

# A Lesson in Judgement and Boundaries

After the destruction of hurricane Harvey, everyone was taking the Irma threat seriously. I started to consider whether we would evacuate.

We live on an island. Our home is on the water. The tide surge was a concern. Could we get washed into the sea? I understood the potential outcomes. Factors I considered:

We would be riding it out on higher ground. We had fuel, water, food and multiple generators. Traffic and fuel to evacuate would be difficult. I knew that I didn't want to be cut off from my home (re-entry limitations to the island). I am self-employed. My business was indefinitely closed. My husband is stepping into an important place in the family business. I needed to support my husband. He and my dad are modern day MacGyvers. If you wanted to feel the safety that is offered by humans - these two are the guys to be around. The building we stayed in was ideal; very safe (poured concrete/ high elevation) and very quiet - even in a cat 5 storm. I knew we would spend more days in peace leading up to the storm if we stayed than if we chose to evacuate.

I knew we could face any combination of threats. I felt peace with our choice.

We went paddle boarding on Thursday afternoon prior to any 'bad' weather rolling in. My hubby took a break from storm prep and joined us. We had a beautiful experience and saw cool stuff. Between the cardinal that flew across our path to a

family of ancient iguanas - I observed God's world.

We stayed, and our family had the best week. We bonded. We spent time together. My daughter had less screen time and more mommy time than any other week. We assisted in Irma prep at our daughter's school. We went to the park, paddle boarding, did art and learned about shadows. She understands about Irma as best she can. She remained happy and content. She was a calming force for all. I had the choice. Be present or be scared. I remained present. We didn't watch the news. We played.

All this being said - you had noooo idea of all this consideration. Nor does it matter. We don't think the same or believe the same. We are different people. Yet, you judged me. I tend to believe you judged me because 1. I chose differently than you and 2. Because I am a mother of a young child. Guess what? That was your shit.

Why did you judge me? Because it distracted you from your discomfort. Rather than deal with your own anxiety about uncertainty, you took it out on me. You told me to 'stay safe'. This is what most people say when danger is approaching. I responded with "of course" and "you too". Bland and obligatory replies.

Truthfully, I think safe sucks. I'm not trying to be obtuse, thick or difficult. I know the difference between taking risks and being reckless. Taking a risk is a calculated choice. A decision to feel the fear but

do it anyway because the outcome could be beneficial. Reckless is acting without thought or concern for well-being of myself or others.

“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.”  
—T.S. Elliot

I believe meaningful life experiences don't happen in the safe zone. If I 'stay safe,' I don't challenge myself, try new things or embrace vulnerability. I can't push the limits of possibility by staying safe.

I wish I had the wisdom to express my feelings before you judged me. I should've set my boundary early. I was still processing; and, I wanted your approval. I didn't want to offend, scare, argue or defend. I wish I had said "this is my choice, please respect it, we can debate when it's over". Or something like that. But I didn't. And, I left myself wide open for feedback. Don't get me wrong, I am grateful for your concern. I don't even fault you for judging me. Honestly, it allowed me an opportunity to grow. To practice communicating without defending. To check my internal processes. To trust my higher power.

So, yeah, we stayed on a barrier island in a cat 4/5 storm. Yeah, I did yoga on the highway in hurricane force winds (not very effective, lol). Yeah, I ripped my yoga pants climbing the fence to the park. No, I didn't 'stay safe'. And, I also wasn't reckless.

I've consciously practiced



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tools for dealing with judgmental people. Every negative response received was an opportunity to have faith, not act defensively and to practice trusting myself. I wanted to practice unconditional acceptance of others - even when they were angry, frustrated or afraid. Don't get me wrong, I sometimes get sucked in to feeling like I have something to prove.

My work is to let go of ego and embrace the uncertainty of life. Because life is messy and dangerous. And it's also beautiful and joyous.

If you want help embracing boundaries and releasing judgement, I am your teacher. Lessons come in many forms. Let's work together to learn and grow through this experience.

## The Mangrove Galley by Sandi Mieszczenski

Sandi's recipes are featured here monthly. For previous issues go to <http://www.theconchtelegraph.com>.



We are now officially entering the holiday season and one of the most important components is the food. I am always looking for different dishes to prepare and serve. I saw the recipe below and modified it to fit a prefect (but easy) Thanksgiving morning. It is a great way to start the day with a cup of coffee and/or an eggnog. Try it and I think that you will be pleased. Enjoy!

### CRANBERRY APPLE ROLL-UPS

- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 1/2 tablespoons butter, chopped into small pieces
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 apple, peeled, cored and chopped into thin pieces
- 1 can of 8 crescent rolls from the dairy case
- white sugar

Mix the first 6 ingredients. Place foil on a cookie sheet and lightly coat with a cooking spray. Open the can of crescent rolls and carefully separate. Place each roll on the cookie sheet. Divide the fruit mixture evenly, and place on each roll. Fold the two ending points together and pinch the seams to secure the filling inside.

Lightly sprinkle with the white sugar.

Bake in a 375° oven for 13 to 15 min. until golden brown and serve.



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