

Crisis or Challenge?

Our choice every morning!

By Angela Mejia – Business consultant and EI Coach.

What is the difference between crisis and challenge?

Our choice....

Today I decided to write in a newspaper format because lately we have been bombarded by “dark news’ every morning. We are getting used to say that we are in crisis, and it’s true the world is in crisis but as an individual you still have an important choice:

- A. Declare yourself as part of the crisis (the easy way out), sit down and complain how difficult are all these days and list all the institutions and people who are responsible for it.
- B. Define what is happening as a challenge for YOU and TAKE action, if you are bold enough, bring others together to co-create solutions in your sphere of influence.

If by now you decided to go for option A. I recommend you stop reading, if you go for option B: I encourage you to take a piece of paper and write the answers to the following questions.



Photo source: personal collection.



Image source: Microsoft image bank

What is your challenge today?

Question #1

We tend to generalize the subjects and get under the umbrella of what is happening outside, and to get even more literal if it rains outside, we say: it’s a bad day! For some people rain is a bless, if you work in agriculture rain could be the difference between a good and a bad crop. With this simple example we can see that an event like rain can have multiple interpretations depending on the perspective we look at it.

My first invitation is to write in your paper what is your challenge today, are the events happening in the world today an opportunity for you? How can you change the perspective and define what is your personal challenge in the big scope of things? There is a common expression that says: If life gives you lemons make lemonade, but not long time ago I found the pictures below which are some variations of it, change them for melons (translated from Spanish) or get some salt and tequila☺

In general, we are all programmed to get to the default answer, now take the time and define your challenge, still write the default answer, and then go beyond. Try to find positive alternatives to it, something that suits your situation, your strengths, your capabilities, your passions.

You will be surprised by all the variations you can find; those options will grow exponentially if you join forces with other people who have similar or complementary skills and capabilities.

Tip 1: When you think about the challenge imagine yourself, expanding, taking the opportunity to experiment, learn and grow. Dare to share the exercise with other people around you and you will see how change starts already to happen.

Tip 2: Go deep into the understanding ask why at least 5 times and get to the origin of the challenge, don’t stop at the symptoms!



Tip 1: Plan the actions, prioritize high impact, divide & conquer (who is good at what?), learn often and share fast. **Tip 2:** Book activities in your agenda, what is not in the agenda, will not happen.

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What did we learn?

Question # 5



Image source: Microsoft image bank

My invitation here is to remove from your dictionary the word *failure* and replace it with **learning**, this sets you in a better mindset and prepares you for future opportunities and correct course to avoid bigger impacts.

Learning is key in any challenge, especially when we are focusing on growing, expanding and changing the world around us!

To learn, there are many technics out there, but I would focus today on the power of the inside-out and outside-in.

Take the time to reflect as individuals:

Journaling is a great tool, it captures the 'everyday' experience and when you sit in front of your notebook at the end of the week and read what happened, how you felt and where are you today, gives you the perspective to find insights, learn about you, the people around you and THE challenge.

Take the time to reflect as a team:

Take the time to discuss about the key events of the week / month. You will find that each person has a unique perspective, feeling & out-take about the exact same event. Capture the new opportunities and agree on how to approach the same event next time based on your learnings.

Celebrate!

Fuel for growth

When we are immersed in solving a challenge, we tend to focus on what needs to happen next and we forget all what we have been through, take the time to celebrate the small and **BIG** achievements, mark them in the calendar and take pictures!

This is not only a way to keep yourself and team motivated but also the fuel for growth. When things get difficult you will have a reference of all the 'peaks' you already conquered, all the way you went through already and will give you the energy and the confidence you need to move on.



Picture source: Microsoft gallery.



Photo source: Microsoft art gallery.

Embrace the challenge!

What is next?

I hope by now you're convinced that although the world is in crisis you have wonderful challenges to embrace, bring others with you and start changing the gray 'collective reality' into a colorful challenge that makes a difference **TODAY**.

I'm sure that if you read back now your answers to the 5 questions you have already a great starting point which you can share with your friends and family to get some followers and take it into action.

I would invite you now to take the 'risk' of influencing others to define the challenge they want embark in and join forces to paint in color the future for the next generation!

Remember to replace these words in your daily language: Failure by Learning, gray by colors and crisis by challenge!

If you have questions or want to continue the conversation, let's connect via: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/angelamejiasalamanca>.

