

# *Meat the Future*

Jenilee Godsey, Youth Agriculture

**December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**“Thriving in 2021”**

I think each and every one of us is beyond ready to say goodbye to the 2020 calendar and welcome the upcoming year with hopes of eventually regaining some sense of normality in our lives. The year 2020 has presented hard times: emotionally, physically, financially... you name it, it has had a burden on what we tend to see as “normal” in our day-to-day lives. It’s been plain hard!

I recently read a newsletter from Dr. Tim Elmore entitled “Three Words Of Encouragement For You This Holiday Season.” Dr. Elmore is the president of Growing Leaders, which is a nonprofit organization that provides resources that help develop young leaders for school, universities, etc. across the globe. And, his recent newsletter article really stood out to me as I try to shift my mindset towards positivity for the upcoming new year.

To start the article, Dr. Elmore reflects on just a handful of the reasons why 2020 has been a year that many will never forget... a year of intrusions by a pandemic, politicians, protests, pay cuts and panic attacks, as we spent much of our time in the isolation of our homes. And, he shares three helpful things to keep in mind as we face 2021.

Dr. Elmore says, “In order to THRIVE in 2021, we will need to have a backbone, a wishbone and a funnybone.” More about those ‘bones’ in a second...

First, I would like to look at the meaning of the word ‘thrive’ per the Oxford Languages Dictionary.

Thrive: “Grow or develop well or vigorously. To prosper, flourish.”

At the beginning of each year, we typically set goals for ourselves, our careers, our families, our finances. Whatever it is that we hope to improve or ‘flourish’ in for the upcoming year... this time of year seems to be full of hope. In a typical year. But, I challenge you to not let this year be any different! Plan on ‘developing more vigorously’ than ever in 2021 – and set your sights on it!

Here’s a bit more on Dr. Elmore’s three bones mentioned above.

## **The Backbone**

“Everyone I know who was able to remain steady and strong in 2020 demonstrated courage at school, at home and in their community.” says Dr. Elmore. “There was so much uncertainty, people had to decide where they stood on issues like wearing a mask, helping others — not just ourselves — and carrying on with our jobs. This year, it wasn’t easy. We need to model hope and grit for the next generation as we enter a new year. So, relax for the holidays, but cultivate a strong backbone on what you stand for and what kind of example you’ll set for students.”

### **The Wishbone**

“You’ll need to clarify some new aspirations in the upcoming year. What do you wish for in 2021? What did you fail to accomplish this year that you’ll want to be determined to achieve in the next 12 months? Certainly, wishing is not enough, but it’s a start. Some people completely lost hope this year of finding a job they’d like or of seeing a loved one recover from an infection. Wishing can turn into dreaming, which can turn into planning, which can turn into reaching a goal. Purpose gives us both energy and meaning. Where there is no hope in the future, there is no power in the present,” said Dr. Elmore.

### **The Funny Bone**

Dr. Elmore says, “I think conflict and challenges can be faced easier when we are able to laugh at ourselves. Friction is lubricated by possessing a sense of humor; call it a “funny bone.” There is a proverb that says, “Laughter doeth good like medicine.” When I’m scared, I make decisions from emotion rather than facts or hope. When I’m able to laugh at a tough situation, it enables my brain to retain its reasoning skills and make better decisions. Don’t stop laughing at yourself and at humorous moments that occur over the holidays. After all, a smiling face is always more attractive than a frowning one.”

I hope you find good reasons to use all three of these ‘bones’ in 2021, here’s to a great year ahead!

Information in this article has been adapted from Dr. Tim Elmore, founder of Growing Leaders.

*Jenilee Godsey is a Youth Agriculture Agent for the Twin Creeks Extension District which covers Decatur, Norton, Graham and Sheridan counties. Email her at [jenileem@ksu.edu](mailto:jenileem@ksu.edu) or reach her by telephone at the Graham County Office, (785) 421-3411.*

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Article Header: “Mandatory Labeling had Minimal Effect on Meat Demand”

Column Title: “Meat the Future”

By: Jenilee Godsey  
Twin Creeks Extension District  
Youth Agriculture Agent