

## The Parable of the Rocks - MabuhayRadio

Written by Re-written by Bobby M. Reyes

Tuesday, 03 June 2008 01:29 - Last Updated Saturday, 24 May 2014 23:00

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**Re-written by Bobby M. Reyes *(as adapted from several online versions)***

**T his parable has often been used by science and time-management teachers. Variations of this story have circulated on the Internet. This version is not only about rocks but also about people who like to rock the boat, albeit on a figurative manner. This is why some of my friends and readers call me “Rocky Reyes” because they say that I always rock the boat called SS Status Quo. Actually, I am merely practicing the “Parable of the Rocks” because the establishment or institutions or individuals that I criticize or hit with my pen, nay keyboard, have anchored their projects or missions in life not on “big rocks” but on the inconsequential pebbles or mere sand.**

Then there is also the lesson that I once wrote to Dionesio Batongmaliit, who is trying hard to become a journalist but who could not really write. Batongmaliit is the Filipino term for a “small rock” or a small stone. I told Dionesio that the road to success in literature is now more-or-less paved well because of what computers can do in the areas of spelling-and-grammar check. But nevertheless, a writer has to have the basic building blocks that normally one could learn in the grammar school or better yet, in a school of journalism. And because aside from the big rocks, lots of figurative gravel and sand are needed to finish that road to journalistic success. Mr. Batongmaliit is the man described now in my edited-version of a Filipino adage, "Kuwarta na, naging grava pa." "Grava" or "graba" or "bato" is the Filipino word for gravel or a pile of small rocks or a rock. The original adage is "Kuwarta na, naging bato pa" (It was almost money in the bag but it turned into a stone, as the bet was lost).

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### **Here is then the classic parable about rocks, gravel and sand:**

An expert in time management addressed a group of business students and, to drive home a point, used an illustration those students would never forget.

As the expert stood in front of the group of high-powered overachievers he said, "Okay, time for a quiz." Then he pulled out a one-gallon, wide-mouthed mason jar and set it on a table in front of him. Then he produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?"

Everyone in the class said, "Yes."

Then he said, "Really?" He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Then he dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the spaces between the big rocks.

Then he asked the group once more, "Is the jar full?" By this time, the class was onto him. "Probably not," one of the answered.

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What are the 'big rocks' in life, career or business? Then, put those in your "jar" first. Think of the "big rocks" as the building blocks, if not the foundation of life or of any project or undertaking.

"Good!" he replied

He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in and it went into all the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more, he asked the same question "Is this jar full?"

"No!" the class shouted.

Once again, he said, "Good!" Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he looked up at the class and asked, "What is the point of this illustration?" One eager beaver raised his hand and said, "The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard, you can always fit some more things into it!"

"No," the speaker replied, "that's not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is: 'If you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all.'" What are the "big rocks" in your life? Time with your loved ones? Your faith, your education, your dreams? A worthy cause? Teaching or mentoring others?

Remember to put these BIG ROCKS in first or you'll never get them in the jar (of life) at all. So, when you reflect on this short story, ask yourself this question: "What are the 'big rocks' in my life or business. Then, put those in your jar first."

Isn't the Parable of the Rocks an awesome story? How often do we get so caught up in the little things and mundane matters that we forget there is a bigger purpose to all this struggle or even drama called life or business or even politics or journalism? # # #

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