

When Life Throws You A Curveball

Life isn't neat and tidy. It's going to throw you curveballs. There are calm seasons and crazy seasons. Even in the calm moments, you must keep your head in the game. It's really about learning how to stay strong and steady over the long haul, regardless of what life brings.

It's okay to be scared. It means you're stretching out of your comfort zone to grow a little.

You need to learn how to select your thoughts the same way you select your clothes every day. This is a power you can cultivate. If you want to control things in your life, work on the mind. Your fears are not walls; they are hurdles. Run your race with perseverance.

Hebrews 12:1 ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race {agon} that is set before us,

You will suffer if you allow your mood to be at the mercy of unpredictable events and unreliable people. Your joy will forever be on a chaotic roller coaster ride. Resist seeking joy from the outside in. Seek it from the inside out; it is a fruit of the Spirit.

1. It is important to stop and take time to think. Don't act on impulse. When curveballs come, it's normal to feel anger, fear, anxiety, or worry. Our fight or flight response creates feelings we can't avoid. We need to give ourselves time to calm down.

Panicking doesn't help. Worrying makes it worse. Now is the time to meditate or pray and to mourn your loss if necessary. It's OK to feel sad when things don't turn out like we hoped. Part of navigating disappointment before it becomes disillusionment is to acknowledge our loss.

2. Planning is really important to take charge of your life again. You need to manage the things you can. Even when everything is out of your control, you can still choose how you respond.

If you feel helpless or victimized, turn your attention to the things that you can change or do. By doing what you can with the resources available to you, you'll gradually begin to feel like you're back in control of your life.

You can't control the curveballs life throws you, so you have to learn how to control yourself. When life throws a curve ball — those things that ruin your mood and make you mad, that seem unfair. It's not. Move on with grace:

Acknowledge that whatever happened is no fun. Say it out loud, with feeling: "I am not happy." Take a few deep breaths. Feel your blood pressure dropping. Ask yourself: Will this thing kill you or anyone you love? Will it bankrupt you? No? Then you're fine. Annoyed, but fine.

Think about the big picture. Will this glitch matter in the long run? Probably not. It might slow you down a bit, but it's probably not causing irreparable damage.

When life throws you curveballs, hit them out of the park!

1) You may be in charge, but you are not in control. The key is in accepting this without a sense of surrender, apathy, or defeatism. Keep your eye on the vision.

2) If you sense peace and comfort all around you, you are missing something big. We all prefer order over chaos. Security, safety, and stability are innate desires within all of us.

The large problems you face are obvious, but there may be a thing or two that seem on autopilot and somewhat comfortable. They will need your attention soon!

3) Lead through the chaos — attempting to manage it never works. You have to get to the other side. If you attempt to manage chaos, you get caught in the swirl and end up stuck in it. Then the chaos is leading you – sometimes in circles.

Leading through the chaos helps you break through any panic in the moment. Helps you make progress in the short term. In really rough waters, sailors know that charging directly through the waves isn't ignoring the problem; it's making the necessary progress back to shore!

You don't have time to analyze every detail when things get out of control; the problems are obvious. Press forward. Once you are through the biggest waves, you can then slow down a little to think through the next steps that are not as obvious.

4) Focus on what you can do. If you focus on the things you can't do or problems you can't solve right now, you will get frustrated and discouraged.

5) Peace within you is different than peace around you. It's easy to become confused with the difference between the peace within you and the peace all around you or the absence of it.

- Internal peace is a gift from God from the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- External peace is a season when the storms are calmed, and therefore pressures and problems feel surmountable.

Philippians 4:6–9 ⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. ⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. ⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

Internal peace allows you to hold steady no matter how difficult life may become. External peace is that usually brief period of time that allows you to catch your breath and experience the security, safety, and stability we desire.

The mistake people make is to pursue external peace from the world more than internal peace from God. But it doesn't work, not for long. The peace within your soul is what helps you endure the chaos in the world. And when those wonderful moments of peace in the world come, simply thank God and enjoy!

Philippians 4:6-9 Amplified Bible, Classic Edition ⁶ Do not fret *or* have any anxiety about anything, but in every circumstance *and* in everything, by prayer and petition (^[a]definite requests), with thanksgiving, continue to make your wants known to God.

⁷ And God's peace [shall be yours, that tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and being content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] which transcends all understanding shall garrison *and* mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of reverence *and* is honorable *and* seemly, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely *and* lovable, whatever is kind *and* winsome *and* gracious, if there is any virtue *and* excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think on *and* weigh *and* take account of these things [fix your minds on them].

⁹ Practice what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, *and* model your way of living on it, and the God of peace (of ^[a]untroubled, undisturbed well-being) will be with you.