



# WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

## Just Keep Trying

I promise you, this is not going to be a morbid conversation. But, on the “keeping it real” side of things, I couldn’t help but consider how our old pear tree reflects how I’ve been feeling about myself lately.

Have you ever struggled with the thought that maybe you’ve reached an age where you’ve lived most of your life?

My husband says our old pear tree is probably around our age. His mom planted it, along with most of the other trees on our cattle ranch, back in 1962. That would make the oldest tree on our ranch about sixty-two years old - younger than us! This pear tree is likely one of the oldest still standing.

When my husband and I first married, we had a variety of fruit trees, including plum, peach, apple, and pear. Most of those are gone now. Some were uprooted by Texas storms, and others simply reached the end of their life expectancy.

Curious about the typical lifespan of the fruit trees we’ve grown, I did a little googling. I found that plum trees typically last ten to fifteen years. Peach trees are similar but can live twenty to thirty years. Apple trees, if the conditions are right, can live thirty to forty years. Wild pear trees can last upwards of fifty years, and there are even varieties of pear trees that have lived for hundreds of years.

This old pear tree is one of the last trees planted by my dear mother-in-law. After I snapped

this photo, I thought to myself: although it looks more dead than alive, it is still bearing fruit. And that thought, my friends, got this city girl-turned-country to thinking about her own life in a profound way.

Even though I may have fewer years ahead of me than I did when I first started out in this world, that doesn’t mean I can’t still live as fully and purposefully as I did in my youth.

Doing my best might look different today, but doing my best is good enough. I’m the only one keeping track and deciding what my best is anyway!

Part of doing my best these days includes taking a morning walk that takes me by this old pear tree. Every time I pass by, I hear the old tree singing, “This is me trying!”

That tune has become my mantra. There are many things that are more difficult for me to accomplish than they once were, but I haven’t given up on trying to do them. I don’t want to give up. It’s just not in me. I suspect I inherited some of my mama’s determination, strength, and stubbornness.

What “trying” looks like for each of us will probably be different at every season of our lives.

For me, “trying” these days includes things like maintaining a healthy diet, exercising or moving my body every day, keeping my brain active by learning a new skill or exploring a topic I’ve never delved into, trying to keep a positive attitude (listening to my



(Photo courtesy of Annette Bridges)

favorite songs and spending time being creative helps with that), doing something each day that makes me feel productive - even if it’s just making the bed - and making travel plans, especially

trips to spend precious time with dear friends and family.

The list of things we try to do truly has no limits, and whatever we try to do is good enough as long as we keep trying. 🍷