



Build Your Own Sandcastle

by Lori Hartwell, RSN President



As a child, Bob Bell loved to build sandcastles. He spent as much time as he possibly could at the beach, creating these complex structures. As he grew older, he found that he was quite good at building sandcastles. In fact, crowds of barefoot onlookers in bathing suits would stand for hours watching him work. But he eventually took a “normal” job and stopped building sandcastles.

When you're diagnosed with

chronic kidney disease, you may go through a period of adjusting to what will be a different lifestyle from the one you're used to. During that reorientation phase, you might feel a bit out of it or disconnected from the rest of society, and you may even feel that you've lost the ability to pursue your dreams.

When you finally feel ready to start making some new goals and plans, you might experience a surge of enthusiasm. The ideas and plans sometimes come to you like shooting stars, leaving your head spinning!

It's important to have a lot of dreams you want to pursue. However, it takes hard work,

and lots of it, to make those dreams a reality. Dreams are most often accomplished by tackling one goal at a time, making a realistic game plan, and giving that vision your undivided attention until you're finally headed toward your goal.

Pick realistic dreams. Given your talents and resources, what can you realistically accomplish? You can't say, “Oh, I'd like to go the moon someday,” without being in an astronaut training course. It's just not realistic.

Having dreams doesn't mean throwing away your common sense. It means combining your God-given talents and passions

with a good dose of intuition and hard, persistent work. Taking steps to accomplish your dream is what will make that seed of imagination grow, becoming a tangible reality.

As a grown man, Bob decided one day that he simply couldn't take his humdrum life at the office any more. He desperately wanted to use his hands and mind to create things. Quite simply, he wanted to build sandcastles.

It sounded crazy, but Bob decided to form a sandcastle-building company. Now he's paid handsomely for building massive, two-story sandcastles for special company parties, promotional displays, and other events. Clients can order scenes from the Wizard of Oz or a



re-creation of Santa's Village, among other things. Whatever a client desires, Bob makes it happen, all the while following his heart's desire and living his dream.

Do you have a crazy idea or dream? Don't let your struggle with chronic kidney disease rob you of it. Fulfilling your dreams may take a little longer, but set your feet on the path and start the journey.

Never forget that life is an adventure. *Your* life is *your* adventure. Go create a life that dreams are made of—build your own sandcastle!

Chronically Yours,
Lori Hartwell
President & Founder
of the Renal Support Network

weKAN Live & Give is a publication of the Renal Support Network, a patient-run nonprofit organization whose mission is to identify and meet the non-medical needs of those affected by chronic kidney disease.

weKAN Patient Activists serve to mobilize, educate, motivate, and empower fellow chronic kidney disease survivors to advocate for themselves and for one another. Together we *can* make a difference.

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