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**Adversity, What Is It Good For**

**By Kim Bloomer**

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As I sat down to write this article, I was reflecting back over the last week - a week filled with adversity. We all go through it and it is during those times that we may often wonder what is it all for anyway? What is the point? What is it good for?

I decided to look up the word, adversity, from my old American Heritage Dictionary. The word is defined as "1. A state of hardship or affliction; misfortune. 2. A calamitous event." It was all of the above for my husband and me. We had what most home owners hope to avoid - a major plumbing problem. Oh the thought sends shivers up my spine!

Nothing like this ever happens when it's convenient or when you have stockpiled loads of money - as if! While you're going through it all, you wonder "Why me? Why now? Why EVER???" Then you get the problem fixed, breathe a sigh of relief, and wait for the next calamitous event to hit! Sounds rather pessimistic doesn't it?

No, not really, because that is life. Over the last year we've survived two computer crashes, resulting in the purchase of a new computer system (after the first crash and before the second), our dog having an allergic reaction to the medicine he was put on to get well (which is why I went completely to all natural care), both cars needing major repairs, and our A/C needing to be replaced. Then last week this plumbing problem happened - not to mention our vacuum cleaner broke and my husband got in a fender bender all in the same week! That does not include the myriad of other "little" things that happen during the normal course of life.

I could've sat down and had a great big pity party OR better I could discover what I've learned from all this and put it to use. You know the old saying when you get handed lemons you can squish up your face in bitterness or you can get better and make lemonade? Well, I decided to learn what God's plan was for me in all this and take the high road to lemonade.

Now I know you'll be thinking that I'm going to hand you this wonderful explanation and revelation so we can all go merrily down the road of life happily ever after. Not so - but it is inspirational I hope!

My husband and I did lots of knee bends last week - you know the ones where you bend them to the floor and look up fervently in expectation hoping that God will just take the situation miraculously away

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and you'll go on your merry way? Don't laugh; you know you've done it too! Well, that didn't happen but what we did discover is that God is always in control. He allows adversity in our lives to grow our faith or to get your attention on Him.

If we never go through any valleys how will we know when we've reached a mountain top? How will we know if the mountain is even any good if all our lives we stay up on the mountain and never experience any valleys? I know we'd all like to avoid those "valleys" at all costs, but the most growth for anything happens during adversity. You can take a look at nature to see that is true. A butterfly doesn't just change into a butterfly from the larvae (caterpillar state) until it has traversed the difficulty of climbing the tree, building a cocoon, staying there for a while, and then, with difficulty, breaking out of that cocoon to emerge a beautiful butterfly. It might sound like no big deal to us, but look at it from the standpoint of a caterpillar and you'll change your tune.

God taught me and my husband that through all these trials, these hardships, these bummers, that He will provide and He does care. He wanted my trust in Him fully and completely. God has always had to get my attention with the old 2X4 method. This time the 2X4 was very literal - as in 2 feet deep (under the foundation of our house) and 4 feet wide! I can laugh at the imagery now but it sure wasn't funny while we were going through that valley, I'll tell you!

I know now that my faith was being thoroughly tested and all I kept hearing God say to me throughout this whole ordeal was "Trust Me". Jesus allowed His disciples to experience many trials as a test of their faith, not the least of them the storm on the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 8:25). He doesn't want us to solve our problems our way, He wants us to lean on Him and trust His provision. My husband I did just that. We didn't wait to go to God as a last resort; no He was our first resort. There is nothing too big nor too complicated God can't handle, after all, He created all things. He allows these adversities into our lives to get our attention, to grow us in Him. He tells us to abide in Him and He'll abide in us. That was the whole point and He really got my attention, again!

You know, the whole situation was a learning experience in God's provision, in trusting Him. My dog understood that from the "get go". He kept bringing the plumbers his toys, and "talking" to them which got us all laughing of course. The plumbing crew was one of the best I've ever had the misfortune to have to deal with (smile). They were so professional and worked so diligently and they did all they could to make a bad situation right again.

The upside to this story:

I was able to meet some new, hard working people last week. I was able to see my dog make a clown of himself. I was able to play around with our shampooer in lieu of having a vacuum cleaner. Therefore my carpets got real clean AND I got a new vacuum! Lastly, my regular routine was changed up a lot which helped me get outside of myself to see all of the many blessings God has bestowed upon me. I was able, through the adversity, to see God's purpose. I may not have seen His purpose had He taken it away altogether.

So, no matter the situation, know that God is in control and that He has very good reasons for allowing adversity into our lives.

Kim Bloomer runs a home business in wellness and also publishes a pet wellness channel, <http://www.Aspenbloom-WellPet.com> . She is co-founder of a new marketing and advertising channel, Kick The Email Habit <http://www.KickTheEmailHabit.net> and <http://www.KickTheEmailHabit.com> or go to <http://KimBloomer.com> for all inclusive details.

**LET OBSTACLES INSPIRE YOU: Don't let adversity keep you from**

**By Barbara Jeanne Fisher**

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At one time or another, each one of us will suffer from some kind of adversity. Especially in recent weeks, many of us who have always felt invincible have seen evidence to the contrary. Many of us have lost friends or loved ones, and all of us are feeling the pain of loss and invasion.

Some of us have experienced more adversity in our lives than others. Many of us have suffered from financial hardship, physical or mental illness, or other difficulties that never seem to let up. However, as many Americans have said in recent days, we cannot let adversity change our way of life or deter us from living. If we do, the forces of evil and sadness will have found victory. And we simply cannot let that happen.

Such is the case in any aspect of life. From personal experience in battling four incurable illnesses, including MS and Lupus, I cannot even express to each and every one of you how important it is to look adversity in the face and continue on, chasing your dreams.

When I was diagnosed with my diseases, I was utterly devastated. For a time, I thought I'd never achieve my dreams of going to college, teaching, and being a writer. But with the help of a supportive husband and children, I started college at age 46, graduated, and became a published author. I'm now a well-known writer, teacher, and online businesswoman. In spite of all that has gone wrong in my life, I have found success and fulfilled my dreams, and so can you.

Instead of letting life's obstacles bring you down and destroy you, use them. Use your adversities to make you stronger and help you succeed in business, education, or whatever you choose. Use hardship to toughen you.

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Telling your story to your customers and associates will undoubtedly get you support, respect, and even success. Don't embellish your tale or beg for pity, but don't be afraid to let people know what you have been through. Being honest about your life's history will inspire trust and understanding in others who may very well have been down the same road.

Author Barbara Jeanne Fisher is author of the acclaimed lovestory, "Stolen Moments" and has used her illness to inspire herself and others to succeed. Her web site, found at <http://www.angelfire.com/ab6/dlipton/> is a virtual library of health information and inspiration. Barbara can be contacted at [mentorsfriend@cros.net](mailto:mentorsfriend@cros.net).



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