

Kaizen

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Have you heard that word before? *Kaizen*. No, it's not what Captain Marvel used to say in the comics. (That was Shazam!) *Kaizen* is a Japanese word that means gradual, unending improvement - doing little things better and better, and working toward higher standards. This is the same thing you should be striving for in your practice, and also what you would like to see happen with your patients. *Kaizen*. In other words, "Great oaks from little acorns grow."

I hope that my articles have given you *kaizen*. That's my goal. I begin every talk I give by explaining the word *kaizen*, and the hope that everyone will leave with a little *kaizen* before we finish the day. I hope that through my articles, I will hopefully add some *kaizen* to your life.

I have some suggestions to help you through this process toward *kaizen*. You will need a few tools. Begin with a pair of scissors or a sharp knife. You will use these to carefully remove my articles when they appear in *Acupuncture Today*. Next, you will need some file folders or clear plastic holders to keep these articles for future reference. I receive hundreds of requests each month for copies of old articles. I would also suggest that if you find any other articles that are of interest to you, do the same thing. I have one file that I call my "idea file," and if I see something I want more information on, I cut it out and put it in my file to check out later.

Step two is easy. If you have any questions about an idea I have touched on in an article, pick up your pen and drop me a line. My address is at the bottom of every article. I answer each letter I receive. Have a question on something that has not appeared in an article? No problem - I will put some information together for you and mail it to you. If e-mail is your thing, then fire away via the Internet. By the way, the phone works, too!

Step three you have already instituted, and you didn't even know it, just by reading my articles. You need to become an educated consumer and be proactive with your financial program, not reactive. A knee-jerk reaction in this world costs you money. It's time to ask questions, get answers, do some homework, and set some long- and short-term goals based on what you want.

Step four is the last step. Remember when you were a kid and had to go to school dances? Did you stand against the wall and just watch, or did you get out there and dance and enjoy the music? Well, it's time to "enjoy the music!" Stop being a financial wallflower. The Nike ads say it best of all - "just do it." It is interesting that some people will never take this last step to put things into motion. They are afraid to make a decision. They feel that if they don't make a decision, they don't run the risk of making a wrong decision. Thank goodness the whole world doesn't think that way. If it did, we would all be still living in caves!

At the turn of the century, William James said, "You can alter your life by altering your thinking." That phrase has been updated and is currently expressed as "you create your own reality." Truer words have never been spoken.

What is your world like? Are you ready for *kaizen*?

