

## **Facing Adversity and Having Options when Life Does Not Make Sense Presentation**

Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA Second Chance to Live

I have been thinking about my life and adversity. I have been thinking about my relationship with the God of my understanding.

Through my recovery process, I have come to realize that at times I was angry at God. I was angry at God because I was unable to see beyond my perspective of life and adversity.

I was angry at God and life itself because I kept running into one wall of adversity after another wall of adversity.

If interested, click on this link: [Biographic Information](#)

### **Options Limited?**

I was angry at God because I thought my options were limited. I was angry at God because I thought my circumstances were holding me back. I was angry at God because nothing I tried worked.

**“History has demonstrated that the most notable winners usually encountered heartbreaking obstacles before they triumphed. They won because they refused to be discouraged by their defeats.” B.C. Forbes**

### **Felt Stuck**

I was angry at God; it was because I felt stuck. I felt stuck because everything I tried did not work. But I am glad I did not give up.

**“I have not failed. I have just found 10,000 ways that won't work.” Thomas Edison**

I was angry at God because I did not understand the “why’s” of what I experienced through the ongoing adversity. The ongoing adversity, despite my best efforts to succeed.

**I did not Realize that All the Adversity that I Encountered was Necessary for Me to Learn what I Needed to Learn**

**“If you take responsibility for yourself, you will develop a hunger to accomplish your dreams.” Les Brown**

Learn what was not best for me. Learn what did not work. Learn so that I could try something different. Try something different to be able to take a different course of action. A different course of action to get different results. Results that would work for me.

**“Persistence and resilience only come from having been given the chance to work through difficult problems.” Gever Tulley**

### **A Change of Perspective**

Although I may have seen the situations as a failure, what I discovered helped me to see things in a different way. A change in perspective that helped me to see that the situations or circumstances were not failures. Just another opportunity to learn and move in a different direction.

**“Do what you love. Know your own bone; gnaw at it, bury it, unearth it, and gnaw it still.” Henry David Thoreau**

### **In a New Direction**

Having this change in my perspective gave me the ability to see situations or circumstances differently. In the process, I was able to look at adversity in a different way. In a way and direction that made sense to me. In a way that would give me more information.

**“Purpose is about a process and a journey, not a destination. I cannot know until I know and knowing just takes what it takes. There are no silver bullets or magic potions. By accepting that reality, I am given the gift of knowing. I am given the gift of knowing by trusting the process, a loving God and myself.” Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA**

### **As a way to Set me in the Direction of Success**

I am not suggesting that I am more aware of God’s perspective. What I am suggesting is that; in hind sight, I have come to understand God’s perspective. What I could not see; at the time, I now realize needed to take place. Take place to fulfill God’s ongoing plan and purpose for my life.

**“We must be willing to let go of the life we planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us.” Joseph Campbell**

### **At the Time, I did not Like the Process**

I now realize that I became angry, because I did not value my experience. The experience (s) that was teaching me the next lesson. But thank God, that was not the end of the story. I discovered that I had other options. Consequently, I realized that I did not have to remain stuck. Stuck, with little or no hope.

**What I Thought had been Unfair, I now Realize was Preparing me for Other Options**

**“The struggle you’re in today is developing the strength you need for tomorrow. Don’t give up.” Robert Tew**

### **Not a Bad Deal or Bad Cards**

In life we may feel that we have been given a raw deal. We may believe that life has dealt us a bad stack of cards. We may feel that life and our circumstances are simply UNFAIR. We may be

angry at God. We may feel like a victim. We may find ourselves wanting to blame someone.

**“Accept what is, let go of what was, have faith in what will be.” Sonia Ricotti**

## **Stuck in the “What if”, the “Could of”, the “Would of” and the “Should of” Cycle**

We may find ourselves stuck in the what if’s, the could of’s, would of’s and the should of’s cycle. We may be angry at the world. We may be lashing out at the people in our world. We may feel frustrated. We may feel rejected and abandoned. We may feel that life is no longer worth living.

