

FEELING BLUE **Dealing with Depression**

2015

This morning I had to practically throw myself out the door to go for a walk. It was one of those days when I'm absolutely in no mood for anything, really. And when this happens, I need some supernatural strength to get me out of this state. I'm talking here about depression, a mood disorder that apparently affects an estimated nineteen millions of American adults and adolescents. Unbelievable!... Even if I know I'm not the only one in this predicament, it still stinks to go through it!.. And as I was walking this morning asking God to help me through this difficult patch, I heard a little voice inside me: *'Why don't you write about it? It may do you some good!'* So, here I am today with my topic on 'feeling blue'. It's certainly not an uplifting subject to write about but I'll do it and see where it'll lead me.

Depression... It's not my intention here to study the matter thoroughly, but to simply write about how it affects me personally. After a brief search on the Internet, I found this definition of the word that expresses pretty well my own feelings: *'Depression is a state of low mood and aversion to activity that can affect a person's thoughts, behavior, feelings and sense of well-being. Depressed people may feel sad, anxious, empty, hopeless, worried, helpless, worthless, guilty, irritable, hurt, or restless. The causes may vary. It could be the results of life events, medications, infectious diseases, neurological conditions or physiological problems.'* But there's one light on the horizon: *it's treatable.* YEAH!..

Fortunately, I don't have bouts of major depression that linger indefinitely like many people have. Mine, thank God, usually last three to four days at the most. But no matter how long they last, it's always *too* long. I must admit that I've been dealing with this issue a good part of my life, and it has always been very difficult to pinpoint its cause. I would say, however, that physical or emotional fatigue is oftentimes the culprit. Certain situations in life which prove to be more difficult to handle than others may also contribute to this state. My first impulse is usually to nourish those feelings as previously described, but I can never allow this response to go on. If I do, it would drag me even further into the problem, and the harder it'll be for me to snap out of it.

People deal with depression in their own way, but quite frankly I don't know how I could do it without God's help. As far as I'm concerned, the usual prescription drugs and many support groups out there are not the answer. I don't deny they may be of great help, but my first reaction is to go directly to God. And I must say that in his great mercy he always comes to my rescue in some way or another.

I was reading Psalm 78 recently and the following verse caught my attention: *'We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done.'* How can this verse have anything to do with my present topic, you may ask? Well, it does. For with each depression I experienced, I said a prayer to God. And with each prayer, he gave me an answer to free me from its grip. And what he has done in my life is something worth writing here.

While I was very busy raising my three young boys, I remember a particular time when I was feeling quite depressed. The depression would simply not go away... So, one day as I was standing at the kitchen sink washing dishes, I started crying, pouring my heart to God and pleading for his help. As soon as I had finished praying, an amazing thing happened. I felt the urge to sing at the top of my lungs a song of praise to God... Shortly after, I realized that my depression was entirely gone... Was it a coincidence? I believe it wasn't, and I give God all the praise for it.

Years later, our family was in the middle of great financial difficulties. One day we had just

received a notice that our electricity would be cut off for non-payment. Depression hit me like a rock, and as I was hanging clothes outdoor, I poured my heart out to God reminding Him of his promise to take care of our needs. Meanwhile, my husband received a phone call from his sister inquiring about us. He told her about the predicament we were in, and she immediately offered to pay our bill. Another coincidence? I believe it wasn't, and I give God all the praise for it.

During that same period, I remember the day when our pantry and refrigerator were literally empty. Our boys couldn't help but notice: "Hey mom, there's no more food!" And I replied without much conviction: "I know... food is on the way..." Was I depressed? I certainly was. But here again, I said a prayer to God. Well, the next morning a good friend of ours came knocking at our door with bags of groceries galore to fill our entire pantry and refrigerator. I may add here that she didn't know about our situation at the time. She then told us her story: "I woke up in the middle of the night with a deep sense of urgency that your family needed food, so here I am". Coincidence? I believe it wasn't, and I give God all the praise for it.

On another occasion, our van was out of commission due to a defective part. One day someone from the church we attended back then came knocking at our door and offered to pay for the repairs. Nobody knew about our van problem except God and our family, so we asked him how he found out about it. "A little bird told me..." he answered. Coincidence? I believe it wasn't, and I give God all the praise for it.

I also remember the day when I found numerous \$20.00 bills hidden inside our kitchen cabinets and drawers that my husband's brother and his wife had left behind after their visit. Or the substantial monetary gift we received quite unexpectedly from my cousin from Montreal. Or the generosity our young boys showed by emptying their bank accounts to help us out. Coincidence? I believe it wasn't, and I give God all the praise for it.

We were not ones to take advantage of the system, but since my husband couldn't claim unemployment insurance due to the fact that he had been self-employed for many years, we decided to apply for food stamps to help us out. I must admit that standing in line to get our food stamps for the month and the embarrassment we felt at the check-out line at the grocery store was quite a humbling experience. The stamps, however, were only meant to provide food for families, so whenever we needed other items we had to pay cash for them. If we didn't have the money, then what did we do? Well, it was my habit - and still is - to double-check my receipts after each shopping trip at the grocery store and as it happened, every time we needed those items but didn't have the cash on hand, I would realize that I had been either overcharged for an item or charged twice for the same one. Therefore, the store would reimburse me *in cash* the amount owed to me which *always* equaled the purchase price of the items I needed to buy. Coincidence? I believe it wasn't, and I give God all the praise for it.

I must say that we experienced a major transformation in our lifestyle during those hard times. We learned to change our habits and found ways to cut our expenses as much as possible. At the grocery store, we chose the store brands for most of the items we purchased. Meat was a luxury, so we converted to lentils and pasta. We used every opportunity to reduce our electric bill by hanging clothes outside to dry, turning the water heater and the lights off when we didn't need them. No more hobbies with a price tag on it, no more cable to watch TV - the 'bunny ears' came back in style in our household -, no more trips, and I could go on and on.... We could certainly better relate to the many people out there who were living in the same or worse conditions.

After our financial struggles were over someone asked me: "I'm sure you'd like to forget about those days, right?..." And I replied: "Certainly not! For I never want to forget how God took such

good care of our family in our deepest needs. I never want to forget his goodness, faithfulness, love, mercy and compassion. He showed them all through the many deeds and wonders he has done for us.” And I know, he will do it again and again. That’s his promise! And what a better way to get rid of the blues by remembering the praiseworthy deeds God has done for me and my family!

I read a quote recently which really hit home: *‘Much of the work of faith consists in this: In bad times to remember the good, and in good times to remember the bad. Practicing the former gives birth to hope; practicing the latter aborts pride.’* Mike Mason, A Bright Tomorrow

© My Walks With God

You may reproduce part of the content of this website for non-commercial purposes only. May not be reproduced or featured on any other websites without permission of My Walks With God. For additional information or to obtain permissions, contact: mywalkswithgod@gmail.com