

Learning to Go with the Flow

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How well do you deal with the unexpected? You have your day all planned out, things start to go smoothly, and then wham—the unexpected hits, and your day is completely thrown off! Going with the flow does not come naturally to me. You see, I'm a planner, and I've always been one. You might think that naturally being an organized person must be wonderful. I'll admit it can be at times. It can be a drawback, however, when the unexpected hits and my plans go awry.

I have learned some skills over the years to deal with my desire to have everything go “just so.” I'll never forget what happened to me a few years ago when I was on my way to Mexico. I arrived at my transfer airport in Phoenix with little time to spare between flights. I got to the gate where I was to show the documents proving my citizenship. My passport had expired, but I had my birth certificate with me. Unfortunately, it was not a certified copy. They told me I could go to a station where I could get a valid document, but it was clear across the airport. The clock was ticking. By the time I got back to the gate, my flight had already left, and my bags were on the plane. The next flight to Mexico was not until the morning. All of my “essentials” such as my contact lens supplies and underwear were on the plane. Let's just say I wasn't completely prepared for the unexpected.

There was nothing I could do at that point but go with the flow. I had just recently read a wonderful book called *The Power of Positive Thinking*. I sat there in the airport, remembering some of the positive affirmations that Norman Vincent Peale had suggested we think about to counteract some of the “negative” things that happen in life. I said things such as “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” over and over in my head while I waited for the hotel shuttle to arrive at the airport.

The shuttle ride to the hotel was significant. On that shuttle, I met an “angel,” a woman who was stranded as I was for the night. She said to me that when things like this happen in her life she tells herself to consider it “an adventure.” So, I started telling myself, “This is an adventure.” It became one. There was no store nearby to buy my essentials so I hopped on a bus across town. I bought what I needed and hopped on a bus back to the hotel, where I ordered room service for the first time in my life. It was all part of the adventure.

Some of the positive affirmations I say in my head when things are not going as planned are “Let it go, go with the flow, and roll with it.” I even have those phrases taped to the laptop computer on which I'm typing this article. So, the next time the unexpected happens, remember this—life is an adventure. Not everything in life is going to go as planned, but that's OK. Let it go, go with the flow, and roll with it. Life can be like a roller coaster at times, with ups and downs, but it can be exciting. You never know what may happen during an adventure in your life—you just might meet an “angel.”