

Climbing the Everest



By Véronique
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Each of us has experienced difficult times. Whether it is the loss of a loved one, a painful separation, loneliness, rejection or professional uncertainty, we all face the harsh side of life at some point.

One day a friend told me that difficult times come to us when life thinks about us. At the time, I did not understand the meaning of her words. How is it possible that life enjoys seeing us suffer? Getting fired is by far comparable to receiving a bouquet of flowers. How can we thank life in such circumstances?

More than a decade later and many difficult moments behind me, I finally got it. What helped me most to understand is the choice I made to seeing events as experiences, regardless of whether my ego would see them as good or bad. I came to the conclusion that if I am able to define the incident that happened to me, it is because I have to understand something important out of it. I am not a victim. Quite the contrary, I have the choice to see the situation as an opportunity for growth and development. Who am I then to qualify it a good or a bad experience? This qualification only exists in my head, and nowhere else. At a broader level, every experience is worth living because they all carry learning and tools useful for each and everyone's journey. The only thing in your power is to trust and let go.

I must admit that so far, I learned more from the so called difficult times. At 19, I decided to pursue my dream of becoming a lawyer in order to enjoy the prestige of this profession. My goal was simple: I wanted to become the female version of Tom Cruise in the movie *The Firm*. On my first day in law school, only 15 minutes were enough to show me that law was not for me; or rather I was not made for law. Too proud to admit it, it took two years of headaches and hidden tears before the law school showed me the door because of my very poor marks. I had failed in appropriating the image of the perfect lawyer. It was the descent into hell.

The Everest set itself up before me. I was desperately looking for a way around it, but there was nothing to do: I had to face reality. In retrospect, this event is by far one of the most positive of my life. It was a blessing and a true gift from life. The ascent to the summit has not always been easy, but it has brought me a better understanding of myself and a better awareness of my heart desires.

Facing a mountain changes our way of seeing things. Even if they hurt, drastic changes are needed at times and beneficial in the long term. Mountains also allow us to tap into our inner resources often unexplored. Unfortunately, it is not when we sing Kumbaya in chorus that the true work on ourselves gets done. Any situation – even difficult – always comes hand in hand

with light. We do not always see it on the spot, but with time and patience, things become clearer. After all, the sun shines continually, even when it is hidden behind clouds.

The top of every mountain offers breathtaking views. I deeply believe that after each climb a treasure is waiting for us, such as a new friendship, a better connection with our feelings or gratitude for what we have in life. The perseverance in keeping faith and cultivating gratitude, even when our ego tells us how unfair life is, has the power to raise us up to our best self. Just accept life and experiences as they are with open arms. If the Everest is facing you, it is because something big is waiting for you!