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WHEN LIFE'S LESSONS COME FROM ADVERSITY

Sometimes when it comes to your course, you have “bigger fish to fry.”

Retrospect is always one of the great traits that we use in life. It allows us to take stock in what has worked and what has failed. As I sit here in my office on a beautiful Tuesday afternoon I am reflective on a year that so far has been less than stellar. I will recount and rethink how I managed the golf course this year and make the necessary changes to improve myself and the course.

“Under fire” is always an interesting term used in any workplace. The failure of our greens to adapt to temperature swings in the spring, and the 11 day run of stifling heat in July that has me still staring at the aftermath on my Poa greens will provide another lesson. With full support of my Owner we have agreed to move forward and

give them their due by naming it) that has a five page thread on my failures. People have called me a quitter, a horrible superintendent and incompetent. I gave consideration to replying to these shots, but their minds are made up about me and my course and nothing I say is going to change that. I guess taking the high road is a practice they could have used too.

Legendary Canadian superintendent Paul White once told me years ago that “once you’re comfortable at your job is when you’ll get fired” and those words have stuck with me ever since. If there has been a year where I have been so uncomfortable, this is the one. But I was given a true perspective from one of my members Mr. Fawcett last week. He said to me “Andrew, I can see in your eyes

golf course, but I get to see the golf course and spend time with my sons.

Time with my boys at a young age is very important for me, as the stakes for us are much higher. Liam and Luke are diagnosed with moderate to severe Autism. They communicate with sign language as they don’t have any verbal abilities. At nine years old they are just now toilet trained and face an uncertain and scary future. They love the course, and for that it has nurtured my love of Saturday afternoon at “work”. For one moment in a hectic week, work doesn’t actually feel like work.

I have always struggled with the definition of home life and work life. The broad line that defines them sometimes becomes skewed and work gets brought home. But what one may view as Liam and Luke’s weakness, I can now see is their strength. They don’t care about bad greens, inconsistent bunkers or unrepaired ball marks. They love me, and my place of work to them is a good place, a place where time spent trumps all things bad.

So you can call me a quitter or a bad superintendent, but what matters most to me is that I’m a good father and a supportive and loving husband. I have learned in our quests in life you cannot and will not ever appease the masses. So I have put stock in appeasing the ones that rely on me the most. My owner put everything in perspective this week by stating “its only grass, you have bigger fish to fry.”

In retrospect today’s tour was the best one ever, and one I won’t forget for a very long time.

“Life’s difficulties can seem overwhelming, and you may face times when problems seem encompassing. Don’t look back at what you’ve lost, for the road of life is never meant to be traveled backwards. Just move on and say: Things always happen for a reason. Trust the process.” - Unknown GCI

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fix the problem, rather than dwelling on what has happened. Many of my brothers and sisters in the same situation won’t be as fortunate.

How many summers do you see where it’s hotter in Ontario, Canada than Florida for weeks at a time? I see on Twitter many clubs in the south converting greens and then not having the heat they need to establish them. Then they incur devastating rain storms that wash away all their blood, sweat and tears. I have always deferred to Mother Nature as all of our boss in golf. After all I watched rain wipe out friends’ golf courses in Toronto and Calgary this summer. She is cruel and to that there is little doubt.

There is a local web-based forum here in the Toronto area (I refuse to

you are hurting. But you need to ask yourself about the important things in life.” He then went on to ask about my wife and children and whether I was getting enough sleep. I was caught off guard and almost became emotional.

Saturday afternoons at the golf course for me carry a very different meaning. Today is no different, given the kind words of Mr. Fawcett and the weight that family carries in my life. Saturdays are reserved for me and my three sons Liam, Luke and Ethan. We tour the golf course together, eat lunch in the clubhouse, chase geese and from time to time play a few holes of golf. This ritual has been a part of our family fabric (and the club loves and encourages it as well) for three years now. Not only do I get to see the