

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a teal awareness ribbon. The ribbon is looped and draped across the hand. The background is dark and out of focus.

PTSD!

VICTIM?

ENJOY THE PETALS

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PTSD!



VICTIM?

Are you living with PTSD, or living with someone with PTSD? This is a revision of my first book because I realized that I need to “choose LIFE over strife”, and I wanted to tone down the “feelings” in regards to a marriage experience I had, being married to someone with PTSD. Sometimes people are like guns, we all have triggers! Some people have triggers because of their childhood experiences, military experiences; and some people have triggers because they have experienced something traumatic such as sexual assaults.

Life is a journey, with moments! Some are happy! Some are sad! Some are angry! And these moments are happening as we’re just trying to get through this journey called LIFE! Some of these moments we experience we didn’t ask for or want, yet they happened.

In this journey called LIFE, circumstances (moments) can be exciting, happy, overwhelming, and painful. It could be getting married, the birth of a child, it could be the loss of a loved one by separation, divorce, or death! We all handle “moments” differently because of how we were raised, and what type of home environment we grew up in. Regardless of the moments that you are experiencing, I want to encourage you to NOT make unhealthy decisions because of the emotional pain that you are feeling. Unhealthy actions/reactions are only going to cause you to feel more pain, feel more frustrations, feel more angry about this journey called LIFE.

Without being “religious”; I must for eternity's sake encourage you to allow Jesus, the word of God, to have an influence on your mind, will, and emotions. Breathe! Stop!! Don't act/react with ugliness! Choose LIFE over STRIFE!! And when those ugly thoughts are swimming in your mind, choose LIFE over STRIFE and you'll make healthy decisions. This too shall pass!

I married an African American woman; a beautiful young lady; she was a 15 year retired veteran (staff sergeant) and she was 100% disabled with PTSD. I met her on November 4th, and married her on Christmas Day! WHAT? Yes I did! I “felt” she was a gift from God. I really did! I really really did! My credit scores are in the 800's so I don't think I am irresponsible of a person. I married her on Christmas Day because I thought she was a gift from God. I believed it so much that I sold my paid for house, an acre of land, left a corporate job with retirement and benefits and the journey called LIFE was on! However, 2 months shy of 3 years, we're divorced. Did I miss God? I don't think so!

I had dreams! I thought we were going to have this beautiful marriage; however, it was challenging as any relationship would be. I had my “issues” or my “triggers”; and she had her “triggers” or PTSD. Relationships are challenging regardless of how long two people know each other. It didn't help that we had known each other for less than 2 months? Whether you have known a person for 30 days, 3 months, 3 years, or 30 years, do we ever really KNOW them? A pastor of Harvest Time in Port Arthur, TX told me “people are like shifting sand”, never knowing how they will be feeling because most of us are ruled by our emotions and feelings. Life is always changing, and we're always going to have to be making adjustments because of the moments each of us are experiencing and or feeling.

Have challenging relationships? I'm encouraging you to build your life, marriage, relationships on the truth of God's word. What does that mean? That your actions/reactions are being influenced by Jesus, the word of God, instead of how you feel. Regardless of how it turns out; YOU (and possibly your marriage) will flourish like a Rose in the midst of the thorns of LIFE. Scripture reminds us that when we build our lives on the word of God, then when the storms of LIFE come, that house/marriage will stand. (Matthew 7:24-27). One's LIFE, marriage can flourish! However you NEED to FEED your mind, will, and emotions with the word of God. The scripture says "pray in all respects, that you may prosper in all things (including relationships) and be in health as your soul prospers. (III John 3:2) You will NEED to FEED your mind with the word of God to flourish. There's going to be moments that you'll ask yourself "Did I miss God?" We all make decisions based on lusts, feelings, emotions, and or dreams. Regardless the GOOD NEWS is TODAY you can allow yourself to be influenced by the word of God; meaning your actions/reactions (decisions) are in harmony with God's word and your life/relationships can flourish like a Rose in the midst of the thorns in LIFE.

