

## SEEING WHAT IS POSSIBLE -- A Modern Day Parable (inspired by MT 11:25-30)

Today marks six months since Kyle was released from the hospital. Those months have been filled with challenging therapy and counseling sessions. You see, Kyle's whole world was changed during his last deployment. He doesn't remember the explosion that left him badly injured and completely blind. Remaining focused and determined to get his life back, Kyle overcame the multiple injuries. He excelled in rehab -- to no one's surprise. Kyle had always been the strongest, the fastest, and the most competitive in sports and in the military.

But, hard work and determination could not bring back his sight. There was no cure, no remedy. The damage was just too extensive. Kyle could not seem to find his way to accept that truth. He felt like he couldn't be the man he wanted to be, the man he had always been, with such an intrusive disability. It felt as though his independence was taken along with his vision, and Kyle just couldn't handle that.

He wasn't alone though. Once he was transported back to a V.A. Hospital in the US, Kyle's father hadn't left his side. The two have always had a very close and trusting relationship. His father did everything in his power to help Kyle recover. He set up the spare bedroom with all the special equipment needed for his son to continue physical therapy and regain his full strength. He did the exercises alongside Kyle and encouraged him with every step and every repetition. He drove him to the counseling sessions and waited patiently in the lobby. He took Kyle on nature walks and to concerts, places filled with wonderful sounds. Kyle's dad had always been a skilled handyman... but he couldn't fix this. He couldn't help Kyle see. He couldn't help his son have hope in the future.

At Dr. Breckon's request, Kyle's father had a few counseling sessions of his own. Maybe together they could find a way for Kyle to heal. The doctor realized the best way to reach the son is through the father. No one knows a son like his father, and this son knows and trusts his father. Even the friend's

Kyle invited into relationship, respected and loved this man like a father. So, Dr. Breckon and Kyle's father came up with a plan.

They scheduled a session for Kyle and his father together. It was a beautiful morning in April. Kyle smiled when they stepped out the front door and the breeze hit his face. He held his father's arm to be guided to the car. They drove with the top down to soak in the sensations of Springtime. Once they settled in at Dr. Breckon's office and had finished the small talk about the lovely weather, Kyle's father put his hand on his son's shoulder. "My brave son," he began. "You have truly labored these months to be strong and whole again. I know you are heavily burdened by your blindness." Kyle stiffened a bit. His dad continued, "It is time to give that worry a rest. So, I have registered you to compete in the Independence Day Triathlon!"

Kyle jumped to his feet and let out a bellow, he was in such a shock by this ludicrous announcement. "Are you crazy?" he asked in his father's direction. Then, turning toward the counselor he asked, "Did you hear that Doc? A race! My father wants me to run on a trail, ride a bike, and paddle a canoe ---- in a race!" Turning back to his father, Kyle's voice softened and tears filled his eyes. "Dad. I can't see the finish line, how on earth could I possibly win a race?"

Dr. Breckon chuckled and said, "With your passion and determination, I believe you can do anything. Relax Kyle. Sit down and listen. Your father has a plan....a very good plan." Kyle's father explained that the two would be yoked up to each other for all of the events. "We will be tethered together with a light cord to make sure you don't lose your way, and to make sure you don't leave the ol' man behind," he said. "Just as your therapists taught you to follow the sound of their voice to guide you across the pool and around the track, I will be by your side giving you cues about the terrain and to encourage along the way. You are in top shape, son. We can do this together! We have a few months to practice, and by the day of the race you will probably discover that it is actually quite easy."

Kyle was so deeply touched by the meekness and patience of his father, who was willing to go these extra miles for his son. The least he could do was humble himself and give it a try!