

## **This Too Shall Pass**

I don't know about you, but when I am struggling with a big issue, I tend to cocoon. For as outgoing as I am, there are moments in my life I prefer to be on my own, riding my bike in solitude, or hiking trails with nothing but the sounds of nature.

I have friends that would laugh at me for even saying that as I am somewhat of an extreme extrovert most of the time. Laughing, chatting and cracking non-stop jokes would seem more my normal routine.

But I do have reflective periods where I love nothing more than to be on my own away from the noise of the world. Cocooning. Wrapping myself in the comfort of silence and letting the world steer me for a change, instead of me always trying to steer the world.

Many years ago I went through a major health crisis. Not only did it knock me off my feet physically, it was the first time I had ever experienced something that was also debilitating from a mental and emotional perspective. I was exhausted, in pain and no matter how many loving friends and family surrounded me, I felt totally and completely alone.

I spent as much of my time away from the world as my life with three young children would allow. A dear friend would often pop by and check on me. Inevitably she would attempt to cheer me up by saying, 'this too shall pass.' I would look at her and nod. Sometimes I liked hearing it. Sometimes I was irritated by it, for it seemed that whatever 'this' was, it wasn't passing fast enough for my liking.

There are many levels to the storms we hope will pass. Sometimes we can see them brewing on the horizon and no matter how much we wish and pray it wasn't headed in our direction, we can't get out of the way. Like when we hear those dreadful words, 'it's terminal.'

Then we travel through the worst of the storm, often feeling like we are being thrown around and beaten to a pulp by the circumstances surrounding us. If we're lucky it's two steps forward and one step back, but all too often in this stage it is one step forward and three steps back.

But we make it through and just when we think we're free to celebrate, something blows in with the last breeze of the storm and holds us stuck. No matter how hard we try, 'this' just doesn't seem to want to pass.

This holds especially true for those surviving the storm of separation or divorce where they remain stuck with one foot in the future and one in the past waiting for the final division of property to take place, or their love for the other to ease gently away from their heart. No matter how hard they try to make that final leap forward into a new life, there are anchors holding them back.

Often these last remnants of the storm are the hardest for us to endure. A friend of mine recently made major positive changes in her life. She left the old and ran full speed ahead into the new following her heart every step of the way. When she finally stopped to catch her breath it became apparent she had sprinted forward while people she deemed important in her life only sauntered, and even though she was in a wonderful

new place, it was lonely sitting on the curb waiting for the others to catch up. The waiting has become her 'this' that she hopes will one day pass.

This is the lesson for today. Although it isn't always easy to make sense of the difficult moments we face in our lives, or why certain things seem to hold us anchored in the past longer than we want, there is always a purpose to every part of the journey.

As maddening as it is, that final stage of being held back or anchored to the storm that just blew through, is usually the best time to contemplate the lessons before us. This is the time where we have weathered the storm and are ready to move forward. This is when I like to cocoon.

It is during this time that you need to make a list, either on paper or in your head, of the things you went through. This is cathartic, therapeutic and will help release you from the final anchors of that particular storm.

Think of the difficulties you faced. The people you will keep beside you for the next storm. The ones you won't. The things you never want to experience again. Think of everything that helped you make it through, and everything that made the journey more difficult. Think of what hurt the most, what you will soon forget and what will stay etched in your mind and heart for eternity.

Next comes the hard part. Release any last bits of resentment, anger, bitterness, or sadness that you hold against people, or the circumstances of this particular storm. Every last bit! It serves no purpose to keep these negative emotions connected to you. You don't need to forget, but you do need to forgive if you want to release the last anchors and move on. Let it all go.

Once this is complete, and you can honestly sit back and see the good elements of where that storm brought you, the last anchors that hold you back will release and you will be free. This too shall finally pass.

Some of us float through this period of finding the purpose and lessons easily and quickly, others take years, or never uncover the lessons at all. Still others could care less, they are simply happy the worst of the storm is over. Unfortunately for the folks that could care less about the lessons, they end up staying connected to that storm by the invisible anchors to the point they are never able to take those final steps forward. And that is sad to watch.

I am of mind where I like to figure out the meaning of things. It's comforting for me. It helps me grow as an individual. Helps me learn my lessons so that I can help others learn theirs. But that's me. I also like learning the lessons so that I never have to repeat that one again, because quite frankly, once is enough!

Eventually 'this' did pass from that health crisis storm of my life. I regained my health physically, mentally and emotionally, discovered the purpose for being brought so low, and indeed learned some valuable lessons in the process.

Although you couldn't have paid me a million dollars back then to stay in the health crisis storm one second longer than I had to, I now look back with appreciation for what I learned and who I became as a result. No regrets. None at all.

Two things are guaranteed in this life (besides death and taxes), everything that happens to you has a purpose and everything has a lesson. The best you can do is appreciate all the good moments that come your way, and when a storm starts to brew on your horizon, hunker down, connect yourself with those that will help you through, and remember, this too shall pass.

Enjoy the journey,  
Louise

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