

BEWARE WHEN HOPELESSNESS:

HELPLESSNESS, WORTHLESSNESS, AND USELESSNESS BECOME YOUR COMPANIONS

We are excited to share with you that we are currently working to put video versions of our 3 Audio Versions of “the Path to Overflowing Hope; the New Day” on YouTube. We’ll post how to view them in the future. But something caught my attention this weekend that I couldn’t let pass by without sharing my thoughts. Mrs. Pence, the Vice President’s Wife, is now announcing an initiative on Suicide prevention, particularly in regard to Veterans, but also for everyone since folks are suffering isolation and seclusion and other distressing issues due to Covid 19. Currently 132 people are committing suicide daily and the rate is even higher for veterans.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNmSY_rtrMo

As those who have read this website know, “I am not a doctor, I am not a psychologist, I am not even a counselor, even though I do have a diploma in Biblical Counseling from the American Association of Christian Counselors. So, why do I even think I could have anything to add on this subject? I fought suicidal thoughts for years and now I don’t/rarely do - a thought may slip in a couple of times a year, but for the most part, it passes as fast as it came. You may ask, what were some of the thoughts? I remember, when my husband was working an hour away, sitting on the couch and trying to decide how I could take my life and not affect him/have the least impact on his life. I would think about how? I would think about where? When? These were not fleeting thoughts - I lived with these thoughts. I survived minute by minute into hour by hour into year upon year, for years. But, remember, I knew the Lord and He was always with me. I truly believe that Christian radio saved my life; it could reach me when no one else was there and I was all by myself. Don’t say, well how about your Bible? I couldn’t open it, let alone read it. Days were black; it didn’t matter if the day was a Sunny/Beautiful day or a rain filled day - they were all black. My companions were helplessness, worthlessness, and uselessness and they plagued me throughout the entire day which left me in a Hopeless state. I begged the Lord to get me off the planet. I just didn’t know how to live my life anymore. I couldn’t see any way out, even though I was properly medicated and under doctor’s care.

So, if you asked me if I could tell you about what it was like to experience and survive a heart attack, I would let you know that you probably know as much as I do or more. I have known people who have had one and my mother died of a heart attack, but my experience is limited. But, if you want to know about surviving suicidal thoughts, on the other hand, I have years of experience to share. Some of which I would like to share with you here. Again, I am not a professional, but have had some experience and learned some things along the way that work for me and might help you better understand yourself or others.

In my research of learning more about Mrs. Pence’s initiative, I discovered the quest of the parents of Daniel Somers, a Veteran who took his life and left behind a suicide note. You can find it on YouTube. In his note, his blame was directed toward the government, but there were also points that I identified in the note that I too had wrestled with. There was the isolation and seclusion, the inability to earn one’s worth (for my personality type, our worth is derived from our ability to earn respect through our job/performance.) Daniel was plagued and suffered extreme agony as a result of actions he took in performance of his duties (and resisting to no avail); he had no choice. Most personality types have mechanisms for coping with this type of situation/stress, his did not. He was consumed with the pain and false guilt that was too great for him to carry alone. You see, I understand - not being able to share with anyone, while the rest of the world functions around you, you begin to loathe yourself and this can even turn into agoraphobia (not being able to come out of your house) as the brain that is not functioning properly as the chemicals are depleted/due to stress, lies to you. He also suffered many injuries. I noted as his mother, with tears in her eyes, she shared before his military service, her son loved to hug; and after his time in service, he wouldn’t let her touch him; he withdrew. Before, he had a huge smile in his picture. (That’s a sign. When someone who smiles all the time doesn’t smile any longer—they need help.) I do not in any way want to minimize anyone’s pain through my analysis. These are just some points that I noticed to help you understand.

So, let's look at an example easier to understand. We have the most beautiful Kitty Cat. He is a tuxedo kitty - mostly black with white on his chest; like a tuxedo. We adopted him about 4 years ago as a tiny little kitten from the Animal Shelter. His name is Royal T. Kitty; we love him like royalty. He sometimes shares a round dog bed with our dog, Copper, (a story I will share later.) Royal has always been a great hunter; he is free to go in and out of the house as he pleases by way of his own cat door. He brings his "catches" to us from time to time - some live; some dead - sometimes we find birds flying in our Sunroom.

