



Resilience in Adversity

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It is through adversity that our true strength is revealed, it is through suffering that we are reminded of our humanity, it is through pain that our character is molded and strengthened. As inevitable and sometimes inordinate as ...it may seem, it is part of each and everyone's reality.

What is prosperity without adversity? What is success without failure? What is the good without the bad? Everything in life exists in pairs, black and white, life and death, happiness & sorrow, ambiguity and lucidity, and so is the same with adversity.

Knowing, as they say is half the battle, and understanding and accepting these facts is easier said than done. The irrevocable realization of such truths has been a result of unique and arduous journeys that some of us have partaken throughout our lives and careers.

Part of these adversities occur from within, whether it is self-doubt, insecurities, inadequacies or imperfections and is usually magnified by external experiences from inequities and most of the time, circumstances not under our control. We would probably think that we are at the losing end with every adversity that we encounter, but in every failure, disappointment or embarrassment is a point of realization that we are being tempered for a higher purpose and not just go through life haphazardly.

I totally agree that it's not easy to see this when we are experiencing an unpleasant situation and we would even be in denial about it. But after the storm has passed, it should be clear to us that nothing is wasted – everything has a purpose, even adversities.

Life is never easy, but there are "lifeboats" that reach out to us to give us a hand or even a clue of how we should be able to cope with each obstacle. It's just a matter of knowing where to look. Some may be as popular and celebrated men of history, the likes of Winston Churchill who despite insurmountable odds was able to win the war with the Allies.

Others like Lance Armstrong, was able to overcome cancer and win the Tour de France seven times. There are also others who are as ordinary as you and me who have experienced different levels of obstacles that are probably a fraction of what these men have undergone and despite that, it is an experience worth learning from and a chance to strengthen our will even more.

So the next time you go through precarious and overwhelming situations, take the bull by the horns and use all means to overcome it, however dire it may be. The indomitable will of the human spirit should never be underestimated; it's a great force worth tapping into.

Questions for discussion:

1. What adversities have you experienced and how did you overcome it?
2. What did you learn from these adversities?
3. What adversities do you think are not worth undergoing? Why?
4. If you have a friend who is undergoing a difficult situation, what would you do to convince him/her about the value of adversity?
5. Do you think you are tougher now, because of the difficulties that you have experienced before? Why or why not? Cite a specific example and explain.