Take Responsibility! I take responsibility that I should have courted this young lady longer, and really gotten "to know" her before asking her to marry me. Our cultures/personalities clashed? I am Caucasian and she is African American, and we dealt with things differently. With the PTSD outbursts I didn't know how to act/react with love and tenderness. (And it didn't help that I grew up in an environment of violence, and little love). I had a father that woke me up in the middle of the night to point a gun at my mother lying in bed; and I can remember seeing my dad chase my mom around the house with a sword. So growing up like this, none of this is my ex wife's fault because I am the man that is supposed to love her as Christ loves the church.

I had been celibate for a few years so did that have an influence on my rushing into a marriage? By the way I am a “jingles” kind of person. How did I overcome sexual immorality? I would sing “Today! Today! I am born again! Yesterday is gone! So are my sins!” Why the jingles? The scripture says “singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs among yourself, and making music to the Lord in your hearts”. (Ephesians 5:19-21). Singing “Today! Today! I am born again” will help you make healthier choices. And born again believers shouldn't be getting involved in sexual immorality. (I Thessalonians 4:3)

Do you have struggles? Sing “Today! Today! I am born again”! You will NOT do certain things as you walk in BEING born again TODAY! The last sentence “Yesterday is gone! So are my sins!” is important because the mercies of God are new and fresh every day; and we're going to stumble in this journey called LIFE. Sing that jingle and watch yourself walk victorious BEING a Christian!

Not born again? Scripture says “whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”. (Romans 10:13). And it doesn't stop there! Allow Jesus, the word of God to have an influence on your mind, will, and emotions EVERYDAY and your life will flourish like a Rose in the midst of the thorns of LIFE. Our Lord God withholds no good thing from those who allow Jesus, the word of God to be an influence in their lives. (Psalm 84:11)

I got the privilege of meeting this beautiful person, and I have wondered “ would I have married her, had I known what I know now”. Would I have married her, had I known she was 100% PTSD and prone to those outbursts? Outbursts that were triggered by my not saying the right things or not doing the right things. Some outbursts triggered just because of mood changes, because of her thoughts and feelings.

Again we all have triggers!! We all have flaws! Flaws! Flaws! We all have flaws! We all have scars! So let's pause, before we act/react towards another because of their flaws!

Relationships are challenging; especially marriage! Everyone has their own wants, their own needs. I was striving to work through this marriage. I knew the failure of my first marriage was 100% my fault, this was my second marriage, this was her fourth marriage and I was striving to work through the differences; even the outbursts. I "thought" I was giving it my all; however everyone has a different opinion about what GIVING is and what LOVE is.

I want to take a moment and remind ourselves what LOVE is. "Love is patient, love is kind, love is not jealous, love does not brag, love is not arrogant, love does not act unbecomingly, love does not seek its own, love is not easily provoked, loves does not take into account a wrong suffered. Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness, love rejoices with truth, love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. LOVE NEVER FAILS (I Corinthians 13:1-8) Such pretty words, yet challenging to walk in them. Choose LIFE over STRIFE.

Do you want help in walking in love? I do! This truth is helping me and will help you walk in love. We become what we speak! Life and death is in the power of our tongue! With our mouth confession is made unto salvation. I want to encourage you to speak these words of LIFE. "I am a gentle person", "I am tender hearted", "I am a forgiving person", "I will enjoy this day with God's love". Stop! Don't just read these words! With our mouth confessions are made unto salvation. So say those words out loud! "I am a gentle person", "I am tender hearted", "I am a forgiving person", "I will enjoy this day with God's love".

How are you and I born again? How are you and I going to walk in love? Because with our heart we believe and with our mouth we confess Jesus Christ is Lord and that's another reason why I sing this jingle: "Today! Today! I am born again". (Because of Jesus) and "Yesterday is gone! So are my sins! And I remind you gently the scripture says "love one another for God is love, and the person who does not love is not allowing God to have an influence in their heart.

