

Dealing with Adversity

Some years ago some American scientists developed the largest artificial environment ever built as a research project, called Biosphere 2. Everything grew well and much was learnt for scientific purposes. But one of the indirect findings was that although the trees had grown well and seemingly healthily, the limbs were weak. After a few years most of the branches of the trees broke off under their own weight. They had grown up easily and quickly but without wind resistance they hadn't developed an inner strength to remain standing.

This is fascinating. The parallels for us humans and for our children in particular are huge. In a similar way, if we grow up without a certain amount of difficulty and hardship, we too are liable to be weak without the strength to stand strong, when adversity inevitably comes our way.

Adversity and difficulties aren't necessarily bad in themselves. In this world they are unavoidable. It's how we deal with them and grow through them that counts.

The Covid crisis was as hard on young families as it was on anyone. Parents reading this article are to be congratulated on navigating those difficult times so well. Good work guys. My encouragement is that by working through these difficult times we potentially can become stronger people in the long run and our children too, if handled well, should become more resilient and better developed individuals.

Some of the greatest achievements and works have come in the midst of turmoil and pain. Beethoven composed his greatest works while he was almost totally deaf and experiencing great sadness. There are many stories of heroism in the midst of adversity.

A few suggestions that may be helpful as you push through challenging days:

- Determine to face the problems with a positive mindset knowing that you will get through them
- Remember that tough times don't last but tough people do
- Don't be surprised that there are hitches – they've been around since the beginning of time
- Focus on the good things of life
- Practice gratitude – list all the things you can be thankful for and go out of your way to thank anyone and everyone for both the little and the big
- Make an effort to cheer up the people around you – reaching out in kindness to others lifts everyone's spirits
- Speak positively about people and situations – try to accept others mistakes remembering none of us are perfect
- Maintaining healthy relationships is worth the effort – make the most of every opportunity to build, support and encourage others

All the Best, Rob, LPS Chaplain

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