



Life Lessons from a Sprained Ankle

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Interestingly, I have been trying to write this article for nearly 10 months. You may be wondering why it has taken me so long. I actually wondered this, too. I felt like there was a missing piece. Then, the answer became apparent today, as I learned yet another lesson. Although I have continued learning from my ankle sprain that occurred last fall, I kept thinking that eventually my learning would stop, and then I could write my article. But my learning did not end, and that was the message. And with that I feel now is the time to share some of the lessons I learned from my sprained ankle, knowing that it will not end here.

Of course I revisited the basics, such as “watch where you walk” and “don’t lose your focus”. But I also learned much about myself at a deeper level that tied into the bigger lesson of life.

Damage can be hidden: When I first saw my swollen foot and ankle, I was thrilled that it was not broken. Soon I realized that the injury was internal; it was hidden. Much of the pain or hurt we feel in life may be inside. What I saw on the outside was the mere tip of the iceberg. Most of the damage was not visible. So just because you can’t see something does not mean that it does not exist, nor does it mean you cannot feel it.

Deal with the anger and forgive yourself: Initially I was angry with myself for falling. I am a speaker – a trainer! I talk on my feet! It was careless and stupid, I kept telling myself. This went on for a few months. Then I realized that type of negative, self-deprecating thinking was part of what was holding me back! I could not change the event, but I had the power to choose how I would live and recover.

Give it time and learn patience: With anything, including injuries, healing takes time. There are no hard and fast answers. No one could tell me how long it would take to heal. Even when I pushed for a time frame, it turned out to be wrong. I had to learn to take one day at a time.

Embrace the ups and downs: Focus on how you are feeling. Notice when you feel good and not-so-good. The body gives us clues – both good and bad. It is our job to see the signs and act accordingly. That includes giving yourself time to rest.

Involve others early on: Utilize your support circle. Share and talk with people. Get input. Find out about different treatment options and get emotional and physical support. I found that there were more options than I was initially aware. Sure, there is physical therapy, ice, splints, pain medications, and surgery. But how about trying something more natural and non-invasive such as essential oils and chiropractors that specialize in extremities?

Keep asking questions: You are your own best advocate. You are smarter than you realize and are really quite intuitive! Tap into your deeper self. Get a second, third or even fourth opinion. It is your body, and you have to live in it. Do not make hasty decisions.



Return to the things you love: My beloved bicycling played an important part in my recovery – both mentally and physically. Think about what you enjoy and find a way to safely do it. Always remember you have options and choices.

This all brings me to today and my last point.

Don't look to certain things as a panacea. It may seem easy, or even logical to think my other problems were caused by my ankle injury. I blamed all of my ailments on my ankle. How silly! Sometimes things are related and sometimes they are not. That is what happened to me today. That was my missing piece. To further explain, I recently developed some back pain and was quick to blame it on my ankle injury. I forgot to keep exploring and paying attention to the signs; I forgot that my life lessons would continue. When I reviewed the above lessons, I eventually found that by replacing my old office chair, adjusting my desk height, combined with yoga and essential oils, my back pain began to resolve. It was not my ankle after all, and in fact, my ankle had healed. I needed to move on.



To simply sum-up, we need to keep learning, growing, and asking. That is life. If we don't, we will become stuck, tired, and angry.

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