It was a wild experience being married to someone with PTSD. Are you in a challenging relationship? Do you have a family member with a physical ailment or mentally challenged that needs a lot of care and attention? Outside of a physically abusive relationship, you got this! The Love of God has been shed abroad in your heart by the influence of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 5:5)

Are you getting something out of the book? We all deal with experiences. Life is a journey with moments! Hopefully you are encouraged, it's not just YOU dealing with "issues", dealing with feelings of unappreciation, either at home, work, or in LIFE! Thank you for taking the time to read this E-book. Here to encourage you, it's going to be okay! Live TODAY! Yesterday is gone! Tomorrow is not here! LIFE is a journey with all kinds of moments. Regardless of what you have gone through to get you where you are TODAY, you are loved by our Creator and his son Jesus! You are LOVED! LOVED! LOVED! You are LOVED!

Jesus Christ is aware of your heartaches, frustrations, and struggles in life, and he knows why you are where you are right now! (Be sure to read this poem TO Someone Special in the back of the book) Life has different maturity levels, similar to a baby who crawls, then walks, then one day becomes an adult and is running. You need to go through what you are going through, to get to the next maturity level necessary in this journey called LIFE. To reach the next level, you can't get entangled in the thorns of life. Thorns such as immorality, anger, bitterness, hatred, hostility, jealousy, racism, strife, and ugliness; so you'll have to allow your mind, will, and emotions to be influenced by Jesus, the word of God.

I was married two months shy of 3 years; she had filed three times, so I didn't really know I was divorced for like two months after I was divorced. Also I had spent most of the 3 years married, renting rooms, not living in the same house, still contributing financially because I was told "that is what a man does that loves his wife", and I couldn't figure out how to act/react because the experiences were so different. Screamed at because the bouquets of flowers were too small, screamed at because I didn't act or say something a certain way, screamed at because she came out of the bathroom and I wasn't in the house because I had gone to check the mail, screamed at because when filling up her car with gas, I didn't top it off another \$2.00 when it clicked off, screamed at because I had taken an hour and half detour because of an accident, and I was wanting appreciation and she screamed "that's what a man does that loves his wife". So many outbursts! So many that I am changing the conversation! However outside of those outbursts, it was a beautiful marriage, and I loved her, I really really did!

I had friends who asked me, why do you put up with this? They also have said: "You married an African American woman, a strong black woman, 15 years retired as Staff Sergeant, and 100% PTSD, you didn't have a chance". I got yelled at because we were walking out of my office and I went one way and she went a different way. I always opened the car door for her, yet have been yelled at because I wasn't standing in the right spot to grab her hand as she was getting out, screamed at because I stepped up on a curb before she stepped up. I have been screamed at when I brought my paycheck home, being accused of it being a doctored paycheck. I was told to sit in a closet for like 30-45 minutes till she came and led me out by the hand. So many outbursts! Let me stop! I choose LIFE over STRIFE! How does one write about PTSD and not share a few of the experiences? I didn't share ALL of them, I promise! And then I consider Jesus, who has knocked on the door of my heart, while I was rebellious, living a hypocritical life, and lovingly Jesus kept knocking on the door of my heart, and I didn't start BEING a Christian until after I visited Harvest Time in Port Arthur, TX on Jimmy Johnson Blvd. I encourage you to visit when you're in the area. This is beautiful! Jesus stands at the door of your heart! Jesus doesn't throw our sins up in our face. The scripture says "He has removed our sins as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our sins/wrongdoings from us". (Psalm 103:12). Meditate on that scripture for a few minutes.

I personally know that I prayed and prayed, made confessions, went to church weekly, tithed, fasted, made godly decisions, however that doesn't change the will of another person. It takes two to build a ""marriage/relationship. Whether it's a spouse, a family member, or Jesus, it takes two to build a relationship. However don't get bitter, and be a quitter in regards to praying for them. The word of God reminds us that Jesus is at the right hand of God and interceding for you and I (Romans 8:34), that Jesus is our advocate with the Father (I John 2:1), and that Jesus always lives to intercede for us (Hebrews 7:25). Don't get BITTER and be a QUITTER praying for them.

Breathe! Life is a journey with moments that were created by decisions, with moments that were created by our own decisions, and decisions that have been made by others. We have to learn to live with those moments acting and reacting in love and forgiveness. Do I regret marrying her? NO! I don't! I look at who I am today, and I am eternally grateful as TODAY I am living BEING a Christian. I don't blame God! I am not mad at God, I am not mad at her! I will always love this individual because I see who I am today, and who I wasn't then. Marriage/Relationships reveal who we are and who we are not.

