



## Savor the moments

**L**ike other Americans and citizens of the world, on September 11 I watched the television images of a second airliner crashing into New York's World Trade Center, followed later by the collapse of the two towers. I was awed by the amount of destruction and touched by the stories about people who had died as a result of the attacks.

Few events have so stunned and unified the nation as this did. For days we watched the rescue efforts and followed the unraveling stories of the men suspected of being responsible for the crimes. We talked about it with friends, family, coworkers, and strangers.

We reached into our hearts and into our wallets to help the families of those who were killed. TAPPI raised US\$ 12,169 for the firefighters' and police officers' families in New York. ABB Inc. contributed more than US\$ 1 million to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund. Lycos and eBay are trying to raise US\$ 100 million in 100 days for relief efforts. Many others have also contributed.

Suddenly, American flags were being paraded around town, being flown from homes and businesses. We were "at war." We had become obsessed.

We still need to be mindful of the events of September 11. We still need to maintain a reasonable vigilance. We still need to "combat terrorism and eradicate it from our world," as United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has said. But, we should not let it possess us.

A few weeks after the events of that day, I was driving into town for a dentist's appointment. The sky had shed the haze of summer and the bright morning sun cast long shadows of trees across the road. The temperature had dipped just enough to warrant a jacket. It was grand.

Then I thought, there are thousands of people who did not live to see this day, this wonderful, beautiful day. How fortunate we are to be alive.

Later that week, in the darkness before dawn, I left the house to go to work. As I walked to the car, I looked up and stopped for a minute to marvel at all the stars glimmering in a cloudless sky—so far away and seemingly constant.

Again I thought, how wonderful—isn't it great to be alive.

Like our freedom and our security, we generally take "life" for granted. We eat, we sleep, we go to work, we fall into routines and become distracted by many things. Often we forget to savor the moments and the day-to-day riches of just being alive.

We have all survived the fires and rubble of the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the four hijacked planes. It's time to take a deep breath, laugh a little, and get on with our lives. Enjoy your friends. Enjoy your family. Embrace the fullness of each day. Savor the moments. **S!**

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