

# FINDING HOPE IN THE STORMS OF LIFE

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A remarkable, 150-year-old red oak tree near the entrance of a Michigan university had welcomed visitors for years . . . until one windy day when it crashed to the ground. It was a shock to many, including the grounds director, Charlie Huizinga. But he knew what he would do.

“I was making my rounds one day more than a decade ago—looking around the oak I discovered little trees coming up. Acorns were still attached to the root.”



That day, Huizinga harvested some of the seedlings and transplanted them onto his property. Over the years they grew to become 20-foot trees themselves.

Today one fills the hole the original oak left behind, “. . . starting a new era of the red oak for the future.”\*

Sometimes the storms of life threaten to take out even the strongest trees. Uncertainty, grief, illness, or financial hardship can leave you feeling totally depleted. But don't give in to hopelessness; you can find calm in the storm. Here are three ways you can rise up in the face of difficulty:

1. Breathe. It may sound trivial, but taking a moment to step back and take a deep breath will help you feel calmer as you face the storm.
2. Serve. Sometimes an unexpected challenge can loom so large that we can't see beyond it, but caring for someone else can help shift our focus. Volunteer your time or choose someone to assist today and see how it helps you too.
3. Practice generosity. Giving of your resources or assets is another way to adjust your perspective. Consider exploring creative ways you can impact someone else through giving. You may find it becomes a source of peace, empowerment and excitement. When you give a legacy gift, you can be certain it will dig deep roots and spring up strong, impacting lives for generations to come.

\*Story adapted from original by Matt Kycinski

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