

By
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THE PAGE

September
and
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Getting GBC ladies on the same page.

How do you hug a porcupine?

While at the San Diego Zoo recently, I observed these small animals that looked like overgrown hedgehogs – porcupines. The major difference being them and hedgehogs is that a porcupine’s quills can detach and remain lodged in its unfortunate victim. These little vegetarians live lives of relative solitude. My thought as I watched one porcupine walking lap after lap inside the barrier of its habitat, his bestie following closely behind, was, “I wonder if these porcupines have ever been hugged.” I can think of 30,000 reasons the answer would be, NO! And each reason is represented by a sharp quill. It’s hard to hug a porcupine. Dare I say, flat out dangerous!

Have you ever met a person that, though quill-less, was hard to get along with, hard to love even? How do you deal with difficult people? People hurtful with sharp words, thoughtlessness, and pushiness? It’s easy to cuddle a fluffy golden retriever puppy that oozes love and friendliness the first time she meets you, but a

porcupine? How do you hug a porcupine? Carefully!

Here's some advice when trying to hug a porcupine person:

1. Pause before poking back.

Prov. 15:1, “A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger.”

There is no tit for tat in Christianity, but there is a turning of the other cheek. It’s unnatural to return warmth for coldness, but it is the Christian way. Respond with words that have been thought through and sifted of all unkindness.

2. Practice patience.

Since porcupines were not built for speed, they move slowly. Prickly people respond slowly to change or to new ideas. “This is how we’ve always done things,” they may say. *1 Cor. 13:4, “Charity suffereth long and is kind.”* They may try your patience, but real Christian love remembers how patient God is with us and tries to love others this way.

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MUSIC RECOMMENDATION:



The Clark Family, “God’s perfect time” is available to stream.

FALL ACTIVITIES:



FURTHER BIBLE STUDY:

Study how Jesus deals with these “porcupines”: the woman at the well, Zachaeus, the thief on the cross.

FOR GIGGLES:



3. Put yourself in their paws.

Quills are a defense mechanism. They are needed because everything is trying to kill the porcupine! When people are prickly, it is a sure sign that they have been hurt. Consider Joseph in *Gen. 50:20*, “*But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.*” Joseph saw the whole picture, not just the micro event of being treated wrongly. My mentor taught me to view prickly people with pity. That’s a good word for this situation. It’s hard to stay angry or bitter towards a person you pity. This word, pity, acknowledges that the “porcupine” has had a rough go of it in life.

4. Protect your heart without hardening it.

I love animals, but I loved the San Diego Zoo porcupines from the safety of the enclosure’s railing. Constantly being hit with quills will affect you. *Luke 5:16*, “*And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.*” Maybe you must live in close quarters of a porcupine at home, work, school, or (gulp) at church. Know how much you can take, then go to your Heavenly Father to renew your spirit as Jesus did.

5. Point the porcupine toward peace.

“Easy there, little porcupine.” A gentle word, a smile, a compliment, a thank you can go a long way. *Prov. 25:15b*, “*A soft tongue breaketh the bone.*” I was in the Las Vegas airport due to a rerouted flight recently. While

there, I stopped by a Baja Fresh for a quesadilla. While standing in line, I observed this large porcupine woman running the register, preparing the food, and operating this airport’s restaurant completely solo. And, boy, was the stress getting to her! She snapped and snarled and “quilled” every person who came to the counter. I decided to see if this Biblical principle would work on her. It was my turn. I ordered nice and loud because everyone in front of me, according to her, had been mumbling. As she typed in my order, I expressed what a great job she was doing getting us all fed and running this restaurant solo. I finished with, “We appreciate your hard work!” While she didn’t fully smile, she did grimace less and I saw her quills visibly settle down. I also got to give her a tract to read on her break. The Bible works, Christian love works, kindness works.

UPCOMING LADIES EVENTS:

(Contact Faith Reynolds with any questions)

Soul Sisters: Once a month Bible study 11am-12pm

Sep. 6th and Oct. 18th

Fall Flannel Fling: September 13th