



IT'S YOUR JOURNEY!

DON'T LET A SCORPION DULL YOUR SHINE!



“Never dull your shine for somebody else.”– Tyra Banks

A classic fable tells the story of a woman who was sitting by a river. She noticed a scorpion atop a stick floating by and realized the scorpion was in danger of drowning without someone to help it.

She reached into the river to save the scorpion and was promptly stung. The woman let go and the scorpion continued down the river. She followed the scorpion along the riverbank and as she made another attempt to help - she was stung again!

A second woman observing the attempted rescue asked the first “Why are you trying to help the scorpion when you are sure to be stung?”

The first woman replied “My nature is to try to help. Just because the scorpion’s nature is to sting, and I can’t change that, doesn’t mean I should stop being who I am”.

We all come across our own “scorpions” in our lives - people or life events that go against our nature. This is something we cannot change. We can choose to grow as a result of these experiences and to realize that these scorpions shouldn’t prevent us from being our own best selves.

Early in my career, I had a colleague who was not very positive. She would start each day by coming into the office, proclaiming out loud - “I am having the worst day.” It was 8:00 a.m. - how bad a day could she be having? As the day went on she made many negative remarks about almost every aspect of our work. While she was very skilled at the particular job she was doing, we found her attitude was damaging the morale in the office. Over time, in an attempt to make her “feel better” I found myself slowly starting to agree with some of her criticisms.

Luckily, I realized what was happening - this woman was a

scorpion! She had her own nature and I was not going to change it. In fact, I realized that it was not my responsibility to change her. Who am I to decide how other people should approach life? Instead, I chose to focus on my approach to life – one of gratitude and optimism. Why not?

The best way for me to do this was to continue being a positive person and do my best to keep my distance from her.

I’m not suggesting that we should not try to help others - of course we should. However, it’s important to recognize that there’s a distinction between “helping” someone and trying to “change” them. In the process, we need not change our own core values. I find it helpful to take a deep breath and back up. Our first responsibility is to ourselves. When we are true to ourselves, we can share our values with the intention of helping and possibly influencing others versus changing others.

Being positive does not mean we ignore the negative. As we face adversity, we can assess when, where and how we can overcome it. And, as we encounter the scorpions along our life journey, let’s never let them dull our shine!

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