



When Life Gives You Lemons and All You Want is a Lemon Drop Martini

Does this resonate with any of you? Life throws you an unexpected curve ball and you say forget the lemonade, I'm going right for the martini! (or wine, or chocolate, or the wrong man/woman, a shopping spree—pick your escape of choice)

Over the past few years I haven't been able to dodge all those curve balls; they've hit me head on. From the death of my brother and father, to my own cancer diagnosis, and most recently a break in a significant relationship, I know what it feels like to be hit multiple times. It hurt, was painful, and rocked my beliefs about how life was supposed to work! But in the process of healing from those life whammies (thank you Brene Brown self-help books!) I've learned a few lessons and wanted to share them with you this month. May they inspire you to view life's challenging situations through a different lens. A lens of compassion, empowerment, and one that helps you heal and move on.

Lesson #1

Give yourself permission to feel vulnerable and don't rush to numb the uncomfortable feelings.

Think of it as a grieving process. Whatever the curve ball was, it likely rocked your world and you need to mourn the loss of that person, job, relationship, status, or perhaps just an ideal.

If you rush to numb the feelings that arise or stuff them down, they don't go away. Instead you stay stuck, may repeat the very same pattern of thought or behavior that created the curve ball, and deplete your power to heal.

Instead of judging yourself or being fearful of other's judgments, simply get curious about what thoughts and feelings arise from the challenging situation. What beliefs does this situation challenge? Are there any patterns that emerge? Performing lesson #1 means we are brave enough to peel back the self-protective stories we have been telling ourselves.

I consider Lesson #1 a prerequisite for #2.

Lesson #2

Your life lessons are often embedded within your most challenging situations.

Trust me. When life throws me a curve ball the last thing I think is “Oh joy – another learning opportunity!” Rather, it’s often “Oh sh*t!”, “This can’t be happening” or “Why me?” Denial and victim mentality anybody?

What I’ve found is that if I can stay present and get used to feeling uncomfortable or vulnerable, I can more easily discern the lesson to be learned.

Mindfulness practices, prayer, journaling, a lot of personal development reading, and being on the receiving end of coaching have been the tools I’ve used to: 1) stay in the present moment despite the desire to bolt due to overwhelming difficult emotions and 2) discover my life lessons.

Talking to someone who can provide objective observations, empathy, and encourage you to be honest with yourself can help. One caveat though! It’s really important to carefully consider who that someone is. A lot of time well meanings friends or family are too invested in the situation itself or in you to be this person. Don’t let fear hold you back from seeking the help of a paid coach or counselor if it’s the one thing that will allow you to discover these lessons.

Lesson #3

There are 2 options for how your life story progresses from this point onward.

Option 1:

You play victim to the life challenge and let it define, and ultimately, confine you. You stay stuck. You may even use it as an excuse as to why you can’t have or do certain things in life.

Option 2:

You use the challenge as an opportunity to shift course; to make changes in your life that bring you more happiness, fulfillment, connection, and peace.

If you choose option 2 be kind and patient with yourself. Option 2 usually does not occur right after the curve ball hit you. It is the fruit that grows from the labor of Lessons #1 and #2. And sometimes that work gets really gritty, messy, and stretches on for months on end. But if you stay the course, eventually you will let go of what no longer is serving you, claim your own power, and move forward intentionally with your life.

I’ll close with a quote that is essentially a question.

“The only decision we get to make is what role we’ll play in our own lives: Do we want to write the story or do we want to hand that power over to someone (and I’ll add- something) else?

Choosing to write our own story means getting uncomfortable; it's choosing courage over comfort." - Brene Brown

So which do you choose?

Need help sorting things out? Then contact me at shelly@wellfinity.com for a free consultation to gain clarity.

Here's to taking the most challenging aspects of our lives and transforming them into an awakening. An awakening to the power we possess to direct the course of our lives from here on out. An awakening of the spirit.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelly".

Live with Intention, Love Yourself, Create Balance, Fulfill Your Purpose & Thrive!