



## **Getting through tough times**

If you have to be in *shut-down mode*, Central Oregon is not a bad place to be. I'm fortunate. We moved to Bend full-time about 4 years ago. My parents retired to Central Oregon in the mid-90s, and our kids grew up literally going *over the river and through the woods* to Grandmother's house. So, the skiing and the mountain biking that CO affords are nothing new. In this time of isolation, I've grown to appreciate where I now live and the beauty this corner of creation offers.

All of that is a preface to something that happened a week ago. I was mountain biking, not far from my house with my son and a friend. I've ridden this trail a number of times. There is one particular rocky section that puts us in *head-down, gear-down* mode.

### ***You just have to get through it.***

I was leading the pack (I think the two others wanted the old guy to feel good about himself 😊). All of a sudden, I found myself at the junction of the trail with a road we take to higher ground, and I let out a **NO WAY!** Literally, I couldn't believe we were there already. (Kind of the opposite of what we did as kids, right, repeatedly yelling out from the back seat to Mom and Dad, **Are we there yet?...Come on, you know you did...** 😊)

Here's why the *No way!* came out of my mouth... We'd been animated in our conversation. We talked the whole way up that trail... No small feat given that this particular trail tends to turn my lungs inside out each time I attempt to ride it. My friend mentioned something like,

### ***Good conversation gets you through sections like this.***

Immediately, it dawned on me...

### ***Great communication gets you through the tough times.***

We find ourselves in the midst of tough times. Whether it's the actual virus or the isolation or the economic hardships, the whole world is experiencing for a period of time what some people in certain parts of our world experience all the time. We will get through this... together... Don't know when or what the other side will look like... So, in the midst of the tough times, we can communicate. We've shared this with you many times...

### ***Communicate EARLY, OFTEN, and CLEARLY.***

### ***Communicate with empathy and compassion; with a listening ear to understand the other person.***

Let your people (your family, friends, neighbors, employees, colleagues, service-providers – not just healthcare personnel, but grocery store workers and others)

### ***know you SEE them and that they MATTER.***

We need this more than ever! During tough times, I believe, it is not possible to over-communicate. Maintain connections. Your people need you to stay connected with them. If you do, you (and they) will be glad you did!