

How is your grip?

By Pocatello

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In surveys conducted by DDI Inc., a global leadership consulting firm, 55 percent of CEOs rated “developing the next generation of leaders” as their main talent challenge moving forward. Leaders at every level interact with other employees, customers, suppliers, regulators and more. There are various metrics for leadership but high on the list is a person’s EQ, or emotional quotient, which is a measure of their interpersonal and communication skills. Gallup Data shows 84 percent of management promotions fail to pan out successfully, and Kleiman Data shows 60 percent promotional failure within 18 months. Studies in Idaho by the National Education Technology Assessment report employers and educators increasingly flag mental health challenges as a growing issue which impacts leadership. The conclusion of these studies is that in today’s world of uncertainties, changes and expectations our leaders should have strong personal control of their thoughts, feelings and actions so that they can reliably and confidently relate to and communicate with others.

In earlier generations, our ancestors might tell us to get a grip when we spoke or behaved in juvenile ways. Pocatello Centennial Rotary Club is completing a year-long pilot project named Think Get A Grip to address how to use clear principles of cognitive behavioral therapy in dealing with everyday challenges and to help build leaders in this generation and the next. Our project recognizes that some mental health challenges require professional counseling but most of us need only some better understanding of ourselves and awareness of tools and methods that will help us reach our promise and potential in life. Rotarian Heather Murray and author of “Think Get A Grip” shares her observations in the next paragraphs:

“Have you ever experienced self-doubt, anxiety, demotivation, fear of failure or any of the other lovely emotional and mental challenges life throws at us? And responded in a way that didn’t work well for you?”

“In order to reach our promise and potential and be our best, we must learn to master the art of thinking and overcome the obstacles of the way we think. Thoughts become feelings which turn into action. And unless we can practice choosing the thoughts that work well and are true, we can’t expect to master our feelings and act in the way we desire.

“Think Get A Grip is all about learning simple strategies that help us choose and think the thoughts that work well, which then make us feel better and respond in the way we want.

“Over the span of my career as an educator, I watched young children who view life through rose-colored glasses develop into young adults who believe life is hard, things are scarce, and no one loves them. And I watched so many children grow into adults who derail their lives because of anxiety, depression, addiction and bad choices, who then turn to drugs and alcohol to numb their pain and quiet the voice in their head. I have sadly witnessed many more try to solve their problems by ending their lives early.

“As we grow up and learn about the world we develop beliefs from watching and listening to those around us. Because explanation is rarely offered we tend to create the wrong beliefs about how life works. And the worst of it is that our beliefs drive us to act in ways we may not want. We think a thought which causes us to feel and these feelings make us respond, usually in ways we wouldn’t choose if we could stop and take a moment. These thoughts, feelings and actions that we have implemented over our years become habit, silently play in our mind, are hard on us, and cause us to think thoughts that aren’t necessarily true nor helpful.

“We all face everyday challenges and want to live the life we imagine and desire. With a few strategies from the Think Get A Grip program, you can do just that.”

Think Get A Grip is designed to help address everyday challenges. If you recognize these challenges in yourself or among your colleagues or employees consider exploring the Think Get a Grip program. Contact Pocatello Centennial Rotary Club for collaboration. Visit thinkgetagrip.com, or email Heather Murray for further information at thinkgetagrip@gmail.com. We offer our program onsite, virtually or via train the facilitator and would love for you or your organization to participate.

This column was submitted by Pocatello Centennial Rotary Club members Larry Gebhardt and Terry Fredrickson, past presidents; Kate Fornorotto, president; Heather Murray, president-elect; and Tami Moore.