

## When life slams into you

Written by Elizabeth Barrett  
Friday, 01 August 2014 13:41 -

---



Charles M. Schulz once compared life to a 10-speed bike.

“Most of us have gears we never use,” said the famous cartoonist and creator of the comic strip “Peanuts.”

I often feel like I’m pedaling too fast to even think about clicking into another of life’s gears.

Instead of noticing how the early-evening light sifts through the hackberry tree, I’m hunched over the handlebars with a scrunched-in face like Almira Gulch in “The Wizard of Oz.”

Minus Toto and speeding out of control.

And then life comes out of nowhere and whacks me.

Literally.

Hurrying through chores several weeks ago, I got in the way of two horses hungry for one pan of grain.

Instead of paying attention around these 1,000-pound beasts, my mind was on the next thing on my list.

## When life slams into you

Written by Elizabeth Barrett  
Friday, 01 August 2014 13:41 -

---

Wham!

Seabiscuit's huge head slammed into my cheek and I dropped to my knees.

As I struggled to my feet, I could see my right cheek starting to swell underneath my eye like another appendage.

Ice brought down the bulge but the giant bruise had a heyday for several weeks, turning yellow, blue and then purple and alarming classmates at my high school reunion who were too afraid to ask what had happened.

Somehow "bar fight" was discounted.

What's important here is not the details but what I hoped I've learned.

If rushing around has become such a part of me that I don't know how to slow down, I'm really in trouble and more apt to get a speeding ticket, rather than a warning, the next time around.

Staying with what's bugging me instead of delving into a million distractions to escape seems like a really easy and simple solution if I can just remember to do it.

Because the alternative, choosing to careen wildly down a country road with a tornado at my back, is what Almira Gulch did.

And we all remember what happened to her.

## **When life slams into you**

Written by Elizabeth Barrett  
Friday, 01 August 2014 13:41 -

---

“Go easy and if you can’t go easy, go as easy as you can.”—Anonymous