One morning, a couple weeks ago, I opened the door and was ready to "hop" down three steps that lead to our patio outside. I caught Royal out the corner of my eye and I couldn't believe it was my Kitty Cat I was looking at. His back was arched, the hair on his back was standing straight up and he was hissing my direction. It was then I saw the non poisonous snake, at least 4 feet long that was seemingly motionless at the bottom of the last step. If not for my Kitty Cat, I believe I would have hopped right on it or hurt myself trying to avoid it if I had saw it at the last minute. Royal was my little hero. We eliminated the snake from the area, but I realized my Royal Kitty was traumatized. I don't know what happened with him when he encountered the snake, but he was totally traumatized to the point when he came back into the house, he refused to go out. He was too afraid to go outside; he was agoraphobic.

So, its been a couple of weeks. I take him to the front porch, which is up high and he can see all around and can see he is safe and he makes his way down the walk, across the patio, to the kitty door. I stand out on the patio, as I water the vegetables in the raised beds each morning and leave the door open for him. He sits at the top of the steps. He wants so much to come out. He is so afraid, even after a couple of weeks. This morning he took his paw and reached, ever so slowly toward the step, and then took another till he was on the patio and then he slowly found his way around and looked under the steps to see if it was safe. He is still traumatized. So, some folks might say, just put him outside and close the door - force him to get over it -after all he is a cat. What if I did that and he ran away to someone else's house where he felt safe. I would lose my Kitty Cat. It takes TIME. He has no obligations to fulfill for me; I just want my Kitty Cat to be happy. I am sure with some love and encouragement, he will return to his old self, eventually.

So, the same sort of thing can happen to a child who is bullied at school, through social media, or even like me, in the workplace, and especially when it comes from multiple sources. It is difficult to fight a bombardment like that. The brain can not process that kind of stress, continually; there are stress hormones malfunctioning and chemicals being depleted. It took one snake for my cat; what about the child who is hit with multiple attacks. Or in the instance of Covid 19, and the stress associated of not being able to provide for one's family. Each personality type is going to respond to that differently. Some may be able to adapt; with their skills and talents, they may be able to do so, but how about those who don't have a clue what else to do. They start worrying, the stress hormones start pumping and soon the chemicals in the brain are being depleted. They are in panic mode and can't stop. For those folks, it could be their worth is tied to their ability to make money (provide for their family,) and unable to do so, they slip into depression and uselessness, worthlessness, helplessness becomes their companions and Hopelessness settles in. They have no program to fall back on other than "I'm a failure," "I'm not acceptable," as they are consumed with false guilt.

So, what is my answer? Remember, I'm definitely not a professional; just someone who has been there/done that/and learned some things along the way. The answer, which most people find difficult to embrace, is a personal one-on-one relationship with the Creator of the Universe. Who else knows you better than He? Who cares for you more than He does? Who knows how to help you better than He does? Who is willing to forgive you of any wrong that you have done or perceive you have done? He is the answer. When you start to see yourself as He does, instead of how others and yourself see you (as a failure, inferior, inadequate, not acceptable to others, consumed with guilt, etc.,) then you will be able to see the truth of who you are and not how others through their desire to get their needs met, causes you to see yourself as. Once you can see yourself as God sees you, then focus on these things: Please read Philippians 4:8 .

To illustrate the above principle, I want to share about another pet. We had a dog named Miss Attitude. She had such great confidence as a puppy. We thought she was a Lab puppy, but as her jaws grew wider and wider, we discovered she was a Pit Bull/Lab mix. She was a great dog; a great travel companion as I traveled back and forth several hours, by myself, visiting my aging parents. Tudy, we called her was getting old and we found a puppy just like her, Minnie Tude. Tudy died and Minnie assumed the duties of being top dog. Minnie ran like the wind as she chased the deer and the woodland creatures.

