

August 24, 2016

How to replace fear of death with faith and maintain it with positivity:

Several months ago, I started to have severe pain, which soon became a part of my daily life. The doctor first diagnosed pneumonia followed by a diagnosis of bronchitis. Within a couple of months, I had lost 30 lbs. By then my chronic pain had become unbearable. I have never experienced this level of severe pain in my life. I was sent to a CAT scan and then the doctor found stage 4 lung cancer that had metastasized to other organs and bones. For managing the pain, I was given seventy two hour fentanyl patches combined with Oxycodone as needed while receiving chemotherapy for my cancer.

For a moment I need to explain an event 12 years prior that has allowed me to apply the lessons to my present situation. I, due to my alcohol abuse problem, did everything necessary to commit suicide except die. I refused to eat at the VA emergency room because I no longer had any hope for a life worth living. After this incident, I worked my twelve step program of Alcoholics Anonymous through which I was able to establish a strong faith in my higher power (a personal relationship with whom I call God). Unfortunately my disease of addiction was persistent. I then developed a cross addiction to casino machine gambling. Gambling had given me excitement that I hadn't found anywhere else. The flip side of that thrill was how bad I felt when I lost. I enrolled myself into the UPAC Problem Gambling Treatment Program where I learned a lot about myself and most importantly I developed a sense of compassion. I was extremely fortunate that the director of the UPAC Addiction Program, Sunnyo Pak, became my therapist. She taught me so much about faith, honor, and giving back, that these qualities became a crucial part of my life. For the first time in my life, my purpose in life became trying to help others.

Giving back is now my wonderful life's purpose. I thank God and ask for his will every day to help other fellow human beings. Twelve years ago His will was done, not mine. Otherwise my life would have ended prior to experiencing many of the most joyful years of my life.

The extraordinary realization that death is a crucial part of life, as is birth, but at the opposite end, has allowed me to understand and accept the fact that all of us will die – it is the completion of the cycle of life itself. I have lived a complete life and I am more comfortable in my own skin now than I thought would ever be possible. I am truly happy, content, and grateful for the 70 years I have been given. I was initially given 2-4 months to live, but to date it has been 6 to 10 months which seems a life time.

How can I possibly feel sorry for myself? I can't. My faith is 100% strong, leaving absolutely no room for fear. This is why I am happier now than I have ever been. And every day I thank my God for that. The pain has allowed me to grow with honor and love for others and myself.

There is a second person responsible for my absolute joy of life. A dear friend of mine, Robert Schonker, who 7 years ago faced his own mortality and had beaten the odds, gave me life changing advice when I asked how he did it. What he said changed my life, my attitude, and my perception of life. He said, "Bob, don't ever think life is 99% attitude. The 1% will bite you in the ass." He explained that opening even just a crack in the door of negativity will allow it to pour in like Niagara Falls. Remove negative things from your life in a tactful way.

The moral to my story.

When facing difficult times in your life, remember that having total faith in the absolute power of your personal relationship with your God, coupled with having a total positive attitude will allow faith to replace fear completely, and staying positive will allow the complete and joyful maintenance of true happiness, no matter what.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL IN THE ENLIGHTENMENT YOU WILL EXPERIENCE.