

Struggling is not the identity. You must learn to live while you struggle, such that anyone who sees you can separate the struggle from your life.

Struggles are part of life, and no living thing is immune to them. Consider a baby chick hatching from an egg. He will slowly struggle to free himself, emerging wet and exhausted. Similarly, a butterfly will painstakingly work its way out of the chrysalis. If you attempt to help either chick or butterfly, they will die. Their struggle builds strength and resiliency and is vital to their survival.

A few hours later, the chick will be fluffy and pecking at the ground, and the butterfly will take its first flight.

Each one of us has something that we struggle with. Sometimes the hardship is seasonal, and sometimes it is ongoing, but we have to look at it with different eyes if we are going to extract the lessons. We can get through hard times and do hard things if we allow the struggle to form us into the women we are meant to be.

Often, we look for comfort in the wrong places and try to numb ourselves to the pain. We call it comfort food instead of inflammatory food. Why don't we start to name things for what they are? It should be comforting to know that you are worth more than the sugar and carbs; that your power belongs to you and not a bag of M&M's. This behavior doesn't keep us congruent with the truth of who we are - wise women.

We also find out how resourceful we are when we struggle. When we say we are stuck, our reticular activating systems look for evidence to support that statement. We become prisoners of our thoughts. No struggle is pleasant or fun, but we need to separate our identities from our struggles and be mindful of the words we use to describe our circumstances.

My dear friend Sandy tragically lost her daughter a few years ago. While many of us cannot even fathom the immense pain that she must have felt, she took that energy and started a foundation in honor of her daughter. While she may never find a meaning for such heartache, she redirected the hurt into something else and has helped so many other families cope with similar losses. Not to diminish her daily grief at all, but she is an incredible example of how we stand at the precipice of choice each day.

Our struggles can teach us a lesson in humility and humbleness of heart. Do you think Sandy sees women who have lost children through a different lens? Of course--and now she reaches out through the ashes to help and care for them. We are called to love one another. How have we forgotten the greatest commandment of all?

Tony Robbins said that success isn't about your resources, but about how resourceful you are. We all have expectations in our lives. When we expect to be overwhelmed, we are. When we expect to be happy, we are. We have to guard our hearts and our tongues and keep them on target with what we want instead of what we are faced with. Instead of falling to pieces, we can say, "This is difficult, but God is with me, I have a community to support me, and I can do hard things."

I am never going to dismiss anybody's struggle or grief, but our words are powerful and can change the trajectory of our lives. Just like that baby chick, you may be wet and exhausted, but give it a minute and you'll be all fluffed up again in no time. Doesn't the rain make us even more grateful for the sunshine?