**“Be miserable. Or motivate yourself. Whatever has to be done, it’s always your choice.” Wayne Dyer**

We may feel like we cannot trust the process, a loving God or ourselves. We may feel like we are stuck with in our body and our lives. We may feel that no one understands. We may feel lost in a sea of unanswered questions. We may have lost hope.

**“Every strike brings me closer to the next home run.” Babe Ruth**

**But there are Always Options**

**I GET IT**

As an individual living with a brain injury and an invisible disability for 55 years I have cycled through each of these beliefs and feelings. In my experience, I have found a common theme. Although each of these beliefs and feelings appeared real and substantiated; at the time, my recovery process has taught me. Taught me something completely different. Taught me that there are always different options.

**I just needed to look for them**

**“Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.” Albert Einstein**

**But I need to be Willing to Not Give Up. To Not give Up no Matter How Long “it” Takes**

**“You may be the only person left who believes in you, but it’s enough. It takes just one star to pierce a universe of darkness. Never give up.” Richelle E. Goodrich**

**“Don’t give up! Never give up trying to build the world you can see, even if other can’t see it. Listen to your own drum and your drum only. It is the one that makes the sweetest sound” Simon Sineck**

Through my recovery process, I have come to realize that I have not been dealt a raw deal or an unfair stack of cards. On the contrary, I have come to realize that “deals” and “cards” do not determine my destiny. I have come to realize that life is what I make of it. What I make of it with God’s help, leading, guidance and direction.

**“Carpe diem. Seize the day, boys. Make your lives extraordinary.” Robin Williams, John Keating — Dead Poets Society**

**Wisdom has Taught me that I Always have Different Options.  
I Always Can Use the Power of Choice**

**I Don’t have to Stay Stuck**

**“The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any.” Alice Walker**

**“Nothing is a waste of time if you use the experience wisely.”  
Auguste Rodin**

### **Blaming Anyone Does No Good**

**“Time stays long enough for anyone who will use it.”  
Leonardo da Vinci**

I have also come to realize that I am not a victim. Blaming anyone for anything is pointless. Blaming or pointing the finger in anyone’s direction is a waste of time, energy. Blaming accomplishes nothing. Blaming only keeps me stuck by believing that I have no options.

**“Research your own experience. Absorb what is useful, reject what is useless and add specifically your own creation.” Bruce Lee**

Consequently; instead of viewing life through the what if’s, should have’s, and could of’s, I can choose to see my life through a series of different options and choices.

### **A Change in Perspective**

**“Big things have small beginnings.” Prometheus**

Having this change of perspective reinforces the realization that we have the power. The power to look at circumstances through the lens of learning opportunities. With our change of perspective, we no longer have to see the adversity; that we experience, through the lens of disappointment and discouragement.

**“Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.” Mark Twain**

### **Owning Our Power**

#### **Being Encouraged Through a Different Lens**

**“Believe in yourself, go after your dreams, and don’t let anyone put you in a box.” Daya**

**“Not everyone will understand your journey. That’s OK. You’re here to live your life, not to make everyone understand.” Banksy**

Because we now choose to view our circumstances and experiences through the lens of a learning curve, we realize that life is filled with choices. We now realize that anger can be channeled in either positive or negative ways. If we are angry at our adversity, we can use our anger positively.

**“Everyone is trying to accomplish something big, not realizing that life is made up of little things.” Frank A. Clark**

**We can Choose to Look for Different Options**

**“Nothing in the universe can stop you from letting go and starting over.” Guy Finley**

**Based on Choices**

As an adult, I have come to realize that all my reactions are based in choices. Choice that I have made; for a variety of reasons, in my past. Choice that I am making in my present. What I need to remember is that I get to look through adversity in different ways.

**“So often we become so focused on the finish line that we fail to enjoy the journey.” Dieter F. Uchtdorf**

I can stay stuck, believing I am a victim of adversity, or I can see myself empowered through different options. Different options that exist through different actions. Different actions that I can take by using the power of choice.

