When Life gives you Lemons...

By Toni Morales

We have all heard the old adage “make lemonade!” but what exactly do we do with the lemons really? Things happen, life happens. There are events and people that seem to make an extra effort to drain us of every last bit of energy. We have responsibilities (both perceived and actual). We feel guilty about wanting something more or something different. Be it a relationship, job/career, lifestyle, a move etc. We create a million and one reasons based in fear, why we cannot make changes. We listen to others fears, often in addition to our own panic. We sit on that big pile of lemons and wonder “WHY ME?!”. Sometimes in life, it’s NOT fair; it just is what it is. What to do aside from making a cool refreshing drink (which incidentally I highly recommend)?

Given my share of lemons, below is a list of my top six thoughts and ideas on making the best out of life “lemons” that come our way.

1. **Accept where you are**- We spend a lot of time here wondering, thinking about why we are here. We all go through the blame, the anger, and the downright injustice of it all. If you keep standing around holding the lemons. Your arms will get tired. Accept that you are at the point you are and make a decision to do something about it!

2. **Understand that you have to FEEL to DEAL to HEAL**. – There are no shortcuts. We can try to push what we need to deal with aside, but … it comes back. It is supposed to. That is how we evolve to greater understanding, greater peace, and greater joy. We pay the price for greater good by sometimes dealing with not so pleasant feelings, but the rewards are significant. I promise.

3. **Lemons = Lessons**- The more sour the lemon, the greater the lesson. In my experience, lessons will continue to be taught until they are learned. While some of my life events and I am sure yours have been traumatic, if we look close enough, with openness for learning, there is great value to be found outside of the sour taste. My current life and propensity to BE happy as well as the seeds of my future are evolved from my life lemons. True story.

4. **It is up to you**- We are not powerless in our predicament. There is always something that can be done to change. I’m not talking about changing your phone number, changing your location or your name, that’s the easy work.
I am talking about seeking answers inside. I am daring you to listen to all the red flags, the uneasy feelings you get from certain thoughts, the change in your heartbeat from anxiety about change. It’s about putting on your soulful armor and going about the business of changing inside for your own betterment! You are as powerful as you allow yourself to be.

5. **Worry about Your Lemonade** - Remember that while we all have our lemons, others are holding their own. Be about the business of making your lemonade and let others do their work. There is a difference between supporting someone with love and understanding and doing the work for them (that’s co-dependency). You will never make your best batch of lemonade, until you concentrate on YOUR batch, not someone else’s batch. Sometimes worrying about others movement is the perfect holding pattern and excuse to not move forward ourselves. We all get stopped here sometimes. Give yourself permission to move forward.

6. **Take your time making lemonade** - Make sure your adding all the right ingredients to move forward. Making a better future for yourself, creating internal peace and happiness takes time. The winner of the lemonade contest is not the one that makes their batch first; it’s the one that put forth the thought, the effort, and the work. Working on your lemonade is not always easy. If it was, I assure you we would all be buying the recipe.

When life gives us lemons, it can be a daunting task. You do have it within yourself to change, evolve, learn and be a stronger, happier YOU! My life lemons have not always been pleasant; I have had a few where the bitterness of the bite lingered within my heart and soul for far too long. The longer we allow things, events and people to control our internal workings, the longer we alone suffer. There are things that are out of our control. It is the way of the universe. We must be resilient, relentless and resolved to make lemonade out of whatever lemons come our way. Believe that you can be in a place of peace inside. Believe that you can live the life you want to live regardless of your lemons.

May you always find peace and light as YOU RISE ABOVE...