



Less Stress Press

The Midwest Center

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Dedicated to hope and help since 1984

Minute

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"The Midwest Center is committed to providing the individual with cost and time efficient cognitive behavioral based solutions - solutions that foster strength, character and self-empowerment."

"GOD DOESN'T MAKE JUNK"

I was doing a phone support call with someone who is struggling with depression. She remarked, "I know I'm getting better because I had an opportunity to commit suicide and I didn't do it." I asked for details...frankly, I was a bit concerned.

She said that her family had left her alone for a number of hours and she could have taken a lot of medicine and there wouldn't have been an intervention. I asked why she had chosen to live. She indicated that her family has been so supportive that she just couldn't cause them that pain. I told her I was thrilled that she stayed and happy that she appreciated her family's love, but that I hoped she would someday be a part of the reason she stayed...to live for herself.

She then stated, "Well, I tell myself all the time that God doesn't make junk."

That reminded me of the television show where they put a value on the things that people have stored in the garage or attic. I told my phone support caller that I could see her standing before God all dusty and disheveled saying, "Here I am, my name is Junk." Then God saying, "JUNK!? You get right back down there and try it again. You are worth millions and there is work for you to do. I didn't make Junk. I made Judy."

I assigned 5 simple, kind, respectful sentences that are to be said while brushing her teeth. "I am a good and worthy person. God loves me and I can do no less. My new thoughts are respectful. I am willing to change and grow. I am unique."

DON'T PANIC!

- Accept the feeling, it can't hurt you.
- Give yourself permission to feel anxious.
- Don't over-breathe. Breathe slowly through your nose.
- Calm yourself with positive self-talk.
- Let go. Just float and flow.
- Distract yourself, it is only anxiety.
- Use the adrenalin in a positive pursuit.
- Don't let a bad day scare you.
- Let time pass. IT WILL GO AWAY.

If you feel you would benefit from a personal coach,
please call (800-990-4692) for more information.

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Garage Sale or...

Speaking of "junk," I am in the process of getting rid of all items I haven't used in the last 10 years. (Hey, I have to make these changes gradually! I still can't bring myself to throw away my prom corsage.) I was forced to reassess my piles of "stuff" when it was decided that it was either modify the pack rat mentality or build a bigger house. Now mind you I reared 6 kids in a 3 bedroom house, eventually converted some of the basement into 2 more bedrooms, but am running out of room AFTER they are all off on their own. Hmmmm? Strange.

As I am making piles labeled: keep, toss, sell, I started to remember all the work involved in preparing for a garage sale, having the sale and cleaning up after the sale...didn't sound appealing at all. I no longer need to do these things so I can take all the kids to the fair! Hurrah! Life is getting easier.

I have decided rather than a Garage Sale, I am having a Driveway-Giveaway. I'm dumping everything in the driveway and putting up a big sign that says, "FREE STUFF."

Roses are red,
Violets are blue.
Poetry is healing,
For you.

So says an article worth finding in the May-August issue of Fibromyalgia AWARE magazine. Quoting: "Ancient Egyptians used to write words on papyrus, which could be dissolved ... ingested. ...Since the 1960's, many therapists and other health professionals have utilized a practice called "poetry therapy" to promote healing and personal growth. Writing poetry can help patients express their deepest feelings and experiences in a tangible way..."

The health benefits of writing in general have been documented in a number of scientific studies. A 1999 study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that patients with asthma or rheumatoid arthritis who wrote about stressful experiences in their lives actually experienced reduced symptoms. As the shortest form of written expression, poetry can help patients distill their thoughts and feelings into a manageable whole." Lisa Lorden

I sometimes feel like such a nag, but I can't help myself. Perhaps if I say it one more time, "Writing is healing," those that have not tried this tool will do so. Poetry might be the telegram of journaling, whatever you choose is for you to decide, just give it a month and see what you think.

I try to have at least one poem in each Less Stress Press published. The talents you all share with me, music, drawings, paintings, writings, ideas for recovery, never fail to humble me.

Assignment for this week: write a poem. See mine above? You as I may not make any money at it but we can make fun with it!

For those who know someone who suffers with fibromyalgia, look for AWARE magazine. I think it is informative and helpful. Call 714-921-0150, or e-mail nfa@fmaware.org

Also for your information: National Fibromyalgia Assoc., 2238 N. Glassell St., Suite D, Orange CA 92865 www.Fmaware.org

"I would like to start by saying thank you for making me feel more alive than I thought possible. I had my first panic attack when I was 20 years old...I was sitting reading the paper and I came across an ad for an evening anxiety seminar. I felt it was fate, but was afraid to go alone...I'll never forget the stories the man speaking told (Mike in Canada). My mother was shocked by them, I was relieved and even found myself laughing at some of them because hearing it from someone else I could actually see how humorous some of the fear's one has actually sound...

I started the program immediately after and now 3 years later there have been so many wonderful changes in my life. I am proud to say I am a recent college graduate and I feel better and more confident than ever before. My relationships get better all the time and I continue to find new things that I enjoy. For example, a few weekends ago I decided to explore your website (something I had not done before). I discovered the chat room, so I spent a few hours chatting with a few people like myself. It was an incredibly uplifting experience. I felt as though my words were really able to help those people. After I got off the computer I felt so energized...Kim Gowetor

THINGS THAT HELPED ME OVERCOME AGORAPHOBIA

By Connie Szollosi

- An open mind
- Relaxation tapes
- Writing down negatives and positives
- No caffeine
- EXERCISE
- Practicing patience
- Not taking everything and everybody so seriously
- Take time to live
- Take time to love
- "Fake it 'til you make it"
- SMILE
- Hard work
- Being mature
- Taking care of me
- Hug more – "A hug a day keeps the psychiatrist away"
- Hot leisurely baths, instead of rushed showers
- Don't expect
- Do something nice for someone else
- Make dreams come true – WAKE UP!

Just a thought: butterflies and love...we can't make either of those come and be with us but we have to be there when they come...or we'll miss them.