

MY STORY

*Believe nothing
just because a so-called wise person said it.
Believe nothing
just because a belief is generally held.
Believe nothing
just because it is said in ancient books.
Believe nothing
just because it is said to be of Divine origin.
Believe nothing
just because someone else believes it.
Believe only what you yourself test and judge to be true.
- Buddha*

It shouldn't matter if I have a Ph.D. in Quantum Physics, am a Doctor in Psychology, a world-renowned philosopher or an ordained minister, for if the content of the messages in this book don't resonate with you, it won't help you, no matter who I am. It also shouldn't matter if I am a homeless transient, a spoiled socialite or an idiot savant – if you find meaning on these pages, the source is irrelevant: it's the message that counts.

But if you're curious about who I am and what compelled me to discover the reasons, here's the scoop.

WHO IS BROWNELL LANDRUM AND WHY IS SHE WRITING THIS BOOK?

I'm none of the above. I'm just a fairly average person who's had her share of doo-doo happen in her life, especially in the past few months. I guess what might make me unusual is my persistence in finding deeper meaning in life, and my willingness to open up myself – my mind and my spirit – to learning from diverse sources. I've read several hundred relevant books, articles and lectures, to help me formulate and support the information I'm providing in this book, to reinforce the Divine insight I received through my own experience.

Learning and applying the Five Reasons Why have helped me open up to a new level of understanding in my life. I frequently give thanks to the Divine for this inspiration, and for my brain and personality characteristics that have helped the Five Reasons Why be manifested in a clear and distinct way.

When I was going through my challenges, I kept asking “Why?” and nowhere could I find complete definitive answers. I read books, I listened to tapes, I researched the Internet, but couldn’t find satisfactory answers. “Bad things just happen” doesn’t suffice, and that’s what most of the other books say. I couldn’t take that for an answer - I have a lot more faith in the Divine than that!

“You Create Your Own Reality” has always been too harsh an answer for me. Although many people’s problems may be self-inflicted, this explanation doesn’t show enough respect for the individual, and can cause great guilt, if taken to heart.

So, I prayed and meditated and talked with trusted, respected friends. I have a close friend to thank for engaging in repetitious, exhaustive, lengthy conversations on the subject. He proposed the possibility of one of the Reasons Why. Other friends’ suggestions led to another Reason Why – but it wasn’t until I started writing in my personal journal one night that the Five Reasons Why came to me clearly as a distinct, complete list.

Even though I hadn’t previously seen the Five Reasons Why defined, I believe they will intuitively resonate with you. Although they’re unique, in the way they collectively explain some of life’s greatest miseries and mysteries, each concept, taken on its own, isn’t new or earth-shattering. But I sincerely think that the concepts and exercises in this book will help readers not only cope, but gain meaning and solace through life’s tragedies.

THE WHY OF THE FIVE REASONS WHY

In the past year, I’ve opened and closed a business, filed bankruptcy, connected with a great love and had my heart broken, had to put my aged and beloved dog to sleep, not been able to work in over nine months, and had my home, which I loved and nurtured, foreclosed.

I’ll admit there are a lot of people with problems a lot bigger and more enduring than mine, but to me it has been a challenging time. The biggest despair has come from the fact that the business (a restaurant) was Divinely inspired, and I followed the guidance of Spirit every step of the way. I created an enterprise that empowered the employee (we were elected #6 of the Best Places to Work in Atlanta), and provided healthy, tasty, affordable food. So, why would I be abandoned by God, if He led me down this path? That was the lingering, existential question I kept trying to answer throughout the ordeal.

Seven years earlier, I’d ended a horrifying time in my life, what I call the “eight years of hell,” so adversity had already poisoned my life. During that period, I battled serious health, legal, financial, relationship, existential, spiritual and business/career problems.

During those eight years in hell, I lost everything I had and was forced to move in with someone who was cruel to me. I lost most of my friends, had significant physical problems, and endured a legal battle. Stuart Smalley, the “Saturday Night Live” alter-ego of Al Franken had a saying, “I’m going to die homeless and penniless and twenty pounds overweight and no one will ever love me.” I felt the same way – except I would have been grateful for only twenty extra pounds. The worst part of it was that I felt abandoned by God throughout the entire time period. Whatever I wanted to change or achieve was completely out of my reach. It was an isolating, strange, maddening and discouraging time.

I tried so hard to understand “why” this all happened to me. I explored every avenue of understanding I could find. I read, meditated, prayed, traveled to spiritual healing sites, and met with psychologists, theologians and philosophers. But, although I acquired more information and learned a lot during this period, I remained unfulfilled and my basic question of “why” was unanswered. The only thing that really got me through was time.

The seven years following that time in hell hadn’t been all that rosy, either. I felt more beaten down by life than buoyed, but it’s amazing how even a mediocre life can feel like such a gift, after being in hell.

As I was going through the recent experience of loss, I was determined to get better answers. I knew that if I didn’t get a more meaningful explanation – and a better way to live my life –I could possibly find myself in another eight year cycle of hell, which I knew to be an unbearable option.

Now that I know and understand the Five Reasons Why, I know that I can withstand any storm and overcome whatever comes my way. I also know how to avoid many of life’s difficulties. I’ve reached new levels of happiness and peace that are impenetrable and lasting.

Today, I know how to identify the physical manifestations of my negative thoughts. I have a close, loving connection with my Inner Self. I know how to ask for and receive love and guidance. And I can even get amused at difficulties. Like Lieutenant Dan on the shrimp boat following the storm in “Forrest Gump”, I’ve made peace with God. In fact, I have achieved an enduring loving unity with the Divine.

I hope you will, too.