



FIONA HOBAN

www.fionahoban.ie

Hope springs eternal

Is it just me, or is there an element of hope in the air? Not in a headline-grabbing sort of way, it's more subtle than that. It's curious because not much has improved; dare I say it, they've gotten even worse. So what's going on?

M Scott Peck in his book *The Road Less Travelled* wrote: "Life is difficult ... Once we truly see this truth, we transcend it. Once we truly know that life is difficult – once we truly understand and accept it – then life is no longer difficult. Because once it is accepted, the fact that life is difficult no longer matters."

Could it be that we're coming to terms with our economic situation? That we have come to accept it? And that in the acceptance we realise that our economic difficulties no longer matter so much.

Before you all start yelling that



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your economic difficulties matter very much, let's just tease out this notion of acceptance in a little more detail.

You don't have to like something to accept it. Whether you prefer the situation to be as it is has nothing to do with your acceptance of it. Acceptance does not mean complacency. We can always take action or improve conditions. We are presented with real problems and must deal with them in real ways. If the problem is approached through acceptance, the required change will take place without struggle. We are able to respond appropriately rather than react impulsively.

Acceptance does not mean automatic approval of a situation. I read somewhere recently that acceptance of the unacceptable is the greatest source of grace in this world.

Acceptance means that we are open to the full experience of the event, no matter how unpleasant. But of course most of us are not open to the full experience of unpleasant events. And therefore we cannot accept them. Instead we resist them, we fight them, make an enemy out of them, we get depressed because of them. The saying goes, what we resist will persist. So, whatever form of non-acceptance we use is futile.

Colm O'Gorman, a survivor of clerical abuse, wrote in his book *Beyond Belief*: "Over the years I have realised that what healing there has been for me has come not from a sense that I have been able to put

right what was done to me, but from a realisation that I cannot and must not try to put it right. Healing lies in an acceptance of the truth of what was done to me and allowing myself to let it be."

Yes, life is difficult at times, but rather than fight, resist or deny it, it seems the answer is to make peace with it. When we can do this, life isn't so difficult at all and hope springs eternal. **CL**



GET IN TOUCH

Fiona Hoban works as a counsellor in Westport, Co Mayo and also lectures with the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Institute of Ireland (NCPII). She delivers well-being and motivational talks at various conferences and workshops throughout Ireland. For more details go to www.fionahoban.ie

If you would like to get Fiona's advice or insight on a particular subject please email info@fionahoban.ie or write to Fiona Hoban, *Irish Country Living*, Irish Farm Centre, Bluebell, Dublin 12.



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