

CLEARING
THE HURDLES

During my junior year of high school in southern Maryland, I decided to join the track team for the first time. I had always enjoyed running and thought it would be a fun experience to run for my school. After preseason training, athletes were either assigned to or could choose the various events they would run in at meets. I decided to run in the 300-meter hurdles. This event has a distribution of hurdles along the 300 meters of track, and



as the race goes on, each hurdle becomes harder and harder to clear. I thought that since I could jump fairly well, I would have no problem.

Despite my inexperience, I found considerable success throughout the season, winning first place twice at two meets. The hurdles seemed to be my niche. After the regular season, certain athletes on the team were chosen to run at the Southern Maryland Conference Meet. I was chosen to run the hurdles at this particular meet.

On the day of the race, I felt prepared to run and was confident I would do well despite the competition. When my event was called, I walked out on my lane, imagining my win. I took my stance, and the starting gun fired. I took off, bolting over the first few hurdles, and passing the other runners. I couldn't help but smile as I became aware of my position—I was on the way to victory. Suddenly I realized that I still had about 150 meters and 4 hurdles left, and I was already getting tired. I had used all my energy at the beginning! I started running slower and slower, and my opponents caught up with me. With one hurdle left, we were all neck and neck. I approached the last hurdle but could not bring myself to clear it. I fell a few feet in front of the finish line. The other runners passed me and finished. Realizing what had happened, I got up and mournfully finished last. I was shocked at having tripped for the first time, and at such an important meet.

This experience was disappointing at the time, but as I look back, I am grateful to have learned a spiritual

MORE IMPORTANT THAN FRIENDSHIP

Have you ever had to ask yourself, "What's more important, my friend or our friendship?"

I faced that problem when a note fell out of my friend Kate's* pencil pouch. I read it and realized that my friend was using drugs. I was devastated. I tried desperately to talk to her, but she ignored me.

Kate was my friend, and I realized that no matter what she said or did, her safety was most important to me. Every time I thought of it, I wanted to cry. I knew that Kate might never forgive me if I told on her, and she might tell my other friends that I wasn't trustworthy. I asked my mom to help me, and we prayed, talked, and read the scriptures. I was looking for something to help me help my friend. We found a scripture that gave me courage to do whatever I had to do and to live with the consequences: "For I do know that whosoever shall put their trust in God shall be supported in their trials, and their troubles, and their afflictions" (Alma 36:3). I knew that if I did what was right, God would support me.

lesson from it. We face many obstacles and difficult encounters throughout life; none of us is exempt from having adversity. As we face the "hurdles" or challenges of life, the Lord expects us to have faith to overcome them. Once in a while our faith may be shaken, but through prayer, scripture reading, and obedience, the Lord will help us up after we fall



I decided to tell the resource officer about Kate's drug problem. Later that

afternoon Kate was called to the office. When we changed classes, she was with her guidance counselor and a police officer. Kate caught my eye, and I could tell she knew I had told on her.

Several weeks went by before Kate would talk to me. I dreaded what she would say, but I was surprised that she wasn't angry anymore. Our friendship had changed, but in some ways, it was better than before. She seemed to understand that I had done it for her sake. I never wanted to lose her friendship, but it was more important to love her enough to try to stop her from hurting herself and the people who love and care for her.

Yes, this experience was painful, but I learned that if we "trust in the Lord with all [our] heart; and lean not unto [our] own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5), anything is possible.

Name withheld

* Name has been changed.

and help us finish as long as we are willing to acknowledge our mistakes and repent. I know that the Lord aids us during and after our adversities and continues to guide us throughout life. He taught me a lesson I will never forget, even though I learned it through something as simple as running hurdles.

Preston W., Maryland, USA

MAKING FUDGE

My Grandma Jeri and I have been making fudge since I was a little girl. Because my grandparents live in Utah and we reside in Colorado, we didn't visit them as often as we liked. When we did, my grandma always made time for us to cook up some delicious fudge.

When my grandparents got their mission call to Cambodia, I was so excited for them to be able to share the gospel, but I was also sad, because it meant that I wouldn't see them for two years. Their farewell was a bittersweet

moment, not only because they were leaving but also because I was munching on bittersweet chocolate fudge.

My grandparents had been gone about a year when my uncle, their youngest son, got engaged. My grandma got special permission to attend the wedding. Excitement ran through my body as I gave her a hug. It was so good to see her and the rest of my family.

After the wedding my grandma and I were talking. My eyes lit up with

excitement, and I asked if she wanted to make fudge. The batch was small, but it tasted just as good as I remembered.

It was hard to say goodbye before we left for the airport, but I knew that soon she'd be back. In grandma-fashion, she wanted to make sure we had something to eat on the plane, so I took the rest of our fudge. Needless to say, with a hungry dad and daughter, the fudge was gone before we got off the plane.

I will never forget how lucky I was to have that special time to talk with my grandma. I can't wait until she gets home from her mission so that we can continue our tradition.

Codie W., Colorado, USA



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