



By Silver Rose

Last week I met Tom, a man who is retired from fighting forest fires. As he reminisced about his job, he spoke at length about the stress of desperately wanting to control something, which by its very nature, is uncontrollable. He talked of purposely staying focused on doing what he *could* and consciously blocking out the enormity of what they faced as winds whipped and spread the fires. He said, "If I faced the reality of each situation I'd have lost heart."

As I listened to him I couldn't help but think of the wild fires currently raging in Colorado. I was imagining in my mind the kinds of life-and-death situations he had been in and that the brave firefighters are facing today in Colorado and in others as well. I can't help but compare it to the "fires" we all face at varying points in our lives. It seems like every day I hear of someone going through a trial by fire—a chronic health issue, the death of a loved one, illness of a child or loss of a home. Unfortunately, the list seems endless. And yet, we somehow persevere.

I'm often struck by the incredible wisdom behind the 12-step program adage, "Just do the footwork and leave the results up to your Higher Power."

Like most profound advice when you think about it, it's pretty obvious. None of us can control results. Like Tom as he fought raging wildfires, we desperately want to have the ability to control the results but cannot. We *can*, however completely control whatever *actions* we take to deal with our challenges.

Are you one of those seemingly strong or together individuals who continually attract people who need help putting out their fires? If so, let me share something that has literally saved my sanity: **only help those who are doing the footwork.**

Now THIS footwork might seem a bit extreme but when I walked across hot coals in a Tony Robbins workshop years ago, I really "got" that it wasn't a circus trick. The point of the exercise was to learn that we have the choice to turn fear into power. The best way to do that is by taking action.

If you come to me for help, I am always willing to do what I can. However, *if I care more about solving your problem than you do*, then I will extricate myself from the situation. I don't mean that you have to do it my way but you do have to be taking steps to solve your own problem.

Talking about problems never solves anything. Imagine what would happen if firefighters merely talked about the fires they faced. "Oh, yeah. This is a really bad one. I don't know how we're going to contain it. It reminds me of the fire

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of '78. Now THAT was a bad one." Meanwhile, the fire is growing bigger and getting fiercer.

In fact, talking about problems actually makes them worse. The Law of Attraction says that you get more of what you focus on. When you are focused on your problems, things will only get worse. If, however, you are focused on doing the footwork to *solve* those problems, even if your actions are imperfect, you will still get good results.

So as you face your own trials by fire, instead of asking, "How can I ever get through this?" try instead asking, "What can I do to improve the situation?" If you sit quietly for a few moments after asking that question, the answers will come and you can move into action.

Action cancels fear—every time.

July 3, 2012