

# HALE PLACE NEWS

ISSUE 01/22

JANUARY 2022

*Dear Friends of Hale Place*

*After 34 years working in care, I would like to share some inspirational stories over the coming months, that resonated with me, to be the best I could be.*

*In 1982, I read a book depicting one of the most inspiring leadership stories I have ever come across concerning Hernán Cortés.*

*In 1519, Hernán Cortés led a large expedition, consisting of 600 Spaniards, travelling in 11 boats, to Mexico. The goal was to capture treasure.*

*Upon arrival, Cortés ordered his soldiers to burn their ships. This sent a clear message to his men, there is no turning back; either win or perish.*

*Although you might assume that Cortés' men would have become despondent, with no plan to escape in place to save their lives, they instead rallied behind their leader as never before. Within two years, he succeeded in his conquest of the Aztec empire.*

*Burning the boats represented a point of no return, a psychological commitment where the line had been crossed and could never be crossed back. There is no hedging, no looking over your shoulder. Everything is about now, the moment you are in. All thoughts, efforts and every ounce of energy must be focused on succeeding the battles ahead or you will definitely succumb.*

*The psychology of this concept is clear even further back in history, to the times of Julius Caesar, Ancient Greeks and Hebrew tradition which teach a similar value. In ancient times, Israelite armies would besiege enemy cities from three sides only, leaving open the possibility of escape. They understood that, so long as the enemy saw they had an escape route available, they would not fight to the death because they had a back door. In most cases, this played right into the besiegers' hands.*

*I love these pieces of history because I believe they are the most powerful lessons one can learn to enable a person to be successful in whatever they do.*

*Many leaders, managers and employees make excuses and focus on what they cannot do, or achieve, stating any number of different reasons: I don't have the time; I don't have the resources; I don't have the motivation or energy. If the job you held was the only job you could ever have, these excuses would become a thing of the past because your mind and energy would be focussed on the new reality staring down at you.*

*Likewise, if there was no going back when children left the family home to seek out pastures new and enjoy their independence, there would be great focus on making it work; it's all too easy to give up and return home, as I and many parents know.*

*When I had no money, when the financial institutions would not lend to me and I had only a few quality people around me, I still achieved my goals, eventually. Relentless drive, no turning back because nothing was there for me. I had to succeed, failure would be the death nail, I would have no home nor income. It is sobering but if you burn your boats, you can achieve desired outcomes in the face of what sometimes look like insurmountable obstacles.*

*Our boats were burnt for us when Covid-19 infected our staff and residents. We could not just stay home, we had to go to work because vulnerable people needed us. We could not walk out or resign just because we were working long hours with little sleep or respite. Stress began to pile on top of us and burn out was simmering but we were resilient and found depths of energy that we didn't know we had. Why, because the consequences of giving up was too great to contemplate; we were needed and valued like never before in our lives.*

*It's amazing what can be achieved when there is no alternative.*

*Kevin*

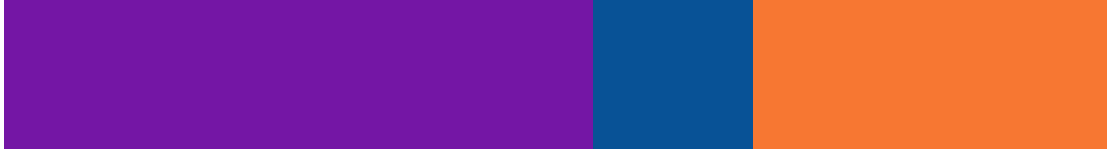
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January was a time of Birthday celebrations and activities.





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