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## **FOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES THAT SHOULD GUIDE US DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

by Bill Mountcastle, President & CEO, Health Giving

It is important to have guiding principles and to follow through on them. Guiding principles give you a sense of direction. Without them, you can be like a ship without a captain or a construction project without a blueprint. This COVID-19 pandemic requires all of us to be even more caring, thoughtful, agile, and resilient. As we adapt and change our practices based on the evolving coronavirus outbreak, I recommend you adhere to the following four guiding principles.

1. **PERSPECTIVE.** Perspective reminds us what's important and what's not. Maintaining perspective means that people must try to see things in proper relation to the bigger picture. While it's accurate that the pandemic has created a sense of unpredictability, our reactions to what is happening are very much in our control and have the ultimate impact on how well we fare through this crisis. We are going to make it through to the other side, perhaps healthier, smarter and better prepared for the next outbreak or financial challenge. Like those who have come before us, you and I are going to need to pick up the pieces, rebuild, and reimpose a sense of order. We need to retain as much of a sense of normalcy as we can, including our daily routines, even if we must adjust. As Henry Ford famously said, "Whether you think you can, or you think you can't... you're right." Your attitude determines your confidence and ultimately whether you can succeed.
2. **PURPOSE.** Purpose is the driving force behind you setting the goals you want to achieve. During this coronavirus outbreak, our federal and state government leaders and public health experts have been telling people that their purpose is to do their part to contain this pandemic and that means maintaining social distancing. As professional healthcare fundraisers, we specifically need to recognize that our purpose during this time is to sustain and build relationships on behalf of our organizations and their missions to provide great healthcare. We do that by setting goals; creating and implementing moves management plans; and identifying, cultivating, and helping our donors and prospective donors accomplish their philanthropic goals and ambitions through a relationship with our healthcare organizations. Now more than ever, be purpose driven.
3. **POSITIVITY.** Positive thinking has helped humans overcome so much adversity. Author Norman Vincent Peale described this phenomenon in 1952 in his well-known book, the

*Power of Positive Thinking.* Since that time numerous research studies have validated his hypothesis that positive thinking leads to positive outcomes. Being successful while living through this pandemic will require positive thinking. On the flip side, chronic worry will increase cortisol and lower immune functioning making people more vulnerable to the virus and other problems. We must be positive and recognize that people want to help and projecting a positive attitude makes others want to help. Through positivity we solve problems instead of creating barriers. A positive attitude is contagious. It brings people together. Others want to be around people who are positive. Nothing brings a team together and builds relationships like positive energy. Do your best to keep your thoughts on the positive side by using words that evoke strength and success. Believe you will succeed.

4. **PRODUCTIVITY.** Being productive is all in the mind and staying focused right now can lead to success. You won't get to experience great results in the future unless you act today. Most of us have more time now because we are at home all day, every day and need to make the most of this situation. I encourage you to write down individual goals for each day. Create a workspace. Study your prospect list and relationship opportunities. Try to become more proficient in your organization's mission and its needs. Set up regular check-ins with you prospects via phone or video conferencing such as Skype, FaceTime, or Zoom. Stay connected with your colleagues. Be a results-oriented individual. Now is the time to be highly productive.

Perspective, purpose, positivity, and productivity. These four guiding principles should provide a blueprint for action, defining parameters within which you act during this COVID-19 outbreak. In their simplicity, they provide clarity and practical guidance to guide you through uncertainty and steer you to future success. And please, be healthy, stay safe, be kind to one another, and have fun self-quarantining. Thank you.