

# A WEEK IN *Learning*

## THE CARROT, THE EGG, AND THE COFFEE BEAN

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Let's face it - life isn't always easy, and it's not supposed to be. We all encounter some form of adversity, sometimes due to our own actions (or lack thereof). It could be the result of being careless, unprepared, or overwhelmed. Although, some of these situations can also be due to variables outside of our personal control, such as the weather, traffic, or the economy. No matter the form of adversity we face, we all have a choice in how we respond. So, do you handle adversity like a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?



***“Adversity is an opportunity to learn about yourself, to grow, and become the person you are meant to be.”***

- Gwen Ahlbrecht

Take the Carrot. It's hard on the inside and out. When you put the carrot in a pot of boiling water for a period of time, what happens? It softens and becomes weak, letting the boiling water transform it. When you are facing adversity, at work or in your personal life, are you hard until the going gets tough? Do you, then, become weak and let whatever may be in your way get the best of you?

An Egg has a fragile outer shell, and a liquid interior. When you put the egg in a pot of boiling water for a period of time, the outside is still fragile - but the inside turns hard. Again, the water has transformed it. When life hands you a setback, do you shut down and turn hard on the inside? Though you appear the same on the exterior, you are still fragile. You may have lost your spirit, your drive, and the desire to move forward.

The Coffee Bean reacts quite differently than the carrot or the egg. In boiling water, the coffee bean actually transforms the boiling water versus letting the water transform it. The coffee bean doesn't let any form of adversity get it down – nothing is too challenging or difficult for it to overcome. Like the coffee bean, can you face what is in front of you, head-on? Are you able to take any situation you are in and change the outcome based on your reaction?

Although we cannot avoid it, we can choose how to react to adversity. It is possible to shift your mindset and allow adversity to become a learning opportunity. The next time you are faced with adversity:

- Have the right mindset. Think of what you **CAN** do verses what you **CAN'T** do
- Don't make excuses or place blame. Own where you are at, and focus on where you want to be
- Cut the negative self-talk. Focus your thoughts and language on outcomes that are empowering, inspiring, and positive
- Ask for help. Reaching out to a friend, family member, or colleague is a great measure of strength
- Find the silver lining. Adversity is an opportunity to learn about yourself, to grow, and become the person you are meant to be

Rarely, if ever, can we change our circumstances. What we can change, though, is our response. The next time you are facing something difficult, I challenge you to transform your surroundings – be a coffee bean.

*Our troubles do not define us. However, the way we handle them does.*