

Hi.

I know what that is like to be down. There was a time when my life went through the darkest tunnel. The depression set in. I called it my black dog. It hounded me every day. Gnawing away at my brain. I was on my own after a divorce. Caring for three very young children. Feeling inadequate – lonely. I tried hard to shift and chase the dog, but it seemed I was wrestling with a giant I could not overcome.

Then I was sitting in my living room. On my own. The darkness descended. My thoughts crowded in with arguments – why go on? Suicide seemed the best way out. Three kids sleeping upstairs, in my darkness, didn't seem to matter. The pain on my life was overwhelming. Now what happened next is my story, yours will be different. However, the route I followed may not be your choice. I understand that. It is the end result that is important.

I had a religious background. Not a great one. It only deepened my guilt, fear and depression. I had a book lying on my table. I picked it up mindlessly leafing through it. Then my eyes caught a sentence. I can't remember it exactly. Its thrust was that when you are at your worst and the pain greatest, then you know you are carrying a cross. As in the Bible a Simon of Cyrene, can come alongside you. It was then I took the decision to pick up the phone and call the Samaritans.

I spent the next few hours talking to an unknown young man. He turned out to be my Simon of Cyrene. He listened. He reflected to me that he understood. He gently led me to take a fresh look at life. He let me see that I could deal with the black dog. He helped me see there were reasons to stay and not leave life. My life turned around. I seen the value of my wonderful kids. I seen the value of making decisions that would help me to take each minute and fill it with life. I later took a degree in Psychology and certified as a counsellor. I then discovered that the young man did something that I now know not to be the normal practice of the Samaritans. Perhaps it was that I had shared my unhappy religious background. But he ended the call by saying, "Find Jesus".

I can honestly say that, initially I was puzzled. I thought I had encountered Jesus. But then eventually I understood. The Jesus I thought I knew, was a religious figure clouded in the fear that religion had laid on me. Later I would discover how wrong I was. I would like to say I did find Jesus. The truth is he found me. It was then I discovered a loving man who understood my pain. I read the Bible differently. I saw him in the garden, in agony. I saw him abused and mis-treated. I saw him crucified. He understood my pain in a real way. I discovered love that replaced my fear. I discovered joy that replaced my depression. I believed in him. I told him all my troubles and heartaches. I told him about my sin and he give forgiveness. I would eventually be baptised alongside receiving the Holy Spirit – the Comforter. Did my life problems go away? No. Definitely not. However, I now had a strength beyond me to cope with life. There are reasons to stay. Reach out and don't suffer alone. There is help out there. You will be helped and you will discover new life new hope. There is a page here on the site <https://fenlandschurch.co.uk/mentalhealth.php> that has information and contacts. My email is admin@fenlandschurc.co.uk. Feel free to contact me.

Much love.

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