

“CHIN UP” See The Blue Beyond The Trees

We've all heard them before—
“Stop & smell the roses,” “Slow and steady win the race,” “Chin up,” etc.
But what about, “See the blue beyond the trees?”

I recently went for a mini hike with my family. Things have been mighty crazy lately, so the quiet time in the woods was very much needed. At one point, I stopped to look up at the multitude of colors on the trees in a particularly beautiful spot, and I was struck by two things: 1.) How tight my chin and front of my neck felt, and 2.) How amazing the crystal blue sky looked just beyond the tops of the trees.

I realized that we now live in a society where we no longer ever really look up. We're constantly typing on our computers or using our smart phones or tablets. We never have enough time, so when we are going somewhere, our head is down, our bodies on a mission, our thoughts six paces ahead. Think about it—when is the last time you really looked up?

I like to think I'm the type of person that can appreciate the little things in life. I often pause to admire a sunny day or a pretty flower. Time stops when my child laughs and nothing else matters. However, based on the tight pulling sensation under my chin, even I apparently have not been looking up enough lately. And the thing is, it was just so refreshing! Besides being a nice little stretch for my neck, it was a moment of pure beauty. It was even a moment of hope.

Seeing that blue way up beyond those beautiful leaves reminded me that there's always a blue sky somewhere beyond the trees. Some days, it may seem really far away, but it's guaranteed to be there.

If you're constantly looking down, weighted down by the stresses of your day, all you see are the dead leaves and broken sticks on the ground. But if you raise your chin, lift your eyes, stop and take a breath for just a moment, you will see the spectacular color, light, clear skies, sunshine, inspiration, *freedom* that await beyond those branches. That is so much more, so much bigger than what's laying at your feet or weighing down your soul.

**So remember—Smile, and “Chin up!”—
There's always a blue sky waiting for you!**