

Columbo'd to Death...

Columbo was one of my favourite shows growing up and the best part was when the shlumpy, dishevelled detective (Peter Falk) would be just about to leave a crime scene and he would turn back with his infamous line "...just, just one more thing...". Great line in a show, not so great in real life.

Tell me if this has ever happened to you...life is going along swimmingly when you are met with a bump. No problem, I can handle this. And just as you are figuring out a strategy to deal with said bump...ouch, another one. *OK, this is difficult and not quite expected but I got it.* And then kind of like the slap game in *How I Met Your Mother* (I really need to put down the remote) Bam! You're hit with another. *Seriously??!! wtf?!* I call this being "Columbo'd to Death". There always seems to be just one more thing.

I kind of pride myself on being able to take the unexpected punches. I can't fall apart when met with adversity...this is what I coach others on. Well, I must confess this past year had me reeling with *just one more things*. I was caught in the weeds and not sure quite how to get out. I had the inspiration for this Coach's Corner months ago but I thought I couldn't write this article until I had successfully extricated myself from that tangled web of "things". All shiny and clean. Hmm. So, that hasn't happened...because life has. The moment we think that another thing can't possibly go wrong, it's like the universe/God/the Divine/super mean angels...all get together and decide what would be the most hilarious left hook they can muster.

One thing I noticed is that we seem to love to give people our Hell Story when we're stuck in the weeds. Somebody simply asks how you are and out comes this diatribe of negativity...every single bad thing that has happened to you recently is spilled out like vomit. My projectile sounded something like this (you have to read it really fast)...*"chronic back pain/cancer/store closing/dog dies/decide to sell house when opportunity to rent dream home on beach is presented/sell everything we own because dream home is furnished/dream home is snatched away and left homeless without furniture/find rental (yay)...rental not ready for move in (boo)/moving sucks/crashing at friends/move in (moving still sucks...especially without a couch) and attacked by killer fruit flies (this is when we all start making shit up)/finally settled and then Bam...literally hit by a car in a parking lot... chronic back pain returns"*. Of course this is just the highlights and if given the opportunity I can delve even deeper, lower. You know the drill right? And what makes sharing our Hell Story even better is the listener then feels compelled to give Their Hell Story. Oh the fun...the joy! Especially when wine is involved.

What we don't often share is the Back story. I'm talking about our Hell and Back story. This is where the juice is, this is where we grow and learn and can inspire those around us to do the same. My diatribe above has a Back story I promise...every single yin had a yang. Even if it was "yes my back pain has returned but I am alive to feel it" (see what I did there? my Back story really is a Back story). I know so many people stuck in their Hell story that I see great courage in and I see how they have fought to come back but they don't see it and are stuck in this story.

If you have been warmly basking in the embers of Hell for awhile it can get pretty cozy. Below are a few ideas to help get you out of the heat but I will suggest that you incorporate them very slowly into your life. Each small step will lead to the next and as *one more thing* continues to happen in your life you will learn to come back faster, stronger, empowered.

Is it Real?

First question to ask yourself when faced with another bump is "is this really horrible or is it my belief about this that is horrible?" Let me explain...if you get fired is it really that disastrous or is it the story you tell yourself that's the real culprit? That you are stupid, incompetent, not good enough, unable to hold down a job, or your boss is an asshole and you were treated unjustly (keep going...this is the stuff that makes a spectacular Hell story). Is that true? Or is the story more accurately that this is not the kind of work you are truly meant to do? That you are now given an opportunity to discover your purpose and work in an environment that celebrates your gifts and allows you to expand, share, and grow?

When the Punches are Real

And sometimes the punches are real and they freaking hurt. Just because we don't want to get stuck in a Hell story does not mean you can't share your pain over something. This is a crucial step to moving forward and pretending all is peaches and butterflies does not serve you and in fact there's a good chance at some point down the road those peaches and butterflies will turn into pits and dragons and then we got a whole other kind of Hell. The key here is to deal with each pain separately. It's when we pile them all up on top of each other and vomit out a diatribe that we get stuck. Talk to your husband, a friend, a coach, a therapist about the one area of your life that is causing you the most pain right now in your life. What is the *one more thing* you don't know how to deal with today? And once that settles, you move onto the next.

How is this Hell Story serving you?

When we get super duper honest with ourselves we can usually come up with an answer to this very tough question. Sometimes we are truly given a shitshow of crap to deal with and nope it isn't fair and yes it totally sucks. But when this story is a constant in our lives and we feel like every time we talk to someone we are telling them only the Hell version and none of the coming Back part...I can assure you there is a payoff of some sort. Is it compassion we crave? Maybe we feel we need to be heard? understood? If we give the coming Back story will they listen? Does constantly telling the Hell story give us permission to stay stuck? Moving forward might mean it wasn't really all that bad? Once you can figure out your payoff you can discern whether it is serving you or not. I am not suggesting that we shouldn't experience compassion or not have a desire to be heard but I think we can all agree that there is a time that it goes from healthy sharing to a pity party. And nobody likes pity at a party.

Fight Like a Girl!

I first saw this tag line on an ad for a Muay Thai gym and now see it is an actual movement. I love it! Ladies, we are strong, we are powerful, and we do not let a few punches take us down. I have been witness to this at The Urban Rack, in my coaching practice, and recently at my gym. This past year I decided to take up boxing with a trainer at Muscle Memory. At first it was just because I was bored of my usual workout but it grew into much more. During this time in my life of being Columbo'd to Death I would spend one hour with Mike and my adorable pink boxing gloves and emerge a stronger woman, body and mind. When I first started I couldn't throw a punch or have the confidence to shadow box. I kept thinking "I punch like a girl, shadow boxing



makes me look like a dork". And then I would get hurt...my back, my wrist, my ankle. All of this creating a story of why I should quit. So I started to work at it one step at a time rather than trying to be a rock star right out of the gates. And I learned that in life, as in boxing, there is always another punch coming and that takes away part of the fear (I said, part). I had to check my ego and be a student. I had to listen and breathe and I began to dig deeper into my power as a woman. And sometimes I imagine all of the brave, strong women I have in my corner, encouraging and supporting me as they fight to conquer their own battles. We make courageous choices every day, we teach our girlfriends, our sisters, our daughters what it means to be Real and what it means to be challenged and how we fight to come back. I now proudly Fight like a Girl!