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*"A lot of people have gone farther than they thought they could because someone else thought they could."*  
- Zig Ziglar

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## Blessed

# An Adirondack Moment

by Ellen Michaud

Sitting in an old Adirondack chair outside my cottage high in the mountains of Vermont, I simply can't move.

The late afternoon sun has baked every ounce of my body into the chair's worn wood. My thighs lie on the tilt-you-back-until-you-can't-get-up seat like dead weights from hip to knee. My back leans into the hard slatted back-remembering for the first time in months that a spine is supposed to be straight, not leaning over a desk. My feet fall sideways out of their flip-flops. My jaw sags. I can't even raise an eyebrow, much less an eyelid. And raising my arm-mentally I experiment with voicing the command and wait to see if something will happen.

Something? Anything?

Nope. Not a twitch.

The problem is the chair. It's been polished by generations of women sliding back to catch their breath, or sliding forward to pull a child onto their laps for a story, and it holds me as firmly in place as the sun splashing through the trees.

I know I should get up and do any one of a zillion things-wash the dog, wash the dishes, wash the windows, wash my hair-but it just isn't going to happen. No one's throwing up, no one's starving, no one needs to be picked up, dropped off, or shuttled from one end of the planet to the other, and no employer is close enough to demand my energy or a moment of my life.

So here I sit, eyes closed, not moving, deeply relaxed. I'm not even really writing these words-just kind of letting them flow.

But somewhere deep inside my chest there's a twinge of unease, a little ripple of something not quite right. Sitting in the sun is not my natural state. Like most women, I nurture whole villages of people, starting with my family, then extending out to my neighborhood, church, town, state, nation, even the world. There's a child in Kenya who needs a home, a woman at my church whose husband lost his job, a neighbor whose husband was diagnosed with cancer. And every inch of the globe seems bound and determined to act out of the meanest, smallest, most violent part of human nature.

How can I sit in the sun?

It's a question we all ask. How can I sit in the sun when so many people need me? How can I take the time to work out? How can I go out with friends?



The need to minister to everyone who hurts is overwhelming.

But just as I'm about to jump up and leap back into the life stream of ATMs, grocery stores, and soccer fields, a chickadee sends it's long, slow call searching through the woods around me.

"Chee, che-che-che-chee..."

The sweetness catches my attention. In a moment, the tightness within my chest eases, and I open my eyes to scan the tall pines around the clearing in which my cottage sits.

The call comes again, solitary, it's beauty capturing my turbulent spirit, filling my heart with light, and-how?--the understanding that sitting here, resting, listening, as generations of women before me have done, is what connects me to what's important in life. Because when the spirit is still, the mind quiet, the body at peace, the whispers of God are everywhere, and the joy of Presence is within.

I've earned my rest. In a little while, maybe when the air chills and the first wisps of woodsmoke drift from my neighbor's chimney, I'll step back into the chaos of daily life and lift the burden again. I'll make dinner, light the lamps, do the laundry, call my aunt, pay some bills, work for world peace.

But right now, while the sun is hot, and the chickadees are singing through the pines, I think I'll sit right here. And I'll thank God from the bottom of my heart for the women in my family, this chair, this moment, this place, and every one of my blessings.

*Award-winning author Ellen Michaud frequently writes about the everyday blessings we all tend to overlook. Share your stories with her at [ellen@blackberrycottageproductions.com](mailto:ellen@blackberrycottageproductions.com).  
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