

The Link Between a Rock and a Stream

Dawn Brown

There are so many lessons to be learnt from the majestic Grand Canyon. We are familiar with the expression “solid as a rock” and we have experienced trying to grasp water only to watch it slip between our fingers! And yet over a period of time, the Colorado River has slowly carved away pieces of the layers of rock and has left us with the magnificent Grand Canyon. It took millions of years for this to happen and that is more time than we have to devote to any project! And yet, there is a lesson here about persistence.

We can learn a great deal from children. I’ve always been in awe at the persistence of toddlers learning to walk, feed themselves, or learn new skills. They just don’t give up! And I do know that I have watched determined kids wear their parents down until in utter exhaustion, the parents gave in to the demands for a new toy, an outfit, having a friend over, staying up late, and the list goes on. So the idea of strength is very relative!

As adults we tend to underestimate our own talents, abilities and strength. The following words of Thomas Edison have helped me to persevere and overcome my desire to turn and run on numerous occasions – “Many of life’s failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.” I’m not speaking giving up after millions of years. I’m speaking of giving up at the first couple of obstacles. Not to worry, the strength to hang in there in spite of our fears or the words of others can be acquired.

I remember the very first article I sold to a major newspaper. The first time I submitted it the editor’s response was lukewarm. Yes it had merits but he pointed out all that was missing and made suggestions for change. The second time, he made even more suggestions for change and I knew what was happening: he wanted to let me down easily and was trying to get rid of me. Taking the hint, I put my writing aside. Weeks later a friend asked me how the article was coming along and I admitted that the editor wasn’t interested. She laughed and said that his comments meant that he had done half the work for me already. That was a shift in perception! I resubmitted the article with the recommended changes, the editor bought it, and I’ve been writing ever since.

Is there a dream, a project that you’ve put aside because it doesn’t seem feasible? Give yourself permission to take another look. Oh and remember to have fun in the process!

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