

The Power of Possibility

Possibility is what you do not know and sometimes cannot even imagine. My entire life is a testament to the power of possibility. My humble beginning in South Carolina destined me for a life quite different than the one I live today; and yet, it is as if I have been heading here all my life.

When I was still a child, I thought I was crazy to envision a future different from the present lived by all the adults I saw around me. But where did I want to go and how could I get there? I found the doorway to that alternate future in books. Reading fiction allowed me to immerse myself in dreams and dreams became the format for testing possibility. What if this happened, or what if that happened? What if I do this? I didn't dwell on the past; instead, I turned away from the past and moved ahead into the mist. Though I could not see the sun, I knew that it shined beyond my view and I only had to keep moving in order to reach its rays.

When I graduated from high school, I wrote in my yearbook, I'm going to college and then I will reach for the stars. That may seem like a naive statement from a teenager, but it speaks to the heart of possibility: Willingness to embrace the unknown. The stars I spoke of were invisible to me. I didn't know whether they were dangerous or desirable . . . but I was willing to reach for them.

I then set about cultivating the skills I had learned and developing the creativity that bubbled inside me. Since childhood, two traits -- curiosity and a strong sense of responsibility for my fellow man - have driven my life. My mother gave me a solid piece of advice which I have tried to follow: since you love to talk, make sure you have something worthwhile to say so people will want to listen to you. Thus, I have embraced life, tried to absorb its essence and sought to incorporate its being into my life.

When I look back at my life, I see nothing but mountains all the way to the horizon. Each one of those mountains was a possibility that prepared me for the future I could not see. I have learned that whenever I balk at opening a door, life is offering me a possibility, a new lesson. I avoid the doors, because new lessons are always hard. Yet, once I step into the classroom, I feel exhilarated, alive, like a plant being fed the ultimate nutrients. I sometimes wonder why I need to keep growing; then, I encounter a new situation for which my latest training has prepared me.

When I was 17, I could not have imagined the possibilities that my life now includes: a master's degree; self-employment; financial security; having a faithful, adoring white, husband and white friends; living in New York; having other people write news articles and books about my life; social and professional prominence; being a role model and teacher; having technological skills; being physically active and fit. . . Yet, all these things are the ordinary coins of my realm. Once again I face the new horizon and wonder what waits in the mist. When survival is no longer a struggle, what becomes the new *raison d'etre*?

My new web site makes me a player in the new global technology. How will who I am and what I bring to the game play out on this stage of new possibilities?