

DEFINING MOMENTS **IN TIME**



Defining moments in time - Weddings, funerals, graduations, big sports wins, a promotion at work! Maybe even that memory you keep forever from a vacation?

We have defining moments in time happening all around us through our lives. Not all of them are good, but hopefully good is created in those unfortunate bad times. Most of these times in life happen to us, for us or around us. We in the special events industry have a unique perspective of defining moments in time as we can create them, expand them, embrace them and yes, work them!

These defining moments in time are made even more special when shared with others. Our industry is a diverse group of individuals and organizations that are the experts of not just designing the moment, but making sure the moment is an experience shared with many.

And, how about 2020 and 2021? I think living through a pandemic is one of those defining moments in time that we will remember forever!

I am reading a book called *The Power of Moments*, written by Chip Heath and Dan Heath. The authors have studied how these experiences change our lives and how we may actually be able to create more of them and even more easily than we know. A great quote promoting the book states, *"Many of the defining moments in our lives are the result of accident or luck—but why would we leave our most meaningful, memorable moments to chance when we can create them? The Power of Moments shows us how to be the author of richer experiences."*

Now there is a great position title for you next business card – Author of Richer Experiences!

We are in such a unique place in the special events industry that we can at some level control and manage defining moments in time. We may not be able to control the tragedy, but we can honor the loss, celebrate the heroes and host annual celebrations so that generations after us never forget that moment.

This letter is not meant to be a book review, but a reminder of both the power and the responsibility that is at our fingertips and soon to be actual, in-person events that are written in ink on our calendars.

The authors of the book discovered through their research that defining moments were created from one or more of four elements. Heath and Heath share in the book, *"While human lives are endlessly variable, our most memorable positive moments are dominated by four elements: elevation, insight, pride, and connection. If we embrace these elements, we can conjure more moments that matter. What if a teacher could design a lesson that he knew his students would remember twenty years later?"*

What if a manager knew how to create an experience that would delight customers? What if you had a better sense of how to create memories that matter for your children?"

Elevation - Defining moments rise above the everyday. They provoke not just transient happiness, like laughing at a friend's joke, but memorable delight.

Insight - Defining moments rewire our understanding of ourselves or the world. In a few seconds or minutes, we realize something that might influence our lives for decades.

Pride - Defining moments capture us at our best - moments of achievement, moments of courage.

Connection – Moments of connection deepen our relationship with others.

How will you choose to lead yourself and lead others in this defining moment in time?

I am encouraging us to look at this at two levels; within ourselves and outwards. We can capture 2021 and understand that this is the time for courage and embrace this as a moment of achievement. We can take our connection to the community more seriously than ever before. And, we can do what the book description sells - author a great and powerful story of defining moments for our students, guests to our events and diverse communities of our cities!

Our industry has the experience, passion and resources to shape new memorable moments in a time in our lives like no other! Bringing the community back together. Supporting our cities economic growth. Live music, live sports, performing arts, fireworks shows, parades and so much more are ours to share with others so that they may remember forever their first public experience after the pandemic. We can create their defining moment in time that helped them move through that crazy era that was "so 2020."

A great quote I have pulled from the book reads, *"Defining moments create shared meaning – highlighting the mission that binds us together and supersedes our differences. We are made to feel united."*

Let's be the authors of richer experiences!

Ted Barody, CFE

IFEA World Board Chair

President

Norfolk Festevents

Norfolk, VA