



## Your Insight

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### Free Falling

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***"To grow is to do something scary and uncomfortable. This can be on purpose or sometimes it just something that happens to us."***

When the invitation came up to do a skydive from 15,000 feet as part of a nationwide fundraising bid to raise £40,000 for Mercy Ministries UK, my initial reaction was, "No way! I can't do that (but I would like to). But I could never raise that amount of money." For most of my life I have battled with fear of failure, letting people down and not being good enough. To me, this was just one more thing that would set me up to fail. There was no possibility that I could raise the £1000 target that had been suggested. I was so passionate about the work of this charity and had already promised myself that I would do a few small events throughout the year to raise maybe £200-£300 for them; but this was in a completely different league. For a split second, I considered signing up but then my fear of failure overtook my passion and so I ignored the Facebook invitation and put it out of my mind.

However, over the next few days, the posts just kept on coming up: every day I would see the invitation at the top of my news feed, and then I would see people accepting the invitation. But still it wasn't for me. "What if I couldn't raise the money? I would be letting the girls at Mercy down, people at church down and me down," were the thoughts circulating in my head. Then Joe asked me if I'd seen it and suggested that I sign up. I gave him all the excuses that I'd been telling myself but the niggling feeling that it was something that I should do just wouldn't go away. So, very tentatively, on the 4th January, I clicked on the button that said I was going. Little did I know, this would be the start of my free fall.

Over the next few months I busied myself with fundraising, setting up a Just-Giving page and holding a few different events. I was blown away at the support I received-even from people who I didn't know! It wasn't long before I was half way to £1000! I couldn't believe it – here I was putting my heart and soul into a project and I wasn't falling flat on my face!?! The money continued coming in and before long, I had exceeded the £1000. By the time I actually did the jump (2nd July 2013, and after 2 postponements) my total raised was £1,458.20.

I hadn't failed, I hadn't let anyone down and in actual fact the whole experience had far exceeded my expectations! When I look back on the last few months, I can see how God has used this experience to show me some valuable life lessons – from the fundraising to the actual jump.

Sometimes we can look at a situation that has come our way, maybe a difficulty, maybe a choice that needs to be made, maybe a call of God on our lives and we can think that there is no possible way that we can get through it. We feel that we are inadequate or not qualified. However, it is not God that gives us difficulties; He will never give us more than we can handle.

*'No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it'. 1 Corinthians 10:13, MSG) and any difficulty that does come into our lives, He will use it for good. ('We are assured and know that [God being a partner in their labour] all things work together and are [fitting into a plan] for good to and for those who love God and are called according to [His] design and purpose.'* Romans 8:28, AMP

If we compare a skydive to the many scary, uncomfortable and difficult things that crop up in our lives, we can begin to see just how, if we stand firm and remain in our position in Christ, God will bring us through to the other side.



When I finally got to do the jump, I had to undergo some training first. This was delivered verbally via the instructor and also through some written disclaimers and truths about the sport which I had to sign to say I had read and understood.



During the training, one of the most important things that was highlighted over and over again was that during the free fall we had to adopt a certain position and remain in that position, no matter what. We were reminded that the instructor would be attached to us at 4 points, each of which could carry the weight of a small family car and that the attachments would not break away unless they were physically undone. We were taught that whilst we were staying in our position, the instructor would be guiding us, he would be controlling the descent and ultimately he would be determining the exact point to open the canopy. Knowing that God has got you, He is in control and will stop the free fall at exactly the right time, is crucial to surviving the free fall. Yes it's scary, fast, and sometimes chaotic and all you feel like doing is reaching for that safety chord (e.g. old habits or addictions, ways of thinking, hiding away, etc) but in actual fact, this would do more harm than good.

Our instructions are to remain and stand firm in the knowledge that God will carry you and it's Him who will help you through the storm.

Remaining in your position requires effort against the upward push of life's circumstances. We can't just flail in the wind. There will be resistance but if we spend energy on trying to solve the problems, i.e. trying to open the parachute, then we can very easily lose sight of what we have been taught from the Word – stand firm, hold your position, let God take control. We have to put our energy into standing on the promises of God, rebuking the lies that the enemy would have us believe and declaring truth over our life and the situation. The instructor will open the chute, just as God will show a solution to our problems.

After the blast of free fall came the upward rush of the canopy opening. This was not a jolt but surprisingly, a very smooth transition to the calm, peaceful and silent skies above. The view was amazing and beautiful and I was safe in the knowledge that I had survived the free fall. Now I could sit (or hang) back and enjoy the ride. The instructor was still in overall control but now there was an opportunity for me to share the control for a while and guide the parachute in different directions. It felt amazing and best of all, achievable – I can do this! In that moment, I wasn't thinking about all the possible things that could have gone wrong or what I did right during the free fall and neither was I wishing or thinking I could have done it differently – that was past. I was focused in the moment, absorbing the awesome views around me and taking it all in. However, without the free fall, this moment could never have existed.

Next was the landing. This was the other part of the training that was emphasized so much. If we didn't get our legs up during the landing, we could do ourselves and our instructor some serious damage. I was expecting this to be really hard and the landing to be bumpy, but surprisingly it was natural and very soft. The instructor did all that work for us too, verbally guiding me through it and taking most of the impact as we came to the ground. I then stood and looked in disbelief at the sky. I had just realised a monumental achievement in my life.



When we finally come through the difficulty in our lives, we can look back and rest in the knowledge that God kept us safe all the way through. Even right at the end, He is not going to let us down. He will remain in control and see us all the way through to the landing. It's funny but the first thing I said when I landed was, "Can I do it again?" Now, this may not necessarily be the response after coming through a trial, but if we look back over it, we will see the faithfulness of God. We will see that He has our back. We can know that in His Word, we have all the instruction we will ever need to bring us through safely. We can plainly see that when free fall occurs in our lives, we can't flail – there is effort required on our part:

***We have to remain in our position in Christ, stand firm on the promises of God, remember His Word and understand the dangers and accept God's help to overcome them.***

God has the ultimate know-how and training and when we allow him to take control, WOW – what a ride! Allowing God to be with us, as well as help us, results in even more adventure than we could have ever imagined!

May your days be filled with awesome God-adventures!

With Lots of Love,

*Katie X*