Combatting Depression and Working Towards Recovery

by CARLA SILVER

Fighting Depression and Climbing Out of the Pit

Motivating myself out of depression is an ideal accomplishment – one that would deserve some kind of award or certificate saying it was actually possible. I'm not saying it's *im*possible, but for me, especially around the holidays, it is a feat of epic execution.

My time in the pit is comfortable: I have my favorite blankets, a nice comfy pillow, cable TV and my handy Roku player to see me through the longest of days. Not even the stink of not showering can motivate me out of the proverbial pit, and that is something that I am ashamed and uncomfortable to say; however, it is the plain, unvarnished truth.

I can talk to you all day about what life is like in the pit, but you all already know. It isn't a place exclusive to me; it is a place where all of us who suffer from depression find ourselves at one time or another. The length of the stay varies with whatever crisis is currently upon us. Sometimes we find ourselves there because the highs got too high and we had to crash land somewhere.

When I'm tired of the pit and the stink becomes too much, I begin to see the outside, and what depression has stolen from me during my time "away". Make no mistake about it, depression is a thief. It steals time away from my children; it steals time away from getting ready to go back to school; it steals time away from the laundry, the dishes being washed, from the cat litter being cleaned; it steals energy; and probably the most important item it steals is joy.

Depression: A Brazen Thief

It is time we begin to see depression for what it really is: a thief. Until we can come to the point where we can clearly see what depression has stolen from our lives, it will continue to rob and leave us holding the bag.

And make no mistake, after depression has stolen what it can, it will make you pay. I paid. I paid with my marriage of 17 years, with my relationship with my oldest daughter, and with the trust of so many around me. The costs continue to pile up.

In order to claw your way out of the pit of depression, depression has to be called what it is, and dealt with as such. You have to see the things outside of the pit that depression is stealing right out from under your very nose. Whatever those things are to you personally, the thought of them being stolen from you has to anger you. That anger is where you'll find the motivation to get up and stop letting depression rob you, and those you love, blind.

Those years I could have fighting depression – fighting back against the stealing, the patterns of self-destruction, negative playbacks and against the acceptance of the dark clouds – are all gone. Gone. Like a whisper, or a breath. I cannot get them back. The dreams I have of walking back into my home and seeing my kids play and laugh and smelling the sheets where my husband slept are just that – *dreams.*

Make it real. Make a mental or actual written list of what depression has walked in and stolen from you. See if it makes you angry enough to decide that you will not let it steal any more from you and those you love and care about.

Shine the light on the thief. Call it out. Stop paying the price for its insolence. Stop handing over your life, your dreams, and your goals for the future. You can never get those things back.

Learn to live again. Learn to give only when you want to give.