

CATTLE CULTURE

by Megan Silveira, assistant editor

Starting Fresh, Striding Forward

Moving forward is more about creating a good mindset than embracing a few resolutions.

It's 2021. I had to put it in writing because it almost doesn't feel real.

I won't spend any time lecturing you on how strange of a year 2020 was. We all know, we all did what we had to do to make ends meet. No matter where you are located in the country, we all experienced similar feelings of anxiety, defeat and fear of the future.

While you can turn these into New Year's resolutions (remember resolutions might be *measurable*), I'm offering these suggestions as mindsets you can incorporate into your life to help take the last year in full stride and keep moving forward.

First things first. We need to let go. Bitterness has the horrible ability to halt forward progress. Release any residual anger or sadness you have for what has happened in the past.

We are entitled to feel poorly, to be angry with the turn of events we faced; but to move forward, we have to eventually let go, completely, of

these negative emotions.

Next, we need to all adopt an attitude of gratitude. Did you know adopting a positive mantra is more than just a way to move into a new year with a smile?

Studies done by Robert A. Emmons, psychology professor at the University of California, Davis, have shown "counting our blessings" actually helps to reduce depression and stress, lower blood pressure, and slow down the effects of aging.

So, I say, find something, no matter how small, to be thankful for every single day.

I also encourage you to turn to your peers for support. Like I said, we all likely share a similar story — in all our struggles as cattle breeders and individuals. And I don't think this similarity is limited to the situations created in 2020.

Want to find more ways to reap the benefits mentioned earlier from being grateful? Numerous studies

have found people with satisfying relationships with others are leading better lives as well.

Connecting with people is also *free*. You heard me right, free. Invest a little time and effort into the other people in your life, and you'll find yourself surrounded by cheerleaders. These friends will be there for you in future times of trouble, as well as be able to offer a few words of wisdom when the need arises.

This leads us into our next task — making learning a lifelong habit. No matter how long you've been in the industry, there's always something new to learn.

I even dare you to take this task outside the realm of cattle. Learn a new management strategy for working with people, discover a new way to track your finances or explore a new hobby to help you relax outside of work.

Finally, I urge you to wake up every morning with the intent of



brightening someone else's life. As cattle producers, I think we have a unique opportunity to connect and affect hundreds of people every day.

From social media to our interaction with consumers or even other producers, the opportunities for you as a member of the Angus family to promote our favorite breed of cattle or the industry as a whole are endless.

If you don't feel quite ready to make your first steps into

conversations with the entire public, remember our first and foremost

duty as producers is to our cattle. We are the sole caretakers of livestock, and they rely fully on our dedication to survive and

thrive.

It might sound a bit silly, but see what you can do to affect your cattle in a positive way. See what new herdsman techniques are out there you can work to incorporate

into your operation.

Challenge yourself to having a new mindset walking into 2021. The saying, "new year, new me," doesn't have to be a cliché. There is no shame in admitting the hardships we faced last year.

But remember we are bigger than these hardships. Remember we are Angus. Remember we can take these problems in full stride, learn from the past and face the challenges of the future with more confidence than ever. **AJ**

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— Megan Silveira

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