



HOPE

by

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When now does not work try then. I have spent my whole professional life trying to get people to live in the here and now. After all, that's the place where change is possible. You cannot change the past nor are we able to change the future. Of course, what we can change is our perception of the past in the future.

Whether you're a Syrian refugee walking endlessly for kilometer after kilometer on an empty stomach with the crowds of people suffering the same plight, or a teenage girl crying in her room suffering the remarks of cool, misguided friends, hope is your guiding star.

Hope doesn't feed an empty belly, but it can feed a starving soul or grant some solace to a heart that is breaking. As parents we provide perspective for our children telling them; "This too shall pass." This old adage is in part designed to give perspective to painful moments when hard truths cast gloomy shadows on our world now.

Wikipedia reminds us that peoples throughout the world have grasped this idea to navigate troubled times.

"This too shall pass." in Persian: این نیز بگذرد, pronunciation: *īn nīz bogzarad*. In Arabic: لا شيء يدوم ("*Nothing endures*"), Hebrew: גם זה יעבור ("*Gam Zeh Yaavor*"), Turkish: *Bu da geçer yâ hû*, Latin: *hoc quoque finiet*) indicating that all material conditions, positive or negative, are temporary. The phrase seems to have originated in the writings of the medieval Persian Sufi poets, and is often attached to a fable of a great king who is humbled by the simple words.

This idea is often used as a kind of verbal tranquilizer whispered in the ear of a frightened child or desperate adult. This too shall pass, inspires the listener to grasp an alternative perception of a troubled here and now.

It is in fact on some level a lie. The Syrian refugee faces cold weather and often times an even colder look by authorities, bent on protecting their lands from others seeking shelter, food and perhaps even more importantly, hope.

We as people indulge ourselves and others in a benign perspective designed to ameliorate painful times until we find, what Winston Churchill in his *Finest Hour* speech in 1940 called, *Bright and Sunlit Uplands*. "If we can stand up to him, (Hitler) all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands. But if we fail, then the whole world..."

This is inspirational psychic trickery. It says, look forward and for God sakes, don't look down. Glean reality through the microscope or

telescope that offers a difference, and perhaps deeper and more accurate viewpoint on the circumstance in which we find ourselves.

So what are we left with is a helpful and hopeful lie, a deliberate distortion or more harshly, twisted truth designed to trick the naïve or blind those who dare not see the truth of the moment.

Memories are the fabric of hope. We create the blanket of truth to warm and shield us through troubled times. Sometimes it is done with (gallows) humor, or a glance at a fellow sufferer when it looks like things couldn't get any worse.

Sometimes it's simply accepting the unacceptable. It's that final moment when Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969) glanced at each other, swing the doors open with blazing guns facing a predictable and final reality. It's Thelma and Louise (1991) as they race their Cadillac towards an unforgiving cliff. It is a final acceptance of a foregone conclusion.

Where does "hope" fit into our psychological basket of tricks and tools of daily survival? It is not a denial of the importance of living in the here and now. Hope offers perspective, a context drawing from past experience projected into the future offering us a path to walk before the break of dawn and better times.

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