

International Conversation Cafe

Lifestyle Topic: Adversity

Read through the following quotes and discuss the questions together.

You should never view your challenges as a disadvantage. Instead, it's important for you to understand that your experience facing and overcoming adversity is actually one of your biggest advantages.
~~ Michelle Obama, Former First Lady of the United States.

Restate the quote in your own words.

Give an example of how overcoming adversity could become an advantage.

Share an example or story that illustrates Obama's statement.

Adversity makes men, and prosperity makes monsters. ~Victor Hugo

What do you think this quotation means?

Give an example of how adversity caused someone to grow wiser.

Give an example of how prosperity destroyed the individual.

Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.
~Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States

What does this quotation mean?

Why do you think power could test a man's character more than adversity?

Give an example of someone in power who could not handle it.

Give another example of someone in power and uses it to help others, not themselves.

You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them.
~~Maya Angelou, writer and civil rights activist

Restate this quote in your own words.

Angelou believed that a person's attitude could help a person survive adversity. Do you think this is true? Why or why not?

How does a person get the strength to push through hard times without being reduced by them? Give an example.

Psychiatrist Dr. Norman Rosenthal Speaks About the Necessity of Adversity

Huff Post Live

Roadblocks have a way of stopping people from achieving their goals. However, according to author and psychiatrist Dr. Norman Rosenthal, adversity is actually a key ingredient for success.

Rosenthal discussed the upside of dealing with challenge in a HuffPost Live appearance on Monday with host Nancy Redd.

"I was looking at the stories in my own life from which I learned lessons -- from myself and the people I've come across -- and as I looked at these stories, it occurred to me that you learn the most when things go wrong," Rosenthal said. "And the bigger the adversity, it seems, the better the lesson."

Rosenthal, whose new book, "The Gift Of Adversity," delves into the advantages of obstacles, also noted that those who have dealt with adversity should actually be more employable.

"If you're hiring somebody, I don't think you want somebody who's had a perfect life because they're not going to know how to deal with things when things go wrong," he said. "It's not just the adversity itself, it's what you do with the adversity -- how you grow and become a bigger person and a more resilient person... and a more compassionate person as a result of the things that happen to you -- those are, in my view, marks of success."

What is your opinion of Rosenthal's suggestion about adversity being a gift?

Here are a few idioms about trouble taken from: www.thefreedictionary.com. Read them and try to create your own sentences using the idiom.

in trouble- in danger; in difficulty; due for punishment.

"If you don't be quiet, you're going to be in trouble. The company was in trouble for months, and then went bankrupt."

not worth the trouble- not important enough to require a comment or any effort.

"Don't bother with it. It isn't worth the trouble. There is no point in trying to get the spot out of the carpet. It isn't worth the trouble."

Trouble is brewing. and **There is trouble brewing.**-*Fig.* Trouble is developing.

"Trouble's brewing at the office. I have to get there early tomorrow. There is trouble brewing in the government. The prime minister may resign."

I've been keeping out of trouble. - *Fig.* a standard response to a greeting inquiry that asks what one has been doing.

"John: What have you been doing, Fred? Fred: Been keeping out of trouble. John: Yeah. Me too. Mary: How are things, Tom? Tom: Oh, I've been keeping out of trouble."

