

Wynne Leon (00:00)

What do you do when you're ready to move forward, but the way ahead refuses to open?

In this episode of The Life of Try, we'll explore the wisdom hidden in the Quaker phrase, way will open. Through stories of illness, longing, endings, and new beginnings, we'll discover why progress doesn't always look like motion, and how trusting this season you're in can reveal the next honest step. Because sometimes the road opens in front of us, and sometimes we find our direction by noticing what has closed behind us.

This week's podcast was slow to arrive. Not because I didn't know the topic. Not because I didn't know what I wanted to say, but because I was sick. Every time I sat down to research and write and push the episode forward, my body had another plan. I ended up on the couch moaning instead of creating. And then I started laughing. Because the topic was what happens when our tries get blocked?

When we are reaching for something, building towards something, ready to record the next milestone, and circumstance says not yet. We don't have the energy, we don't have the resources, we don't have a clear path forward. The Quaker tradition has a beautiful phrase for this way will open.

It speaks to those moments when action feels necessary, but the path to accomplish it has not yet appeared.

Our spiritual traditions have been reminding us of this for centuries. There is a season for everything: a time to begin, a time to end, a time to plant, and a time to harvest. It says in Ecclesiastes 3, 1 through 8, and immortalized in the song by The Byrds a time to break down, a time to build up, a time to weep, a time to laugh.

A time to mourn, a time to dance, a time to speak, and a time to be still. We want every season to be the season of forward motion. But life does not work that way. Sometimes the pause is part of the path. Author Parker J. Palmer tells a story about this. In his thirties, he was searching for his vocational path.

while working at Pendle Hill, a Quaker living learning community in Pennsylvania. He had faith. What he did not have was patience. He felt time racing forward while Clarity stood still. So he went to an older Quaker woman named Ruth and told her, in essence, I've prayed, I've listened

I have waited, but way is not opening for me. Ruth answered with the kind of truth that first makes you sink and then it sets you free. She said in that more than sixty years, way had never opened in front of her. Then she smiled and added,

But a lot of way has closed behind me. And that's had the same guiding effect. That deserves a belly laugh, because a lot of way has closed behind me too. And some of those

closed doors were not failures. They were directions. They were life-saving. Not this way, not with this person, not in this season. It was not until my marriage ended that I realized I wanted to have children. Deep down I knew that I could not build

That future inside a relationship that was not healthy enough to hold it. That way had to close. And when it did, another way opened.

At forty five years of age, I walked into a fertility clinic. Three months after that first appointment, I was pregnant.

So what do we do while we wait for the way to open? We keep trying, but we stop forcing. Poet Mark Nepo offers the image of a rose. If you force it to open before it's ready, you tear it. Growth cannot be bullied. Timing cannot be wrestled into submission. So this week,

When I could not write the podcast, I let myself lie back. I rested, I reached out to people I had been meaning to call, I did what was available while I waited for what was not. And maybe that is the invitation for all of us. When the road ahead is hidden, pay attention to what is closing behind you. Loosen your grip. Take the next honest step. Trust the season you are in. Because a close way is

Is not always the end of your try. Sometimes it is the guidance that leads you home. Way will open. Thank you for listening to The Life of Try. I hope today's episode reminds you that when the way forward isn't clear, the pause may still be guiding you. Keep listening, keep trusting, and keep taking the next honest step.

If this message resonated with you, I recommend my conversation with Michael Yang: How to Get Unstuck in Life and Start Moving Forward Again. It's a hopeful, practical next listen for anyone who feels stalled and ready to build momentum again.

Until next time, be gentle with yourself. Stay open to where the way may lead. And keep trying.