



MONDAYS

with Mike

How strong is our root system?

The redwood tree can reach heights of up to 350 feet. Yet, with all of its magnificence in height, its root system is only 6 to 12 feet deep. Redwoods create the strength to withstand powerful winds and floods by extending their roots outward, up to 100 feet wide from the trunk, and living in groves where their roots can intertwine. Instead of growing down to find an anchor, redwoods grow out and wrap around each other. They hold **each other** up!

So, when the winds wail and the earth cracks, redwood trees stand. And they keep standing, sometimes for as long as 2,000 years. They survive and soar because of who they are growing beside. The underground entanglement not only holds them up; it supports them as they thrive.

Sherri Coale, author and retired head women’s basketball coach at the University of Oklahoma, shares the following in her book, *Rooted to Rise*:

People aren’t much different. We don’t become who we are on our own, and we sure don’t stand without assistance. We are shaped and molded by those whose paths we cross. It’s the intersection of our lives that makes us who we are. We are grounded by others. We are fueled by others. We are elbow-locked with others as we reach and swell and grow – the life- anchoring connections that sustain us.

As the Malay Proverb emphatically states:
A tree with strong roots laughs at storms.

As we begin our week, let’s check our personal root systems. I will twist the use of the name of Sherri’s book into a question for our reflection: Are we rooted to rise?

Laugh at the storms this week!