



Life Detours

*Not the Roadblocks
We May Think*

By Edie Melson



I've never met anyone who's road through life was a straight path. All of us have stories about a much longer journey, often filled with detours and odd twists. But one thing they all say is that they wouldn't be where they are today without the experience they gained along the journey.

I wouldn't choose it, but I wouldn't change it.

And an important note—those detours can bring you to a standstill, if you treat them like roadblocks.

I've had a lot of detours in my own life. But one of the most difficult revolved around our son.

Our oldest son chose to enlist in the Marine Corps instead of attending college. We were button-busting proud of his decision to serve, BUT terrified of the sacrifice that service might call for.

I spent those years struggling with fear as I sent him off twice on deployment to the Middle East. I wanted to quit and hide my head in the sand.



I argued with God, bargained with God, and finally surrendered my son's well-being to God. It was a long—difficult—process, but the final result was peace.

One thing I learned through this experience is that EVERY crossroad, EVERY detour is a decision point.

I could quit or I could keep going. Ultimately it's that simple.

Then on Veterans Day 2011 my first book debuted—a devotional for military families. The best first book I could have ever had because it was birthed out of the fire of experience. But I had to walk the path to get there.



On the following pages I've got some tips to help you manage the detours in your own life.



Things We Need to Remember When a Detour Sign Pops Up:

- *Talent without persistence is worthless. This is true for my own publishing journey, but I've seen it in every situation I've encountered. So much of what we need to know to be successful, no matter what our goals, can be learned.*
- *Quitting is the only path to failure. I've found writing success, but a lot of it has come simply because I refused to give up.*
- *Sometimes, ignorance really is bliss. When I first started down this road, I thought I knew everything I needed for writing success. I'm glad now that I didn't know what was needed at the beginning. It would have been too overwhelming. Quit trying to anticipate, you'll get it wrong.*
- *I'm stronger than I thought. If I had known when I started, the hard work and emotional toll getting to this point would take. I would have quite because I would never have dreamed I could do it.*





- *Take advantage of the storm. Life is rocky, enjoy the excitement of the journey!*
- *God is always faithful. Sometimes He helps me around the detours—sometimes He helps me through them—and often He carries me through them. I can (and will continue) to make plans—but I stay flexible. I would never have even dreamed of the opportunities God has given me.*
- *Generosity will always get you farther than selfishness. I have never once regretted putting someone else before me. I'd even go so far as to say that I've build my career (or at least my platform) by promoting others. Don't forget to look back. It's important to be willing to reach back and help others through hard times. Beyond that, helping others takes the focus off our problems and helps us focus on the blessings.*
- *My reputation is worth solid gold, but it's not something I can buy. I can only achieve it and keep it by guarding it. I always try to communicate honestly. And I have never once regretted being nice, even on those instances when I've been taken advantage of.*



- *The joy is in the journey. The people I've met, the things I've gotten to experience have been the high points, not the achievements.*
- *Don't fall into the comparison trap. It's so easy to look at others and assume they're in a better place or have an easier road. The truth is, we all have stuff. Comparison is never apples and apples. Each of us is unique and so is the path laid out for us. I've had to learn to keep focused on God, not myself and not those around me.*
- *Let go of your preconceived notions of how this is going to turn out. Just like I thought my kids' adult lives would look differently, doesn't mean they're a failure, and it certainly doesn't mean I'm a failure as a parent. Truthfully it's way better than I imagined.*

And MOST important of all...

- *Don't miss the journey looking for the destination*



2 Final Tips to help you Keep Moving

- Take notes and/or keep a journal. It's hard to remember all the lessons you're learning and all the emotions you're feeling if you don't write it down.
- Ask how these circumstances could benefit someone else. Don't get ahead of yourself, but begin thinking beyond yourself.



Take a look around you right now. You're in a unique place, a place that has a lot to teach you, a place you'll never be able to return to. Don't waste the experiences you have access to right now.

Life rarely goes as planned, so it's time to get over that myth. Enjoy the journey and embrace the process. Go deep and wide as a writer, and no matter what the future brings you'll have built a boat circumstances can never sink.



About the Author



Find your voice, live your story...is the foundation of Edie Melson's message, no matter if she's writing for fiction readers, parents, military families, fiction readers or writers. As an author, blogger, and speaker she's encouraged and challenged audiences across the country and around the world. Her numerous books reflect her passion to help others develop the strength of their God-given gifts and apply them to their lives.

*She's a leading professional within the publishing industry and travels to numerous conferences as a popular keynote, writing instructor and mentor. Her blog for writers, *The Write Conversation*, reaches thousands each month and has been named a *Writer's Digest Top 101 Websites for Writers* in 2017. She's a member of the *Advanced Writers and Speakers Association*, the *Social Media Director for Southern Writers Magazine*, as well as a regular columnist for *Guideposts.org*, *Todd Starnes.com*, *Just18Summers.com* and *PuttingOnTheNew.com*.*

