



Chapter 3 – Keep Calm and Carry On

I am not sure that I am aware that I am not being calm in-the-moment. It seems to me that whatever I allow to upset me, I also allow *to upset* my calmness. It is probably a better use of my attention to ask myself, “Am I calm right now?” My priorities have been backward.

It can be that being calm enough takes a courage that I haven’t learned well enough yet, because I haven’t practiced being calm well enough yet, and I probably haven’t taken the time to learn about the subject of calmness; now I have to search for my courage to stay calm-enough in situations that can be severe-enough that a temporary problem stands to create some permanent results. Calm is important because those around us, and teens in particular need to witness that a calmness with rare breaking points is possible - and possible under severe conditions.

I don’t recall very many good and efficient endings where I get *temporary* and *permanent* get mixed up; where by applying a temporary fix to a permanent problem, or my using a permanent fix on a temporary problem, works out that well. It is very easy to also point at the government’s misapplication of the two words for examples, but that may not be fair because governments don’t turn on a dime, and probably for good reasons. Looking inversely, individuals can and should turn on a dime; some of the most problematic people I run into

are people who fail to act in the short-term to avoid long-term issues for themselves and others.

As a kid, I don't comprehend that when my parents are saying "we'll see," what they are really saying is, "the answer is NO but I have better things to do than to talk you right now." It takes me a long time to understand first, that my ability to use legitimate hope is being under-minded in ways that will stop me from reaching for future genuine uses of hope, and second; that reading a slander-sheet or downing a glass of vodka are better uses of my parent's time than their use of a few minutes to talk to me. From this sort of history, I see today where some patient-calm might really help, and where the lack of patient-calm can cause some long-term problems.

This brings up a group of people that I allow to get to me – the people who won't act, decide, or decide and they won't say, because they have yet to gain enough of their own courage in the subject of *communication that can become emotional*. I can deal with being told 'no' a lot better than I can deal with 'false hope in indecision,' because the answer that provides me with certainty, also removes some shackles keeping me from the next thing. I let people get to me when I feel they are oblivious to their role in my shackles or are aware yet unbothered.

Of all the courages I have learned and practiced enough that I won't have to stop and look for them when I need them, my calmness the most essential, and with the most unlimited upper-bounds. I am sure that I can't learn or practice enough about calmness, but I can keep resisting the urge to believe that my calmness lessons should ever end.