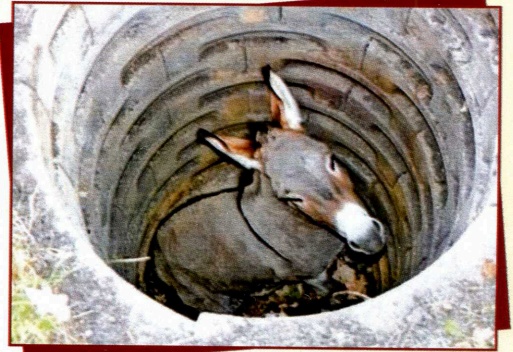


The farmer and his donkey

A farmer owned an old donkey. The donkey fell into the farmer's well. The farmer heard the donkey crying for help. After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the donkey, but decided that neither the donkey nor the well was worth the trouble of saving. Instead, he called his neighbours, told them what had happened and asked them to help him haul dirt to bury the old donkey in the well and put him out of his misery.



Initially the old donkey was hysterical! But as the farmer and his neighbours continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back, a thought struck him. Every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back, HE WOULD SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP!

This he did, blow after blow. "Shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up!" He repeated this to encourage himself. No matter how painful the blows, or how distressing the situation seemed, the old donkey fought panic and just kept right on SHAKING IT OFF AND STEPPING UP!

It wasn't long before the old donkey, battered and exhausted, stepped triumphantly over the wall of that well! What seemed like it would bury him actually helped him... all because of the manner in which he handled his adversity.

THAT'S LIFE! If only we face our problems and respond to them positively, and refuse to give in to panic, bitterness, or self-pity...

Life's beautiful