

Lessons from Disappointment

It all seemed to hit us on the same day. My husband, Craig, was out of town on a business trip, and I was home with our three kids. I had picked up one son from his high school basketball practice and the other from his practice with the middle school team. I'll just say that neither practice had gone the way the boys had hoped.

They were down on themselves. They were questioning their places on their teams. Some teammates hadn't been the most supportive. And it was just a little too much that day.

Tough lessons

It was a quiet drive home from town. Neither boy wanted to talk. But I just felt as if I had to say something. So, I reminded them to consider things from the coaches' standpoints. To know that we are going to deal with difficult people throughout our entire lives. (That was received with eye rolls, as I expected.) To remember everyone has tough days — and one bad day doesn't mean a bad life.

All the while, inside, this momma's heart was hurting.

Both boys have been putting in great effort this year. They're

making progress and are continually improving. Unfortunately, their parents were never voted "most athletic" in school. Not even close. So, their accomplishments are the result of a lot of hard work — not necessarily natural-born talent.

As well, we want our kids to be resilient. To learn from coaches and mentors on how they can improve, and then to apply those lessons to do just that: improve. Sometimes, it feels as if life would be best if our children never experienced disappointment. And many times? What I wouldn't do to take that hurt on, myself, so that they could avoid it.

Dust yourself off

But that's not how life works. And our best lessons come from falling, learning and rising again. As much as I know it's true for our kids, I know it's also true for us as adults, too. I'll admit — I'm my own worst critic. I can beat myself up for a stupid thing I said 25 years ago.

I look at every photo session I've done and wonder how I could have made it even better. I read and reread

stories I've written to determine how I can make each even more informative or enjoyable.

And when I don't feel as if I've done my best, it's tough for me to let that concern go. Disappointment is one of the worst emotions I can imagine.

We are now entering the second month of 2020. If you're like many Americans, you've set resolutions to better yourself. And, statistically, one third of those resolutions don't make it to this point.

I gave up on resolutions long ago. But one thing I haven't given up on? Bettering myself and setting goals to achieve each year.

Be a good example

One of my top goals for this year? To be kind. Of course, to others. But even more importantly? To myself. And I have a feeling we all could benefit from that mentality.

When I don't reach a goal for myself, when I don't produce what I consider to be top-notch work? Well, I say things to myself that I would never, ever say to another person. I can be downright cruel.

If I wouldn't say it to a friend, I most definitely shouldn't say it to myself, either. It's time to start giving myself some grace, too.

There's no doubt; we will all experience disappointment throughout our lives — in our workplaces, in our homes, in the showing. Chances are, more than we would ever hope. But we can rise from those setbacks, learn from the mistakes and become better for it.

Yes, we will individually benefit from dealing well with disappointment. But even more importantly, perhaps, the youth in our lives are watching, and they're learning how to cope through our examples.

Let's be a good example. For them and for each other. **HW**

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