

Sal's Place

“Life is going to shovel dirt on us, all kinds of dirt.”

Life is going to shovel “dirt” on us, all kinds of “dirt”. When a chronic illness develops, the “dirt” may take on the form of insulting comments by well-meaning friends and family, loss of finances/dignity/credibility, and loneliness. This can be further compounded by the disbelief of others in the severity of the disability, feeling misunderstood, and experiencing sadness and anger over losses. Some may even experience persecution for seeking understanding and acceptance from society for disabilities. It is during these times that we must remember the donkey in the well.

Donkey in the Well

One day a farmer's donkey fell down into a well. The animal cried piteously for hours as the farmer tried to figure out what to do. Finally, he decided the animal was old, and the well needed to be covered up anyway; it just wasn't worth it to retrieve the donkey.

He invited all his neighbors to come over and help him. They all grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well. At first,

the donkey realized what was happening and cried horribly. Then, to everyone's amazement he quieted down.

A few shovel loads later, the farmer finally looked down the well. He was astonished at what he saw. With each shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was doing something amazing. He would shake it off and take a step up.

As the farmer's neighbors continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal, he would shake it off and take a step up. Pretty soon, everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and happily trotted off!

-Author Unknown

The lesson the donkey teaches is two fold.

The trick to dealing with life's “dirt” is to shake it off and take a step up. Each of our troubles is a steppingstone. No matter how deep the well, we can get out just by shaking it off, stepping up, not stopping, and never giving up!

The second lesson is that when you do something hurtful and try to cover your ass, it always comes back to bite you.

Living with multiple chemical sensitivity, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia and other chronic multi-system illnesses can be a challenge, both personally and in the community at large. Daily challenges may seem overwhelming; however, by taking one simple step at a time, anything can be overcome. I hope that you will focus on the next step and never forgot the story of the donkey! The donkey serves to inspire us to greatness!

See you at the top!

