

# INDIGO BLUES & Co.

#TheClothesYouLiveIn



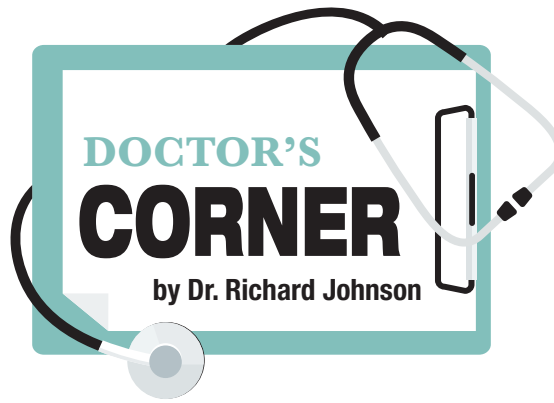
**TOAD&CO**   
EVERY DAY IS AN ADVENTURE

In Capital Plaza 51 North Main Street  
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SPRING  
**2020**

**Congratulations  
Hopkinton/Contoocook Students  
for Academic Excellence!**

Alexis Blanchette - Dean's List at Keene State  
Emily Campbell - Dean's List at Kutztown University  
Grace Clark - Dean's List at St. Michael's College  
Emma Fredyma - President's List at Plymouth State  
Jalen Galan - Dean's List at University of New Hampshire  
Payne Gould - President's List at Plymouth State  
Sage Hubicki - President's List at Plymouth State  
Autumn Hughes - President's List at Plymouth State  
Daniel Kashulines - Deans' List at University of New Hampshire  
Emily Knowlton - Deans' List at University of New Hampshire  
Jennifer Lewis - Dean's List at Keene State  
Emmaleigh Sabol - President's List at Plymouth State  
Rebekah Underwood - Dean's List at St. Michael's College  
Clara Walling - Dean's List at Hamilton College



## I TRIPPED... WHO OR WHAT SHALL I BLAME?

During this difficult time of social distancing I had to come up with an activity that could give me some outside air, exercise, and be constructive while all the time staying away from everyone. I decided to construct a stone stairway; it was the perfect project to accomplish all of that. The other day I was retrieving some heavy stones from the woods on my property, and as I was carrying a heavy rock, I tripped, fell, and really bruised my lower leg, resulting in a golf ball size hematoma, pain and frustration. How did this happen? How could this have happened to me? Or, why did this happen? What, or who was to blame?

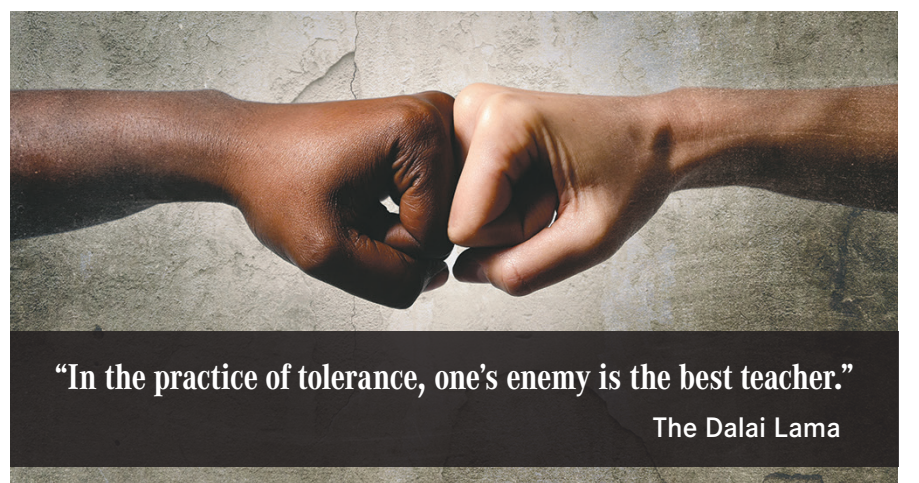
My first thought was that it was a branch on the ground that caught my foot. (Or was it my foot that caught the branch?). Maybe the cause of my fall was the heavy rock? (Or was the rock too heavy for me?). Perhaps the fall was totally the fault of the uneven ground I had to walk over. After all, if there had been a path with an even surface, I never would have tripped. Why hadn't someone created such a path, so that when I had to carry this rock, I would not have tripped and suffered an injury. Do you get my drift? I was looking to find 'fault' with someone or something. Those were my initial thoughts.

So the question is, why does that happen? Why do we look to 'blame' someone or some thing for our misfortune? Of course, there certainly are clear examples of legitimate 'blame.' The nor'easter that knocked out power for several days. The tornado that destroys a town. The corona virus that is taking lives. But for the vast majority of situations we do not have such a clear-cut cause and effect.

Blame is an excellent defense mechanism that we can use to preserve our own self-image. We don't want to deal with our own failings. Along with that thought is the reality that it is much easier to blame someone or something than it is to accept our own responsibility for a bad outcome. We might even take a more negative approach and use blame as a way to subtly attack someone. Let's face it; shifting the blame onto something or someone is the perfect maneuver to avoid having to deal with our own shortcomings, mistakes, or bad choices. When this becomes our default position, it develops into a victim mentality where one can never assume responsibility but is always looking to blame someone else.

There is a better way to deal with our accidents, mistakes, or and choices. My 80+ year old friend, Rodney Doucet, said it perfectly, "It affords me the opportunity to improve." He is right! In medicine we speak of these accidents, mistakes or bad outcomes as "sentinel events." The handling of a sentinel event seeks to understand how it occurred by looking at many different factors and from several different perspectives. We look not to blame, but to learn how to make something better and thus avoid a negative outcome in the future. We look to see what we could have done better, sooner, or differently rather than blame someone or something. I was trying to carry a rock that was too heavy for me, and I had not appropriately considered the rough terrain. I fell because of poor planning.

When we are dealing with a bad outcome, having our political discussions, and living in this pandemic let us all make an effort to follow Rodney's advice and seek to learn rather than blame.



**"In the practice of tolerance, one's enemy is the best teacher."**

The Dalai Lama