One day I noticed she had a lot of mud on her coat, but I didn't think much about it. Then our Minnie went missing. We put out flyers and checked with the neighbors. We live between two highways; our property is entirely fenced. We had checked the roads and had not seen any remains. We decided to take a closer look. We pulled off the highway, onto the berm behind our house and I got out. I saw her collar, first, and picked it up and as I turned around I saw my Minnie, her body was flat against the embankment, it was a horrific site. I immediately began to be filled with false guilt. The "if only's" started. Throughout the day, I would see the image in my mind of my Minnie as I saw her and I blamed myself for what had happened. She had crawled under the fence, we think, chasing after rabbits. But there was something else that I saw when I saw Minnie in that state, it was the head of a Copper colored dog. Every time I was headed for depression over my false guilt over Minnie, I would see this dog. So, our focus then became on finding this dog. It had to be the Lord. We just knew it. And sure enough that following Saturday, we were at the Petco and they had brought dogs from the shelter to find them homes and there was the dog with the Copper colored head. I am not saying that everyone should get over their pain and suffering so easily, but the Lord did not want me sliding into depression over false guilt from something I couldn't fix - so he gave me another image - he gave us Copper. And we love Copper. That's an example of Philippians 4:8 And we share our testimony of Copper with anyone who will listen - now, even folks around the globe.

So, you and I are not God, so what can we do? First, know the Personality types: what the motivations are, what the addictive natures are. There's a great book that is on the source list and I saw is still available on Amazon.com entitled, "Understanding How Others Misunderstand You," by Ken Voges and Ron Braund. I wish everyone had a copy of that book. You might skip the first half, but I use that book to this day to understand how to interact with personality types. Understand, every personality is going to react differently to stress. Some folks use physical activity to reduce stress; some folks want to talk, talk, talk; some want to be silent; some want to be by themselves and build something, some want to be part of a big group. If you can identify their personality type, then you will know what they need. Everyone needs new programming. Be an encouragement! Listen! Some folks need you to come along beside them and be like the Holy Spirit is to us. Help Them. Accept them. Above all do not shut them down or shut them out. Give them permission to succeed, by that I mean allow them to fail. They aren't going to fail, but need permission to like my Real Estate Broker did me. Remember, from the "Integrity" message—the best advice I was given: "I was starting a new path with a new broker and Company. I shake. I shake terribly when nervous; my arms will fly every which way. At that time, I limped due to what I now know was a malfunctioning thyroid. It was so embarrassing. And I had a listing appointment. He was to go with me. He couldn't go. I was going to have to go by myself. The pressure of what if I started shaking; what effect would that have on his company? With tears in my eyes, I will share what he said. He said, "Debbie, here's what we'll do. If you start shaking uncontrollably, you hand them my card and have them give me a call, and when I get on the phone, I will tell them if you give her the listing, she will leave." I went and wasn't nervous: I couldn't help but laugh to myself the entire appointment." Some people have no problem failing - for those you have to be more forceful with an emphasis on achievement. It is all according to personality type. "Not one size fits all." But for those with suicidal tendencies, they will most likely be suffering with fear of failure, or even fear of perceived failure tendencies.

Every personality type needs new programming. Learn everything in "Deprogramming and Reprogramming our Hearts, Minds, and Souls." Understand, someone with severe depression or anxiety and depression, may not be able to read and comprehend. Read it and share with them as the occasions come up. Above all, don't give them a book and tell them to read it. They can't. Their brain may not even be functioning properly enough to comprehend. Listen, Listen, and Listen to them; their ideas and suggestions. Don't shut them down or shut them out. The Lord has shown me that each one of us has in us something that another needs. It is His system. Help them find out what it is that God has put in them. Help them discover it and you will discover what gives them true value. I was 60 years old before I knew I could write anything, let alone, share as I share now. Don't ever let people feel that they are a bother to you. When their brain lies to them and they see themselves as "worth less," show them how valued they are as you and God values them. The second best advice that was given to me was by a psychologist - he showed me who I was, not the person that others had caused me to believe I was (failure, inadequate, ugly, their tool to get their needs met, etc.) but that I was a "Good Person." Be gentle, loving, encouraging, give them room to fail and also to say "No." But don't give up. Remember Royal T. Kitty Cat. Love Your Neighbor as Yourself - as we are commanded to do. Luke 10:27. In the process, you will find that you have a great friend. Please read: Proverbs 17:17 And read "Deprog and Reprog" at this website.

Debbie

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>



<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/military-crisis-line>



Forever Remember:

Copper & Philippians 4:8 & Royal T., the traumatized Kitty, and how we should Love One Another as they do each other!
Friends!!! And both with their own testimonies of God's Love!!!