

Patron:

His Excellency  
The Honourable Hieu Van Le AC  
Governor of South Australia



### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT - Autumn 2019

Here we are in Autumn and Easter has been and gone already. It feels as if the year is speeding past, but we have not been idle at ADSSA!

We are heavily into the training program undertaken each year under the Doorways2Construction [D2C] program for construction apprentices throughout the State to give them a better awareness of the dangers of asbestos within the environment they'll be working. I'm pleased to say that 42 D2C programs have been held so far this year. Our trainers are travelling extensively to fulfil the need. We appreciate the funding provided by the Construction Industry Training Board to support this asbestos awareness training.

Recently we were delighted to have Mr Steve Georganas MP visit our Committee to hear about ADSSA's work in the community and also to give a viewpoint on the thoughts in Canberra regarding asbestos and



how to eliminate this scourge from Australia and also from the wider region. He also heard the personal perspective of one of our mesothelioma sufferers, Anastasia, who is putting up an amazing fight against this disease. She has an inspiring story to tell.

We have just launched a new, revitalised website and invite you to log on to have a look – [www.adssa.org.au](http://www.adssa.org.au). Also our Facebook page is refreshed with relevant posts frequently, so by 'Liking' the ADSSA Page you will always be kept in touch with what's current.

**Peter Photakis – President**

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### From the Social Worker

It is late in the day of Easter Monday, as I sit here writing the autumn newsletter, looking out on to the dustbowl of my front garden, waiting for 'wet matter' (rain!!). As my father used to say, "It will come". The husband of one of my mesothelioma clients said to me the other day, "It would be good if it rained most nights at 1.00am, then cleared up at daybreak". I think my Dad also used to say, that there are 3 things we have no control over- death, taxes and the weather! I like the expression my daughter often throws up at me - "It is what it is, Mum".

Amy Morin LCSW, is a licensed clinical social worker, psychotherapist and author of '**13 Things Mentally Strong People Do**'. She has some strategies that you will all have heard of before, but I find it helpful to go over 'old ground'. **There's a brutal truth in life that some people refuse to accept: You have no control over many of the things that happen in your life. If you find yourself wasting time worrying about things you can't control, here are six things that can help, as listed by Amy Morin.**

**1. Determine what you can control.:** When you find yourself worrying, take a minute to examine the things you have control over. You can't prevent a storm from coming, but you can prepare for it. You can't control how someone else behaves, but you can control how you react. Recognize that, sometimes, all you can control is your effort and your attitude. When you put your energy into the things you can control, you'll be much more effective.

**2. Focus on your influence:** You can influence people and circumstances, but you can't force things to go your way. While you can give your child the tools he needs to get good grades, for example, you can't make him get a 4.0 GPA. While you can plan a good party, you can't make people have fun. To have the most influence, focus on changing *your* behaviour. Be a good role model and set healthy boundaries for yourself. When you have concerns about someone else's choices, share your opinion, but only share it once. Don't try to fix people who don't want to be fixed.

**3. Identify your fears:** Ask yourself what you are afraid will happen: Are you predicting a catastrophic outcome? Do you doubt your ability to cope with disappointment? Usually, the worst-case scenario isn't as tragic as you might envision. There's a good chance you're stronger than you think. But sometimes people are so busy thinking things like, "I can't allow my business to fail," that they don't take the time to ask themselves, "What would I do if my business failed?" Acknowledging that you can handle the worst-case scenario can help you put your energy into more productive exercise.

**4. Differentiate between ruminating and problem-solving:** Replaying conversations in your head or imagining catastrophic outcomes over and over again isn't helpful. But solving a problem is. Ask yourself whether your thinking is productive. If you are actively solving a problem, such as trying to find ways to increase your chances of success, keep working on solutions. If, however, you're wasting your time ruminating, change the channel in your brain. Acknowledge that your thoughts aren't helpful, and get up and go do something else for a few minutes to get your brain focused on something more productive.

**5. Create a plan to manage your stress:** Exercising, eating healthy, and getting plenty of sleep are just a few key things you need to do to take care of yourself. You also have to make time to manage your stress so you can operate more efficiently. Find healthy stress relievers, like meditation, an engaging hobby, or time with friends. Pay attention to your stress level, and notice how you cope with distress. Eliminate unhealthy coping skills, like complaining to others, or drinking too much.

**6. Develop healthy affirmations:** I have two phrases I use to remind myself to either take action or calm down. The first is, *Make it happen*. Whenever I catch myself saying something like, "I hope I do OK today," I remind myself, "Make it happen." It reminds me that I'm in control of my actions. When I find myself thinking about something I have no control over, like, "I hope it doesn't rain on Saturday," I tell myself, *I can handle it*. Those quick little phrases I have on hand keep me from wasting my time on things I can't control. I'll either do what I can to make it happen or deal with the things I have no control over. Develop a few healthy mantras that will keep you mentally strong. Those sayings will help you combat self-doubt, catastrophic predictions, and endless ruminating.

As Easter Monday draws to a close, I am about to stop typing, wind down, reflect on our grandson's 1<sup>st</sup> birthday party that we celebrated on Easter Saturday, have a glass of wine, and embrace some of the 'above' strategies!

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