



## The Stepping Stones in Obstacles

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We are blessed enough to have a 21-month old and all the experiences and learning that go with him. Every day as I watch him grow and discover the world, I realize he is teaching me just as much as he is taking in – and this has been going on since before he was born.

In our bedroom we have a tree that sits in a pot and the pot is just slightly shorter than our son. And months ago when he first discovered it, it was just as tall as him. The problem is he is fascinated with this tree. More specifically, he is fascinated with the taste of the dirt in which the tree resides! Now, my wife and I thought it would be a great idea to place some sort of obstacle to prevent him from having access to the tree.

We looked around his massive stack of toys and found the perfect solution. We call it, “Toy Mountain.” It’s a plastic mountain that has ramps and such on it that is supposed to be used for little to cars to boot around. It was the perfect solution for a couple of reasons. First, and most importantly, it was large enough to block his access to the tree. Second, it was one of his more favorite toys at the time and it served as a great distraction to help him forget about the wonderful tasting dirt.

So we placed it and it worked! Whenever our little one got close to the tree, he got side-tracked with Toy Mountain and totally forgot about what was on the other side. We first implemented operation Toy Mountain when our son was about 10 months and it worked very well until he turned about 20 months.

One day, I walked into our room to discover that Toy Mountain was no longer an obstacle for our little monkey, but in fact, it had become a stepping stone. In explorer-like fashion he had managed to balance atop of Toy Mountain and reach over to get to his ultimate goal, the tree, and the dirt – he could now also reach the leaves to serve as a chaser after the dirt.

This episode taught me something very important. The very things that serve as obstacles at one point in our lives, with the proper education, experience and change of perception will serve as stepping stones as others. It got me to think and reflect on some of my past experiences that at the time I thought were obstacles but really turned out to be stepping stones.

The very things that hold us back at one point in our lives have the ability to propel forward at other times, provided we let them. What obstacles do you currently hold on to that aren’t serving you? How can you leverage them? What can you do to acquire the skills or experience to turn them from weights into spring boards.

Then I really got scared as I thought, “If this is what he is teaching me at 21-months, I’m scared to see what he’ll be teaching me by the time he is three!” I’m looking forward to it with great excitement ... and apprehension.