

Everything Is Temporary

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Ernest Shackleton is best known for his expeditions to Antarctica. On his third expedition, he faced a very serious situation when his ship sank. He and his group of twenty-seven men were literally stranded on ice, for they were drifting aimlessly in the wild southern seas. Apparently, they had no hope of survival. They remained on the floating ice for six months and spent the next four months on Elephant Island before they were rescued. In the end they returned safely to their homes.

Now the question is: how did this miraculous escape come about? Alfred Lansing in his book, *Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage*, explained it in these words: Underlying the optimism of the party was the confidence that their situation was only temporary.

This miraculous formula is applicable not only to Shackleton's crew, but to every single man and woman. Everyone has the experience of facing serious situations in life. But if you believe that every situation is only temporary, and that it will last for only a limited number of days, then you are able to repeat the story of Shackleton's party.

Every dark night is a temporary phase in this world, and the same is true of human difficulties. Every human difficulty is temporary in nature. Every difficulty is bound to disappear after some time. It is a law of nature that no difficulty goes on and on forever. So, you have to feed this simple formula into your thinking: 'It is all but temporary'.

Ghalib, the Urdu poet, says in his verse: The seven heavens are active every day and night, something new will emerge, then why this anxiety? History only verifies this formula. Difficulties come and go, just like day and night. This is the universal law that applies equally to

every human being.

Optimism means knowing that one will eventually be rescued: that the waiting period will only be temporary in nature. The only thing that can create a serious problem for you is to lose your patience or to lose your hope or to forget that the situation is temporary and not permanent.

When you save yourself from being upset, you are in a better position to keep your energy intact, to keep yourself from being a victim of frustration, for frustration is certainly a killer-frame-of-mind to be in.

At every point in life there could be serious difficulties, on the home front, the social front, the national front and the international front.

The simple formula for facing these difficulties successfully is to think that like the human being himself, one's problem is also temporary, that is, lasting for only a limited period of time, not permanent. Death is the ultimate fate of man, and the same goes for his difficulties. Difficulties are also doomed to pass away, sooner or later.

In fact, difficulty is a state of mind. It is the mind where difficulties are created, and where they can

be killed, too. When one faces a difficulty, one generally forgets a very important fact: that man himself possesses a difficulty-solving machine, that is, his mind. The mind is greater than everything, including difficulty, however severe it may be. So, in such situations, try to focus on your mind rather than on the difficulty. And very soon you will find that the difficulty has disappeared, first psychologically and then physically.

Moreover, difficulty has a plus point. Difficulty unfolds your hidden qualities: it is a boon rather than an evil. Difficulty makes an ordinary Shackleton into a hero Shackleton.

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