

♥ Snippets of Encouragement #35

Hello darlings

It is day 35 of Snippets of Encouragement, and today we are going to speak about growth, more specifically your growth.

In 2011, I flew back to South Africa specifically to attend a 10-day Vipassana Meditation retreat. I had no intention of visiting friends or family, I was going to sit in silence for 10 days somewhere in the Western Cape and find God, or at least myself.

As you can imagine sitting in silence is no easy feat because pain and suffering come flooding in through the doorway of your monkey mind. However, I don't want to talk about meditation, this is about growth.

During those 10 days, I found myself slowing down, entering a stillness that went beyond silence and became incredibly mindful of everything.

I walked past a succulent bush that was more like a tree and it appeared as the most beautiful succulent I had ever seen. I stood in wonder and admired it for the longest time and then I decided I wanted a piece to take home with me.

I realised that the probability of it surviving the journey was miniscule, but I wanted to try nevertheless. Before I left the retreat, I plucked one succulent leaf from the tree and wrapped it in wet tissues. We had 3 days and three flights to endure together and I really prayed that the leaf would make it.

When I returned home, I dropped it into a small glass of water and placed it on the kitchen windowsill. I hoped that it would shoot some roots. It sat in that water for months. My partner threatened to throw it away, I threatened her with other things, and eventually that little leaf sprouted some roots.

OMG I was so happy. I could barely contain my excitement. I enlisted the help of my elderly neighbours to plant it in a suitably sized pot. When we went on vacation, the fledgling succulent went to live with my neighbours for a while.

One winter I realised it needed more light and warmth than I was able to give it and I moved it to my in laws. It absolutely flourished while living there and seemed to grow in huge leaps and bounds.

Before my father in law died last year, he insisted that I bring my plant home and look after it properly. Honestly, I haven't always been the best plant mother. This summer I nearly killed it with too much heat and sun and at times I've over watered and under watered it, but that little leaf seems determined to GROW and to LIVE.

It is currently standing next to the window in our spare room. This week I had a proper investigation of my plant to see how it's doing. I was delighted to see that the main stem has grown two beautiful new shoots on it. Leaves that fell off have



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rooted in the pot and are themselves becoming little succulents. My little leaf is healthy and flourishing.

At its highest point, my plant is 56 centimetres high and has a circumference of one metre! Can you believe that? My little leaf has become a happy little bush in 7½ years.

Now you may argue and say, hmpf 7½ years that's a long time, but is it? Consider how much effort this has required to expand itself more than 14 times upwards and I am not even considering what's happening within the root system.

I realised as I delighted in my little bush that we are often incredibly critical with ourselves over our own growth. We don't see progress or we think we've stagnated. Sometimes we even think a part of us is dying and yet if we really look closely we are always growing, even in the winter of our lives.

Today be encouraged to **celebrate your growth**. Look how far you have come. Notice how you pushed through, how you never gave up. Remember those who helped you grow and even those who pruned you in some way. If you feel like you're stagnating, you may need a pruning, some new potting soil, compost, growth hormones, or a good kick in the ass.

Wherever you are in the growth cycle of your life, celebrate it because it's great to be alive!

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