**“Goals give you a mark to shoot for and keep you motivated when you face adversity.” Benjamin Watson**

**We get to Choose to Not give UP!**

**Taking a Proactive Role in Adversity**

**“Dreams do not vanish, so long as people do not abandon them.” Phantom F. Harlock**

With our awareness, we can take a proactive role in our present. We can take an active role amidst our adversity through remembering that options exist. We can take the time to seek, ask and pray for guidance to see and use those options.

**“Decision is the spark that ignites action. Until a decision, nothing happens.” Wilfred A. Peterson**

The options that will empower our process, give us hope and make sense of our lives.

**More will be Revealed with Time**

**“Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgement that something is more important than fear.” Ambrose Redmon**

**With My Understanding**

**With my understanding, my perspective of God has changed.**

**With my understanding, I need to remember that I always have options and choices.**

**With my understanding, I have come to realize that God is not doing to me, but God is doing for me.**

**With my understanding, choice reminds me that nothing goes to waste if I use the experience wisely.**

**With my awareness, choice reminds me that I am being empowered by each lesson found in my experience.**



**With my understanding and change of perspective, I see how God uses my circumstances to empower my process.**

**With my understanding, I need to remember that I always have options and choices in whatever adversity I may face.**

**With my awareness, choice reminds me that I can look at adversity (what may appear as dark clouds) as silver linings.**

**With my change of perspective, I now realize that my circumstances are being used to build me up, not tear or keep me down.**

**With my understanding I have come to realize that God is for me, not punishing me, as I remember that I always have options.**

**With my awareness, I have come to recognize that as I walk through each door, I am always greeted by a familiar friend.  
Opportunity.**

**With my understanding, choice also reminds me that my circumstances are not meant to be gauntlets, but portals that open to opportunities.**

**With my understanding, choice then encourages me to remember that each circumstance, lesson and opportunity is leading me to my destiny.**

**With my understanding, I now see how adversity is being used to give me hope. Give me hope by teaching me what I could not or would not be otherwise willing to learn.**

**With my understanding, choice reminds me that I can always choose to be empowered by the lesson (s) found within my experiences. The lessons in my experience, because of adversity.**

**With my understanding, choice also reminds me that each circumstance; found within adversity, is designed to be an advocate. Be my advocate and not an adversary.**

**With my understanding, I realize that because my circumstances are meant to build me up, they are preparing and empowering. Preparing me to take advantage of opportunities.**

**With my awareness, I have come to realize that my circumstances are being used to guide me. Guide me through the opening doors of my experience.**

**“It is not that I am so smart, it is just that I stay with problems longer.” Albert Einstein**

**“Ability is what you’re capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it.” Lou Holtz**

### **In Conclusion**

As I continue to walk through the door (s); of experiences and the portals of opportunities, choice reminds me:

**Choice reminds me hope exists, one day at a time.**

**Choice reminds me that I don’t have the big picture.**

**Choice reminds me to let go of the outcomes of my footwork.**

**Choice reminds me that all things are working together for my good.**

**Choice reminds me that by letting go of the outcomes, I have options.**

**Choice reminds me that I do not have to lean on my own understanding.**

**Choice reminds me that I can trust the process, a loving God and myself.**

**Choice reminds that I can create hope in my life, one experience at a time.**

**Choice reminds me to trust the process, as more will be revealed with time.**

**Choice reminds me that I can ask for help from the God of my understanding.**

**Choice reminds me to trust the process even when things do not make sense to me**

**Choice reminds me to keep moving in the direction of my dreams and my destiny.**

**Choice reminds me that I can trust a loving God to guide me through the lessons that I learn.**

**Choice reminds me to trust the process, even when the lessons do not make sense to me at the time.**

**“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28 Bible, New Testament**

**“If you advance confidently in the direction of your dreams and endeavor to live the life you have imagined...you will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.” Henry David Thoreau**