

FINDING PURPOSE IN THE PAIN

WORDS NEAL WILLIAMS

Throughout our lives, we all encounter seasons of adversity. Our pain doesn't always look the same and everyone is fighting a silent battle of their own. Whether it be physical, financial, mental, or emotional, we are always working to find a balanced state of being as we experience life's ups and downs.

When I was eight years old, I broke my arm. I had fallen from a tree in our front yard. My brother said that it would build character. I thought, "OK, but why did it have to be like THIS?" I learned that I wasn't made of glass. My experience served a purpose. In order for something good to come from my pain, I must accept it.

With such a strong guarantee of experiencing pain at some point in our lives, we have no other choice but to do something with our pain. It can serve us, or it can be a great disservice to our lives. If we wish for our pain to serve a purpose, we must practice acceptance. This is how we begin to find purpose in our pain.

HOW DO I GET OUT OF THIS PLACE AND HOW DO I HEAL?

Our first priority is to take action. Call a therapist, start a new course, go on a church retreat or a mission



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trip, join a home team, join the gym, or call Elevated Lifestyle Academy...

A writer named Ed Calderon always concludes his essays with the phrase: "Stillness is death." If we remain still for too long, we harden – outside and within. Our hearts respond to this kind of behavior in a slow, sorrowful way. Happiness is alive! Joy is not subtle, nor is laughter meant to be hidden.

If we want to live in a state of happiness or joy, we have to get moving, no matter how painful or small the first steps may be. When we stay in our pain, we will continue to suffer. We must rise up, walk through the pain and amidst the struggle.

WHAT DO I DO WITH MY EXPERIENCE AND THE SCARS LEFT BEHIND?

The personal outcome these experiences have on our lives will rely heavily on the actions we take to heal, the people we surround ourselves with, and the

environment we build for ourselves moving forward. This will determine the condition of our hearts in the end.

In 2013, I was a homeless alcoholic and addicted to drugs. Twelve years prior, I was a promising young athlete with charisma and a bright future. At age 27, I had lost everything, and my family did not want me inside of their homes. One day, I asked myself: How will I get out of this? That day, I decided to pursue recovery and to do the best with what I had been given.

Because of this decision and the actions that followed, I now show other young men and their families how to navigate through substance abuse and surrounding issues in their homes. The things that once haunted me are now the very same things that qualify me to carry out my purpose.

Your purpose will be much greater than your pain. Take action and take hope. The sun will rise.