

The POWER Of Suffering

Without suffering, I was naïve and prideful. I've had my days of engaging in gossip, spreading a rumor, taunting someone, causing heartbreak, then going through heartbreak myself. It can be a vicious part of the cycle of life.

I've grown. It's like that old saying, "When you know better, you do better" (better behavior, better ways to handle things, better ways to treat people). And, if I don't do better, consequences follow.

Many turning points have come from suffering. It sensitized me. It opened my eyes. It opened my heart. It opened my mind to other possibilities of suffering that could be around me. It made me aware of our differences as people; where we come from; what we learn as opposed to somebody else.

I think each experience gifted me an awakening. And, I've gotten a lesson more than once. Each time, it deepens the understanding. With that understanding, I get to another layer of healing or compassion. This is an ongoing journey... I don't think I ever stop getting layers of understanding and an opportunity to change where change could be beneficial. It isn't about being perfect at life. For me, it's more about revealing who I'm capable of being and how I can align my experience on Earth to be a more fruitful one.

I guess I can say that suffering and becoming more aware, more spiritual even, has opened me up to a level of sensitivity I wouldn't have gotten without it. It changed my attitude. It made me 'nicer' and it's also given me more boundaries. It's softened my heart while making me more direct in my communication with people. It pushed me deeper into my soul's journey and uncovered what could be considered 'ugly'. It's made me cry and it's made me inherently more happy. A real joy; not the joy that blows away like a frail, dry, brittle leaf that wisps away with a slight wind of disappointment or a setback... but joy with more staying power like a sturdy branch on an old tree that sways with the gusts of wind but stays with its foundation on the trunk.

My results because of suffering? More gratitude, more compassion, more tolerance for disappointments in my life, more room for people's mistakes, a deeper relationship with my Creator.

I'm sharing this because I'm having my first Ramadan experience. And, while I'm still figuring out how to best approach it, I was suffering from a fasting headache... I still

did not drink water/eat food/ take headache medicine/ or try a holistic method for pain relief (to honor the practice and principles of Ramadan). I endured until I could eat after sunset. I sat with my headache and remembered WHY I was on this fasting/ reflective/ liberating journey in the first place; to remember through The POWER of Suffering that others are suffering. To let the pain dig up compassion; to let it continue to it quiet my ego; and to stay aware of the reason for this season.

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