

## Should you ask an Irishman for Directions?

My grandmother, Helen ‘Nellie’ McTagart Lloyd, was the salt of the earth. She was incredibly kind, and smart, and loving; yet, even she would tell you not to ask an Irishman for directions. This is not meant to be a knock on the Irish, but it’s just that many from the island will spend most of their time telling you what route NOT to take...when asked for directions.

Unfortunately, too many of us have a ‘little Irishman’ lodged in the back of our heads when we’re trying to figure which road to take; especially when it comes to trying to decide how we should go about prospering in our lives.

Call it over-analyzing, or forever-procrastinating, or not-focusing, or whatever you want to call it. The truth is, too many of us are stuck talking to ourselves about what we can’t do, or what we shouldn’t try, or what won’t work. And we wind up journeying around in our own thoughts, instead of taking the road that will get us where we want to go.

It’s the road we know we need to take. And it’s the road that we really want to take. Because while we may not know the exact route, or the number of traffic delays, or the construction sites we’ll need to overcome; we know we need to get from where we’re at...in order to get somewhere better.

Some folks may think this is a small point to ponder. When actually, it’s the single most determinant factor in anyone’s life: Which road should I take? This question is posed to us every day and every moment. And it’s in the choices that we make **to actually DO things** – to taking the road, instead of forever talking with that little Irishman in the back of our heads about which road we shouldn’t take – where the day is won or lost.

Decision is the key here. And none of us gets ‘bonus points’ for forever-pondering. Rather, it’s often a case of casting out demons. It’s a leap beyond ourselves; and the seemingly endless lists of silly, lazy, excuse-ridden ‘reasons’ why we can’t, or won’t, or shouldn’t.

As we grow older, we’re more aware of lots of things. We witness a wide variety of good and bad; and we tend to become more cautious...and that’s normal. What’s not normal (or good for us) is when we grow so negative, and cynical, and inwardly-focused, to the point where we get all our news from the major media – and all of our directions from the little Irishman in the back of our heads. That’s a recipe for failure.

We wouldn’t ask our dentist to fix our washing machine, nor would we call a plumber when our car won’t start. In like manner, we shouldn’t be asking the little Irishman in the back of our heads – or our buddy, or barber, or mechanic – what proper road to take...when we actually want to DO something.

We should seek out motivated achievers. We should work with like-minded folks who recognize the challenges at hand – and nonetheless DECIDE to press on; instead of whining, and bitching, and moaning about what can't be done, and can't be achieved, and can't be tried.

The best advice that each of us ever got was from a loving mother: 'You can do it' is the most magnificent line in the 'mother's playbook'. It helped each of us with our first steps, many of us to overcome huge obstacles, and countless others to achieve greatness.

The simple truth is that those that have achieved great things in life – truly great things – have always DECIDED to take on roads that are less traveled, and more rugged, and often scary. And as they march on, they still ask for directions; they're just out DOING things, instead of forever asking which road to take in the first place.