



Carrots, Eggs and Coffee

Inspirational Story on our response to difficulties

A young woman went to her mother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling.

Her mother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water. In the first she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed ground coffee beans.

She let them sit and boil without saying a word. In about twenty minutes she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed it in a bowl.

Turning to her daughter, she asked, "Tell me, what do you see?" "Carrots, eggs, and coffee," she replied.

She brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft and mushy. She then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hardened egg. Finally, she asked her to sip the coffee.

The daughter smiled as she tasted its deep flavour and inhaled its rich aroma. The daughter then asked, "What's the point, mother?"

Her mother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity - boiling water - but each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard and unrelenting. However, after being subjected to the boiling water, it became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin, outer shell had protected its liquid interior, but after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened.

The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water they had changed the water.

"Which are you?" she asked her daughter. "When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean?"

Think of this: Which am I? Am I the carrot that seems strong? But with pain and adversity, do I wilt and lose my strength? Am I the egg that starts with a malleable heart, but changes with the heat? Did I have a fluid spirit but, after a death, a breakup, a financial hardship or some other trial, have I become hardened and stiff? Does my shell look the same, but on the inside am I bitter and tough with a stiff spirit and a hardened heart? Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water - the very circumstance that brings the adversity, the pain, the hardship – into something quite wonderful. When the water gets hot, it releases its fragrance and flavor. If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better and change the situation around you for the better.

When the hours are the darkest and trials are their greatest do you elevate to another level? How do you handle adversity?

ARE YOU A CARROT, AN EGG, OR A COFFEE BEAN?

(Somehow, wake up and smell the coffee takes on a whole new meaning)