



Important Phone Numbers

National Alliance on Mental Illness Help Line

1-800-950-6264 <https://www.nami.org/help>

Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800.273.TALK

Veteran's Crisis Line 800.273.8255 press 1

Pastoral Care—Pastor Jim Alexander 623.792.5295

<https://thepalms.org/Tools2Thrive>

May 16th is Mental Health Sunday

As we observe Mental Health Sunday, we share a personal testimony from one of our members. A part of ending the stigma of mental illness within our society is the sharing of journeys and the telling of stories related to mental health. As you read this sacred story, look for the ways God is prompting you to become more welcoming, inclusive, supportive, and engaged in the lives of people with mental health needs... we all do!

To Whom It May Concern:

I developed and suffered with mental illness for years. For today, the reasons aren't important. What is important is what I have learned on this journey, and how I can share it with you.

I know now that I am as normal as can be. Thanks be to God. I just have some scars that are still healing. I need to take 10 mg. of medication to keep my serotonin to drip normally in my brain.

I went through it feeling like I was numb to life and living. Was it frustrating? Was I feeling helpless? Had I lost sight of my personal relationship with my Heavenly Father? Now I know He had never lost sight of me. He still had me in His care. He taught me to never stop praying.

When one develops a mental illness, so many loved ones suffer also. I am indebted to my family who loved me through this. I am thankful to God for He loved me into wholeness.

I thank the Lord for the gift of faith that started very early in my life with my favorite Sunday School teacher, Mrs. Poehler. She taught us little ones about God and His love for us. She taught us lovely Sunday School songs. She opened up my eyes, my heart, and my love for others. I loved her Godly peace. My favorite

hymn is still, "Jesus Loves Me."

The other side of suffering is an even closer walk with the Lord. When I came to Arizona, my doctor that prescribed my medication said to me, "I am amazed! For the situation you were in, you should be on about six different medications. But, you are on a minimal amount of medication. How can this be?" I told him I prayed to God for help. And I received it."

Please know that we all need the love that Jesus set as an example: forgiveness, understanding, a feeling of worthiness, not feeling alone...like we are on the outside looking in. We can all talk about mental illness, but would we invite someone into our hearts and homes who had or has a mental illness? Could you accept them right where they are, like Jesus does?

Jesus is the answer. But, He could use your help not to judge others, but to love one another. Please be concerned about one another and be concerned enough to help.

I dedicate this letter to my brother, who died by suicide in his early 60s. We love him and miss him. May God continue to bless you as he so graciously has blessed me and my precious family.

Now you know who it concerns: all of us!