

When 'the stick turns blue' - an alternate perspective on chaos ...

I don't know your story, but as humans, we don't get to mid-life without having had this kind of experience. I was 35 when 'it' happened to me.

Our family - two boys, then 6 and 9, both in school full time - was complete. I was ready to 'get on' with my life and was in the process of changing careers. So had made the decision to have tubal ligation surgery. I had signed the carefully worded consent saying I recognized this BOTH as a permanent form of birth control (so I shouldn't expect to be able to have it reversed), AND that this surgery didn't come with a 100% 'guarantee' (a 1:1,000,000 chance of failure said my physician cheerfully).

Yet two months later here I was one morning with shaking hands, and unbelieving eyes watching 'the stick' from the kit I had picked up anonymously at a drug store I'd never been to before (and have never returned to since!) turn BLUE!! Even as I write this, I can still feel the panic that gripped in my belly that moment.

A whole wash of feelings - numb shock, this can't be happening to me, I don't want this, I don't know how I will cope with this, flooded through my being that day, and on many occasions after. In fact, while I deeply loved this baby as she grew inside me, it was not until I was doing some reflection on Rachael's second birthday that I recognized I no longer had any feelings of 'if you were not here, I would be doing'. True grieving - the process of re-weaving the web of our lives after a hole of loss has been torn in it - takes a long time.

For several months, I lived in turmoil, fighting inside myself, until one day in a gift of grace, I heard again the story of another. Paul had struggled with an issue in his life, had asked for the struggle to be removed, and had been reminded by God that it was exactly in those moments when we recognize our own limits, our own finiteness, that we can be most open to the infinite possibilities and strength available to us. Here was the reminder - the paradigm shift - I needed. NOT that everything was 'fine', but that I could, and from that day DID know that I would not crumble, that I would be given the resources I needed, that there was light at the end of the tunnel ...

More than a decade later, that light is now very bright. And in that light, it is clear that in many ways, the birth of Rachael was the birth of Maralyn. A gift that was absolutely not one I would have chosen, but the one that gave me the opportunity to open myself to a whole new way of being.

The choice of perspective is clear - we can believe that the circumstances in which we find

ourselves are 'wrong', shouldn't be, OR we can believe even in those times which appear chaotic, the universe is undoubtedly 'unfolding as it should', and is giving us a unique opportunity for discovery and growth and learning. A chance to live authentically in a much bigger space!