



Georg Christoph Lichtenberg

## Navigating Life: Look Forward—Do Not Look Back

"This is not about going back. This is about life being ahead of you and you run at it!  
Because you never know how far you can run unless you run."

Diane Lane as Penny Chenery  
Disney Movie: *Secretariat*

"Look Forward—Do Not Look Back" is my title choice for this week's TEDDY TALK. If you are a regular reader, you know I choose a principle theme for a six-to-ten-week timeframe. In this series, I envisioned the words "Navigate Life" based on my love of boats.

Back up to November 15, 2020 and you will read my rendition of how sailors reach a destination at sea or on a lake. The article quotes Ella Wheeler's words from her poetry, "it is the set of the sails and not the gales that determine where you go." Due to a tendency to look back on 2020 and more recently, the massive and destructive winter storm that attacked with a vengeance, it is time to look forward and put the past behind.

Today's title and many others come from my method of sharing household duties with my bride. The responsibility of washing clothing and dishes fell on me, and I was glad to take the load. You see, the first eighteen years of my life were lived in a tiny farm house where dishes were washed and dried by hand, and laundry was loaded in the trunk of the Dodge and hauled seven miles east to a laundromat in Pampa.

Here's the way it works. I have fifteen movies on DVD that are my all-time favorites. Sandy enjoyed them when we saw them in a movie theater, but she has little interest in watching them again...and again...and again... . I on the other hand could watch one a day for fifteen days and start over. *Secretariat* is in my favored DVD stockpile. It rotates with *Hoosiers*, *The Kings Speech*, *Finding Forrester*, *Coach Carter*, *Remember the Titans*, and...and...and... . I think you get the picture.

Folding clothes after washing and drying in two machines, is when I watch uplifting and positive movies. Unlike childhood and teen years, our two machines do it all without loading, traveling, unloading, washing and drying, reloading, and driving seven miles west to Kingsmill.

If I have enough for thirty minutes, I'm thrilled. Generally I watch in ten-to-fifteen-minute intervals. It takes several days to finish, but I don't care as long as I work my way to the credits.

Tuesday of this week I was several foldings into Secretariat when I heard the line I noted above. Diane Lane (as Penny Chenery) is in a heated discussion with her husband and brother over a tax issue related to the death of her father. The men see the only way to solve the problem is to sell Secretariat to satisfy the debt. When Penny said "No" to their proposal, her brother pointed out that if the horse didn't win the Triple Crown, his value would drop to half his current value. Her brother said, "If that happens, we can't go back...". I simply love Penny's response, "This is not about going back."

You and I can agree the pandemic and winter storm have caused many tears and hardships. Many experienced personal illness and loss of loved ones from Covid, houses and churches flooded from frozen pipes, cold nights without light or heat, and severely limited communication in 5-degree weather. Both have caused us to be separated from the people we love. While I love living alone with Sandy, I miss the noise, hugs, and games when our children and grandchildren together in our home. You and others feel the same agony and distress. We want to be back to normal, but a new normal is inevitable.

Instead of identifying what's wrong with the indignities of the past, we can say "what's right with this day?" and begin to move forward with confidence. We remember that going back is not the solution, it is the race ahead that will make us whole again.

So I leave you with one more opportunity to reread Penny Chenery's words...

"This is not about going back. This is about life being ahead of you and you run at it!  
Because you never know how far you can run unless you run."

Peace always,

*Ted*