

The Glass is Relative  
by Kristin Avery  
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Ah the age old question: is the glass half full or half empty? Everyone has their own take on this philosophical conundrum, whether their opinion is about the cup in a physical, literal sense, or about the metaphorical cup in our minds. Many think of this 'cup' as a representation of one's mind and/or emotions; optimists think of it as half full, and pessimists think of it as half empty.

My personal opinion on this is that the glass is relative, dependent on its previous state; if the glass was previously empty, and was then filled up halfway, then it is half full. If the glass was previously full, then was emptied halfway, then it is half empty; this is true for both the physical and metaphorical glass. If one were to wake up with a full glass – optimism and a positive mindset – and then come home at the end of the day beaten down, tired and stressed, then their glass is half empty.

It is up to all of us to try to view our own glass as half full, but if you tell someone who is suffering to conform to that same mindset, then it shows that you don't have an understanding of them nor their issues. If your friend trusts you enough to tell you about their problems and feelings, then the last thing they want to hear is, "Just stay positive!" Sentiments like this are well meaning and partly true; I find that if I at least try to find the silver lining in my circumstances, I can pull myself through just about anything. But to write off someone's struggles as a small inconvenience that can be solved with a thumbs up and an inspirational quote is purely wrong. For example, if you've ever witnessed someone going through a panic attack, you'll know that telling them that their worries are silly or negligible will only worsen their situation; the best way to help someone through this is to acknowledge the cause, show that you understand, and do your best to show them that they don't need to be scared or panicked. Sometimes, all a person wants is for someone to understand them.

Sure, viewing your own glass as half full can make a difficult situation a lot easier, but trying to push that on someone else is only achieving one thing: making their situation a lot harder. So the next time you try to give advice to a friend, remember, the glass is relative.