

A Musing

Podcast Transcript

005 ▶ Friction

Friction can be uncomfortable. But we've had a relationship with friction since before we had use of reason. So... perhaps there's a bright side to the discomfort of friction? This episode explores that idea.

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00:00:00.660 - 00:00:03.600

Welcome to A Musing, I'm Diego.

00:00:11.439 - 00:00:13.799

Today's episode, Friction.

00:00:29.833 - 00:00:40.353

Today, we're going to take it back, all the way back to when you were a developing fetus inside your mother's womb.

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Bear with me.

00:00:45.773 - 00:00:55.713

During gestation, as your limbs were forming, these squishy pads along the palms of your hands and feet began to form.

00:00:55.713 - 00:00:57.433

They're called volar pads.

00:00:58.813 - 00:01:03.593

These little pads used to be much chunkier when you were inside your mother's womb.

00:01:03.593 - 00:01:15.553

At a point, they stopped growing, and as the rest of your hands grew, creases began to form, which you can actually see at the points of articulation along your hand.

00:01:15.553 - 00:01:25.233

Now, during this time, you also developed your dermis, that's the inside skin layer, and your epidermis, the outside skin layer.

00:01:27.833 - 00:01:40.193

As you moved around as a fetus, your hands came into contact with the inside of your mother's womb, with your own body parts, with your umbilical cord, basically everything that was inside there.

00:01:40.193 - 00:01:46.653

This caused friction between your forming hands and those surfaces.

00:01:46.653 - 00:01:49.513

It had started to have an effect on your palms.

00:01:52.453 - 00:01:58.973

Something called friction ridges began to form on your hands at around 10 weeks of gestation.

00:02:00.393 - 00:02:15.533

Now, because of the randomness of your movements inside of your mother's womb, and the randomness of that friction, the flow and the patterns of those ridges developed in completely unique fashion.

00:02:19.013 - 00:02:25.273

Those friction ridges are what you commonly refer to as your fingerprints.

00:02:25.273 - 00:02:37.333

And thanks to the combination of your particular genes, and the friction you had going on inside your mom's womb, those prints are absolutely unique to you.

00:02:44.792 - 00:02:52.832

This means that friction brought about one of the most unique identifying traits in us.

00:02:54.312 - 00:02:56.332

And that's very telling.

00:02:58.392 - 00:03:05.132

Let's take it away from the literal sense and think about friction in life for a minute.

00:03:05.132 - 00:03:10.552

Friction is the resistance of one thing in relation to another.

00:03:11.712 - 00:03:18.472

It's what doesn't allow things to go smoothly, but it's not always negative.

00:03:19.772 - 00:03:26.352

You need the friction of rubbing one side of a shirt against another to remove a stain, for example.

00:03:26.352 - 00:03:31.412

You need friction between your tires and the road to avoid accidents.

00:03:31.412 - 00:03:39.172

And in our case, as human beings, we need friction to help us develop some of the most unique characteristics in ourselves.

00:03:43.272 - 00:03:48.092

The friction of relating to other human beings is what helps us shape our personality.

00:03:49.732 - 00:03:57.052

The friction of conflict is what teaches us what not to do or say to avoid trouble with others.

00:03:57.052 - 00:04:00.732

The friction of pain is what teaches us what things to avoid.

00:04:02.692 - 00:04:13.152

Were it not for friction, we'd never develop most of what makes us, and friction isn't pleasant, in most cases.

00:04:14.172 - 00:04:18.192

Certain types of friction throughout life are more painful than others.

00:04:18.192 - 00:04:20.772

Some are damn near impossible to get past.

00:04:20.772 - 00:04:24.672

Some cause destruction, but not all do.

00:04:24.672 - 00:04:34.452

Some, no matter how painful at the moment, have made us stronger as human beings, more capable of self-sufficiency and more capable of resilience.

00:04:37.732 - 00:04:43.192

Recently, one of my kids came to me with a scenario that they wanted me to save them from.

00:04:43.192 - 00:04:50.832

Every paternal instinct inside me wanted to swoop in and be super dad to free them from the friction.

00:04:52.212 - 00:04:59.892

But I was able to pause and consider what I'd be depriving them of if I played the superhero.

00:05:02.572 - 00:05:08.852

The opportunity to face a challenge, to stand firm on their own two feet and learn courage and self-control.

00:05:08.852 - 00:05:12.852

The friction they were facing was one that would not destroy.

00:05:12.852 - 00:05:16.972

On the contrary, it could make them stronger and more resilient.

00:05:19.152 - 00:05:25.932

So, I put away my cape, and instead I gave them some tips on how to face that friction with courage.

00:05:25.932 - 00:05:28.012

And sure enough, they overcame.

00:05:28.012 - 00:05:29.152

They surpassed the friction.

00:05:36.033 - 00:05:38.333

Now, what about you?

00:05:40.873 - 00:05:43.053

Do you avoid friction?

00:05:46.693 - 00:05:51.093

How do you feel about the friction you've already faced throughout your life?

00:05:51.093 - 00:05:55.113

Do you see it as a defeat or as destructive?

00:05:55.113 - 00:06:04.933

Is there perhaps an opportunity for you to look back and see what was added to the unique soul that is you, thanks to that friction?

00:06:06.513 - 00:06:12.613

Looking into myself, for example, I've been able to reframe several of those instances throughout my own life.

00:06:12.613 - 00:06:19.953

Things like abuse that I suffered, abandonment, betrayal, failure, heartbreak, loss.

00:06:19.953 - 00:06:31.453

And granted, some of those took longer than others to reframe, but I'm legitimately glad that I took the time to revisit each and to reframe their role in my life.

00:06:32.193 - 00:06:42.593

There's a power in writing your own story in your own words, instead of feeling like life is writing you into a corner.

00:06:44.453 - 00:06:56.453

I know that not every challenge or trauma lends itself to be reframed as positive, but with the exception of extreme cases, try this when you can.

00:07:02.648 - 00:07:08.648

See friction as the thing in your life that shapes you into who you are.

00:07:11.828 - 00:07:21.868

Don't fear friction or resistance or challenges or trials or tests or conflicts or, you know, straight up bad seasons in life.

00:07:21.868 - 00:07:26.628

Don't let getting through to the other side of that friction ever be in question.

00:07:27.308 - 00:07:33.168

Perhaps the how or the when, sure, but not the if.

00:07:36.228 - 00:07:43.168

Visualize yourself on the other side of the challenge as an improved version of who you are right now.

00:07:43.168 - 00:07:47.728

Stronger, more resilient, a leveled up version of you.

00:07:52.248 - 00:08:02.768

And when you get to the other side, admire yourself, both in the sense of feeling proud of yourself, and in the sense of looking at yourself like a piece of art.

00:08:02.768 - 00:08:06.368

I mean, you've defined your friction ridges a bit more.

00:08:06.368 - 00:08:09.928

You've developed your uniqueness one step further.

00:08:09.928 - 00:08:15.188

You made it, and there's no one else like you.

00:08:15.188 - 00:08:16.928

Thanks in part to that friction.

00:08:22.687 - 00:08:24.347

Let me know how that goes.

00:08:25.427 - 00:08:30.487

You can write me at [contactamusing at gmail.com](mailto:contactamusing@gmail.com).

00:08:32.487 - 00:08:38.767

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