

Mondays get a bad rap. Even the Carpenters sang about rainy days and Mondays bringing them down. I disagree. I view Mondays as a way to kick off a brand new, unblemished week. This is especially true today considering we had a few unpleasant moments that cast a shadow on our doorstep last week.

Humans can achieve amazing feats in difficult, challenging and stressful circumstances. As I was walking into Howes Hall this morning, my mind wandered to what February 22, 1950 must have felt like at Maplebrook. There were no snow blowers to clean the sidewalks, there was no internet to give us ideas as to how to inspire and that morning greeted the students with a temperature of 6 degrees. Today began 20 degrees warmer and eager student eyes fired up their laptops to find out what they would learn today. Mondays should be viewed with perspective and as a fresh start.

In moments of difficulty, it's important to get our feet firmly planted, to return back to the roots of the foundational values that have served us and previous generations so well. I am sure that Marge Finger, first Head of School found herself in a pickle or two, but if she didn't persevere, we wouldn't be celebrating 75 years at this amazing school. To me, this Monday tells me that we are fortunate.

However, I have also learned that no matter how exciting a drama-filled week can be, it is actually very satisfying to return to normality and the routine of life, just as we have on this Monday. A taste of the extreme allows us to appreciate the everyday pattern of life and the structure to which we all respond so well. May the new week wrap you up in a blanket of routine and normalcy as it has here. A little bit of drama puts the mundane in perspective and helps us to be satisfied with all the good things happening in our lives.

I send you off this day with wisdom from the ultimate optimist, Helen Keller: *Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.* Here's to a great week ahead.