

A Collection of Forks in the Road

By Dennis Payton Knight

I have traveled the beaten path, gone off the beaten path, and beaten some paths of my own. I have taken wrong paths and right paths. I have encountered those famous Yogi Berra forks in the road and taken them. The path I am on is well worn, sometimes meandering and crooked. I have slogged through muddy quagmires and skipped along lanes paved with yellow bricks. I try to stay on the straight and narrow and I am always on the lookout for the path of righteousness, but I also know about the road to perdition.

To keep us from skidding off the path and into the barrow pit of life, a motivational speaker named Ralph Marston reminds us, "There are plenty of difficult obstacles in your path. Don't allow yourself to become one of them."

Another motivator, Marcus Buckingham from England, got it right when he said, "The best way to find out whether you're on the right path? Stop looking at the path."

Rosalia de Castro of Galicia, Spain, a poet romanticist who was born in 1837 wrote, "I see my path, but I don't know where it leads. Not knowing where I'm going is what inspires me to travel it."

The American poet Theodore Roethke said, "Over every mountain there is a path, although it may not be seen from the valley."

Henry David Thoreau, who beat a path of his own that we all crossed back in high school, waxed eloquently on the topic. He said, "As a single footstep will not make a path on the earth, so a single thought will not make a pathway in the mind. To make a deep physical path, we walk again and again. To make a deep mental path, we must think over and over the kind of thoughts we wish to dominate our lives."

Thoreau also wrote, "Pursue some path, however narrow and crooked, in which you can walk with love and reverence."

Oprah Winfrey tells us, "Understand that the right to choose your own path is a sacred privilege. Use it. Dwell in possibility."

We travel coast to coast on speedy highways with the help of modern GPS units, but we get totally lost in the winding paths of our own lives. Some of us wander through life aimlessly, and some of us are goal oriented with detailed roadmaps for living laid before us. But inevitably we do come to those Yogi Berra forks in the road.

Over my life's path exceeding seven decades, I have come to many forks in the road, and consistent with the wisdom of Yogi Berra, I've taken them. Whether I take the one on the left or the one on the right, inevitably it always leads down the path to yet another fork, so I take that one, too. I know it's just a metaphor for life, but all I have so far is a drawer full of forks.