

Are Your Relationships Like Wading Through Jellyfish?

I love the ocean. Being in water makes me feel young and fearless. So it is not surprising that I ignored the two flags flying on the beach: yellow, which meant *caution*; and purple, which meant *dangerous marine life*. 

You see, I recently discovered paddle boarding. It is a tamer version of surfing, and the water was calling to me. To get out where you can paddle, you have to walk your board beyond where the waves are breaking. I knew this meant wading through hordes of jellyfish and inevitably getting stung, but I decided it was worth it.

The first jelly got me on the lower part of my knee; then it was an ankle. As I walked further out, the burning, slightly electric stings began to happen so rapidly I could no longer isolate their locations.

Then it was over. I was beyond the sandbar and up on the board. As I paddled out, the stinging sensation began to abate. I went out beyond the second reef until I reached the water that was deep blue.

Exhausted, I decided to lay down on my paddle board and rest when some movement in the water caught my eye—two dolphins! I followed them as they arced through water parallel to the shore. It was a moment of wonder, one I wouldn't miss for all the temporary stings in the world.

But what if I hadn't wanted to get stung? I would have never known this moment that took my breath away.

How about you? What are you afraid to wade into because it means risking some passing discomfort?

Relationships can feel like wading through a school of jellyfish. Getting out beyond the turbulent places can be exhausting, but in moments of rest, you just might find yourself surprised by wonder. Life comes with its share of dangers and obstacles, but if you dare to go beyond these, you will discover places of ease and awe. For some of you this means leaving behind the shore of indecision and leaping into all that is waiting on the other side. Philippians 3:13-14 reminds us:

But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (ESV)

Keep moving through the waves!

For more on doing relationships well, check out John and Lisa's upcoming release The Story of Marriage.

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