

6 Things You Do Need When Going Through a Tough Season

Note: This is the second in a series. For the first part, [click here](#).

In times of crisis, your faith is critical and the trial is an invitation to go higher in your walk with God. Yet at the same time, healthy relationships are where you process out that upgraded level of faith. Those healthy interactions can bring a nurturing presence and add virtue to your faith.

Key relationships become deep bonds that carry you into new avenues with great power. What you gain in those hard times can propel you into the next season of life with great maturity. For example, going through this trying season of our life has made me love my wife Melissa more than ever before. I have never felt more solid in the respect, love and honor that we genuinely have for each other. Walking through this trial upgraded our relationship.

Yet there are also relationships that get downgraded and often lost through times of crisis. It is true when they say hard times can make or break a relationship. I don't have any person in mind. All I know is that this past year has shifted our relational world quickly. Some of this is simply part of the process, but there are components of it I wish could be healthier.

Studies have shown that when people go through trying times, some of their friendships can fall apart. The very nature of the trauma or sudden change often brings out the shallowness or dysfunctional foundation that is present.

The biggest challenge I have had to face relationally is when people make my difficult situation more about themselves than about the fact that we have been hit with a deluge of

problems. We have literally moved out of pastoring, gotten our van totaled and had our condo flooded within weeks of each other. My head and heart were spinning. I didn't know which way was left or right.

It's at these times when you need the patience and support of relationships the most. Many great people step up to the plate and become bound to you like never before. Yet it also reveals how shallow some relationships are, with people who make it more about you not being as available anymore. They just don't know how to recognize the season someone else is in.

When going through a tough season, here are six things you do need to keep you going:

1. A listening ear – Sometimes the absolute best thing to say is nothing and provide an engaged ear that is listening and taking in what the other person is going through. I'm not talking about a passive posture of saying nothing, as that can be excruciating to witness, but a posture that shows you are listening and connecting. Sometimes a cup of coffee and conversation, or just a breather of relational connection can do more than trying to give a word or some kind of advice.

2. Patient space – I have had to learn to do this and I have been in times where I needed this. Quite often, people need understanding. They're going through something new they have no references for, and they need time to process it.

3. An engaged heart – Everyone's different, but finding ways to demonstrate your heart's engagement can be so powerful. Maybe you can do something that is needed. When my condo got flooded, I had hundreds of items that were destroyed and drenched. I was overwhelmed with what was damaged and lost. My mom arrived and pulled up her sleeves to help me wade through it all and clean it. I was brought to tears because I realized that was what I needed. But if she asked me what I needed, I wouldn't have known what to say.

Sending a bowl of pasta or saying “Let me know what I can do” may be convenient for *you*, but that may not be helpful to them. Sometimes the best thing to do is to ask God how you can love from the heart.

4. A loyal presence – Sometimes people going through hard times can feel alone and abandoned. Sometimes it’s helpful to just check up and see how people are doing. Show you haven’t forgotten.

This is really important when people lose loved ones. When the funeral is going on, there are crowds, but when it’s all over, others often forget and move on. Meanwhile, the person is still grieving. It’s good to check up and be mindful.

5. A prayerful heart – I make it my aim to never tell anyone, “I am praying for you,” unless I actually do it. To make sure I do not forget, when I send an email or text saying, “I will pray,” I stop and do it right there. I never want the action of prayer to be something that has little power or depth of meaning.

6. Simple acts – Sometimes the simplest act can be so helpful. When Melissa and I went through the miscarriage of a pregnancy years ago, one friend took me out just to hang. There was no advice, no lecture—just time to talk and connect.

Recently, I’ve had people randomly send me grocery cards or restaurant cards. I had cash or checks sent that were just what we needed. You will forever be remembered because those gifts were often the very thing we needed to get through a complicated week of juggling meals and schedules in a small efficiency hotel kitchenette.

Sometimes the simplest gesture can go a long way to add to the faith of those who are being deeply pressed by circumstances. As we learn to engage relationship in trying times with greater wisdom, we become a more powerful body of people to impact our world.

Mark DeJesus has been equipping people in a full-time capacity since 1995, serving in various roles, including teaching people of all ages, communicating through music, authoring books, leading and mentoring. Mark is a teacher, author and mentor who uses many communication mediums, including the written word, a weekly radio podcast show and videos. His deepest call involves equipping people to live as overcomers. Through understanding inside out transformation, Mark's message involves getting to the root of issues that contribute to the breakdown of our relationships, our health and our day-to-day peace. Out of their own personal renewal, Mark and Melissa founded Turning Hearts Ministries, a ministry dedicated to inside out transformation. Mark also founded Transformed You, a communication platform for Mark's teachings, writing and broadcasts that are designed to encourage people in their journey of transformation.

For the original article, visit .