

JUST A DAY



When I was in rehab I remember lying in bed at the end of a grueling day and having a very lonely, depressing thought - "This is too hard." In the moment of that thought I felt as though I was the sole inhabitant of planet Earth. Bereft and forlorn - that was me.

I was a young woman and my whole world had caved in right before my eyes. I didn't know what to make of it. In fact I couldn't fathom how I was ever going to make anything out of it. I only knew what was gone. How did a person operate in the world when they were paralyzed? I didn't have a clue. It didn't occur to me that other people did it and therefore so could I. All I knew at the time was one thing. "This is too hard."

Eventually, I went to sleep that night.

When the morning came and I woke up, guess what happened? I got up and I had a day. Maybe it wasn't a great day or even a good day. Maybe it was a crummy day. But I had a day. Since then I've had somewhere around 7,600 more days - fantastically great days, good days, okay days, bad days and super bad days. As all those days were going one into the other, I was, and still am, learning how to do it. This is not too hard anymore.

The "this" I thought of all those years ago was what I imagined I had in store for me as a person who could no longer walk around in the world. It was what I imagined I was going to have to go through to scrape my life back together. The "this" of today is, quite simply, life.

No matter what the cause - divorce, illness, disability, violence and abuse, death or other personal loss - when your life starts spinning in a whirl of chaos and confusion, a dreadful feeling of being out of control rises up. Along with that comes fear. The more out of control you feel, the more frightening it gets.

When we are unsure and afraid, what do we tend to do? We imagine. And what do we focus our imagination on? Every negative "what if" scenario we can think of. That's not necessarily bad. It's a natural survival response to a threatening situation. Things can get bad if we don't reset the focus though.

I can't remember what I thought was in store for me all those years ago or what I thought I was going to have to go through. Whatever that was, it wasn't anything good. It was so bad in fact, I thought I couldn't do it. That's was, after all, the subtext of "This is too hard." I thought every day was going to be as bad as that day was. That's because I didn't know how they were going to get better. I didn't

know what needed to be done to make them better. So I kept on having days that were just days. Or so I thought.

When "This is too hard" - or some variation of it - shows up in your mind, remember that you imagine your future because you have not yet learned what you need to know and do to create your future. But you will. I did. That means you can too. In fact you are. Every day that you get up and have a day, you learn. If all you do is have a day, you learn you have the determination to persevere. That's no small potatoes.

Then one day you will do something new or do something differently. You have a day that's more than just a day. You make a change that moves you one step farther into that future life you could once only imagine. The best part about that is that as the learning that comes from healing moves you farther and farther into that life, you find it isn't a precarious hazard zone full of fearful "what if's" at all. It is your masterpiece and you have total artistic control.

That's when you know you have reduced the rate at which your life was spinning to a comfortable speed. You have pulled all the learning from all your days of healing - including every day that was just a day - together and made it into your life today. You have progressed beyond imagination.

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