

Making the Best of It

A middle-aged man decided to take up jogging. He found a sports shop carrying a wide variety of running shoes. While trying on a pair, he noticed a little pocket on the side of the shoe.



“What’s this thing for?” he asked the sales clerk.

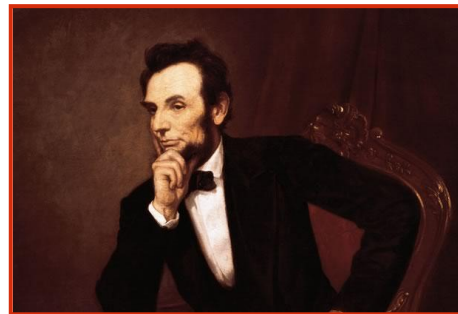
“Oh, that’s to carry spare change so you can call a friend to come pick you up when you’ve jogged too far,” the clerk replied.

Jogging – or any kind of exercise regimen – can produce sore and aching muscles, particularly in the beginning. Oddly enough, those aching muscles are probably good for the one who is exercising; they motivate him or her to take better care of the body.

Life is filled with pains from harsh conditions or adversities of one sort or another, be they physical, emotional or spiritual.

Abraham Lincoln knew the value that difficulties can bring to life. One of his cabinet appointees, Edwin Stanton, Secretary of War, frequently found flaws with the president and criticized him – sometimes in public. But Lincoln seemed to show excessive patience with him. Once, the president was asked why he kept such a man in a high-level position.

Lincoln characteristically responded with a story. He told about a time he was visiting with an old farmer. He noticed a big horsefly biting the flank of the farmer’s horse. Lincoln said he reached over to brush the fly away. As he did so, the farmer stopped him and cautioned, “Don’t do that, friend. That horsefly is the only thing keeping this old horse moving.”



Even life’s many irritations and problems have their place. That horsefly kept the horse moving. Edwin Stanton, no Yes Man, kept the president sharper, honest, and self-reflective.

Sometimes, we make the best of our problems. But how wonderful it is when those problems can make the best of us.

– Beecher Hunter