

Introduction and Fable

This week is Dyslexia Awareness week and the theme for this year is '**The Right Tools for the Job**'.

To help us to start thinking about what the right tools might be for ourselves I want to start with one of the most helpful memory tools we have – a story.

The interesting thing about stories is that our brains find them easier to remember than simple facts alone.

This story has been specially chosen for you to start thinking about what can happen if you don't have the right environment or the right tools that suit what you need to grow and thrive.

As you listen, I want you to notice if the signs that someone is not thriving are noticeable, hidden, or both.

Cass and the Little Flower

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Dyslexia Awareness Week 2026



Dedication.

To all the orchids living in a dandelion world.

How can you bloom in the place where you are planted?

In the middle of a new housing estate, a wildlife garden had been planted.

It was an untidy sort of garden, deliberately so. There were wildflowers and grasses, dandelions and daisies, plants that loved the sun and others that preferred the shade. Some thrived in damp soil. Others needed dry ground.

Cass, the gardener, had learned that a garden did not ask every plant to grow in the same way.

One spring morning, Cass noticed a little flower growing near the edge of the garden.

It was unlike the others.

While the dandelions opened wide beneath the morning sun, the Little Flower folded its petals tightly together. When the sunlight grew stronger, its petals seemed to scorch, and it pulled itself closer to the ground.

Cass watched.

The daisies did not seem bothered by the heat. They stood tall, turning their faces towards the sun.

But the Little Flower did not.

Then there was the noise.

The wildlife garden sat beside a building site, and throughout the day the sound of machinery travelled across the garden. Dust blew through the air and settled on leaves and petals.

The daisies carried on growing.

The dandelions barely seemed to notice.

But the Little Flower shuddered at every sudden sound. Its leaves curled inwards, and it seemed to disappear a little further into the soil.

Cass watched some more.

Then came the rain.

Day after day, the clouds opened, and the garden became soaked. The other flowers pushed their roots deeper into the wet earth. They stretched upwards, growing taller and stronger.

The Little Flower did the opposite.

Its roots tightened.

Its stem became smaller.

It looked to anyone passing by, as though it simply wasn't trying hard enough.

But Cass knew better.

A gardener who pays attention learns that a struggling plant is not always a struggling plant.

Sometimes, it is simply growing in the wrong place.

One morning, Cass carefully dug around the Little Flower and lifted it from the ground.

She didn't throw it away.

She didn't try to make it more like the daisies.

She simply changed where it grew.

The Little Flower was placed in a pot filled with bark chippings instead of heavy, wet soil.

On hot days, Cass moved it into the shade.

When the wind became too strong, she placed it behind the potting shed.

And when the rain became relentless, she moved it into the shelter of the greenhouse.

Nothing about the Little Flower had changed.

The flower was still the flower.

But its environment had changed.

Weeks passed.

Then something unexpected happened.

The Little Flower began to grow.

Its roots stretched.

Its stem strengthened.

Its leaves opened.

And before long, it stood taller than any flower Cass had seen in that part of the garden.

It had not needed to become tougher.

It had not needed to learn to tolerate everything the other flowers could tolerate.

It had simply needed the conditions that allowed **it** to thrive.

Cass smiled.

The garden had taught her something once again:

There is no perfect flower.

There is no wrong flower.

Sometimes, what looks like weakness is simply a sign that the environment isn't right.

And sometimes, the most important thing we can do is not change the flower but change the conditions around it.

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