

When life started to throw James curveballs

Theme 3 WPA presentation

Quick thoughts

- I want you to think about the problems you faced during your life. Questions to think about:
- Did any issues arise that you had no control over? How about the issues you could control?
- How about issues when you were a young child compared to a young adult? How were the problems different? Did you handle them differently?
- Turn and talk to a partner for 2 minutes, and be prepared to share out if you would like

Principles

- Everyone experiences adversity at different periods of their lives
- Some of our adversity we have no immediate control over
- Some of our adversity we can control
- There are many different ways to overcome adversity

Practices

- How we handle adversity is what matters
- You cannot worry too much about adversity you do not have control over
- Through self reflection, you are able to overcome adversity you have control over
- Do not feel as if there is only one answer to a problem(s). Find which solution best suits you

Background of the story

- James had what many would call an “ordinary” life—a stable home with two parents with jobs, took a family vacation every year, and got into a good college. However, after seemingly a charmed life, during his late teens/early twenties, life threw James, the former high school baseball captain, a few unexpected curves.
- Perhaps his parents had done a good job of keeping him sheltered to many of life’s cruelties. Either way, these new challenges effected James negatively. It took some time, but like all good players, James learned how to handle life’s curves. But just like in baseball, James also learned nobody will bat %1000 all the time.

The plot

- The story will follow James through a variety of adversarial times like his parents divorce, personal health issues, his attitude in the workplace, and excepting there are those more fortunate than him.

Video- Brendon Burchard- 5 ways to Overcome Adversity

<https://www.youtube.com/watchv=VM3PDPVFn28>

- 1) Have Confidence
- 2) Keep perspective
- 3) Schedule Action
- 4) Ask for Help
- 5) Honor struggle

All will be tied into the various adversarial situations of James' life

Example-James learns his family life might not be the way he thought it was

- To James, his parents fought once in a while, but no more than anyone else's. He actually prided himself having an intact family, while many others in his neighborhood did not. As he got older he noticed some particularly disturbing behavior from his father (infidelity, drug use, gambling). James started to notice his parents seemed to argue every day. Then, after a few years later, they were getting divorced. James did not know what to do or who to turn to. He felt as if his life was falling apart. Fortunately, James had finished college, so his childhood was past him. But all of a sudden, a once happy go lucky young man now had a major point of stress in his life. James tried self medicating through use of drinking and drugs. This effected his job performance and overall attitude. His employer was starting to consider James a weak link. That's when James sought out help from a counselor. Through his counselor James found out he was far from alone with his problems. Through a support group he was able to confide in people who have faced similar adversities.
- However, what he was also learned was there are some though parts of life he would have to accept. Holidays would no longer be the same. Birthdays, weddings, funerals and all the other parts of life in between would be effected by the divorce, but James tried to handle it. Even if he couldn't all the time, he could most of the time. Heck .667 is amazing in baseball! Most importantly, James saw his future as one that would try to avoid the pitfalls for his family he felt his father had created.
- Much of ties a into Biff and Happy Loman's experience with their father and how they handles it, and to several of Brendon Burchard's points including asking for help (finding counseling), keeping perspective (James is not the first person with divorced parents or someone who drank too much), and scheduling action (James help *and made a plan to improve his workplace attitude/performance*). In A Tree Grows in Brooklyn the Nolan child learn at a young age how to deal with a irresponsible father, and how not to be defined by your parents shortcomings

Death of a Salesman

- Willie Loman expects a certain behavior and level of success from himself and his family but that is not the reality, and this has an adverse effect on his family. As his boys Biff and Happy grow older and more cognizant of the reality of their family life, adversity manifests itself in various forms. Some of these experiences will tie into the story of James

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

- Is a story about the troubles a family goes through. Some financial, some health, and some cultural/class based. The Nolans (at least Katie, Francie and Neeley) are an excellent example for James to reference when looking to see people deal with adversity. The Nolan's living conditions present far more serious challenges (malnutrition, sanitary issues, alcoholism), yet the family has an enduring optimism that allows it to succeed. While it is not realistic for most people to constantly see that someone else has it worse, it would benefit someone like James to be cognizant of the impending struggles some people (like his grandparents) endured to get allow James a better life

Possible other video to accompany

- 5 Ways to Overcome Adversity
<https://www.youtube.com/watchv=VM3PDPVFn28>
- Ted Talk- Stephanie Buxhoeveden-Thriving in the face of adversity
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuLOT6GsAxw>

Sources

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