I thought I was demonstrating love, for example: she needed packing tape, Home Depot was blocks from her house, yet I drove an hour and half to bring her packing tape because with her PTSD, she didn't like getting out. I am not sorry for the marriage experience though it didn't last 3 years. In my marriage, I would often hear these words "if you don't do it, I'll get someone else who will" and with my past history of having life selfishly, rebellious to the things of God, I took those words seriously and I kept doing/giving because I wanted our marriage to succeed and I thought "this is what a man does that loves his wife", and with my previous past of robbing banks, drug trafficking, and usually dating "dancers ", so I thought it was part of growing up experience and becoming a man. I had disclosed my past to her, however she didn't disclose having PTSD, would it have mattered? I am not sure it would have mattered had I known, and then I look at who I am, and am becoming today, so I don't have complaints; as much as I do have hurts. Romans 8:28 reminds us "we know in everything; in all things; that God works for the good of those who love him."

I can see the truth in Proverbs 19:2 in being excited about something, and rushing into a decision is not always enough. Yes! I know you can accomplish great things when you're excited! I graduated valedictorian of the fire academy because I was excited about becoming a firefighter. I built up a mortgage company, Golden Vault, started the company out of my house and then grew into an office with over 30 employees within 2 years, personally making ½ million a year, because I was excited about it. I've reached millions with the poem "To Someone Special" because I was excited to share the gospel. Excitement is awesome! However you need God's wisdom DAILY to build something that will last. The word of God reminds us "unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain". (Psalm 127:1).

In regards to BEING a Christian, I want to remind you that you are a Christian because you are born again! The word of God says you and I have born again “not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed which is the word of God. (I Peter 1:23) Then why are “Christians” living hypocritical lifestyles? Why is there a 50% divorce rate even in church? Because they’re not allowing Jesus, the word of God, to have an influence on their mind, will and emotions. Jesus reminds us that he is the vine, we are the branches. To reflect the fruits of the Holy Spirit; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23) we must stay connected to Jesus, the word of God. If you’re not walking reflecting fruits of the Holy Spirit, then others will see you as “false prophets, and wolves in sheep's clothing?

Life is a journey! What do you think? Sometimes it is like a roller coaster experience! Sometimes you’re holding to the hand rail with your eyes tightly closed, other times, you’ve got your hands in the air yelling and screaming; laughing. Life is filled with all kinds of moments. We all have our own experiences that we are dealing with or have dealt with. Be tenderhearted! Don’t accuse others of “playing the victim” or telling them “don’t be a little b**tch. I heard that often in our marriage. We have one shot in this journey called LIFE! And LIFE will not be fair! Not fair for you! Not fair for others! Allow Jesus to have an influence on your mind, will, and emotions regardless of how unfair LIFE is. Jesus said “love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you belittle you”. (Matthew 5:44)

In this journey called LIFE; our painful experiences can teach us so much. Our Creator can take a situation that seems like a tornado, and bring calmness. I am not proud of how I have acted/reacted in some of the situations in the marriage. And you'll have moments that you're not proud of! So sing with me "Today! Today! I am born again! Yesterday is gone! So are my sins". (Because of Jesus)

Yield to the nature of Christ within you! Don't allow anger, bitterness, hatred, hostility, racism, strife get into your heart! "See to it that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled". (Hebrews 12:15 Bitterness creates ugliness! Control your thoughts and you'll control your emotional actions/reactions. Enjoy this day with God's love in your heart!!

Because of the nature of Christ within you (as born again believers) you can act/react in love and forgiveness. I realize at times "it's not easy". You're dealing with emotions of hurt, anger, and frustrations while being belittled, possibly being used. I remind you of Jesus leaving us an example, while being abusively insulted, he did not insult in return; while suffering, he did not threaten, but kept entrusting himself to HIM who judges righteously". (I Peter 2:21-25) As you and I look to Jesus, the word of God and allow him to have an influence on our mind, will, and emotions, then you and I can find healing and strength. We will flourish like a Rose in the midst of the thorns in LIFE. You'll not be a victim because greater is he who lives within you!

(I John 4:4)

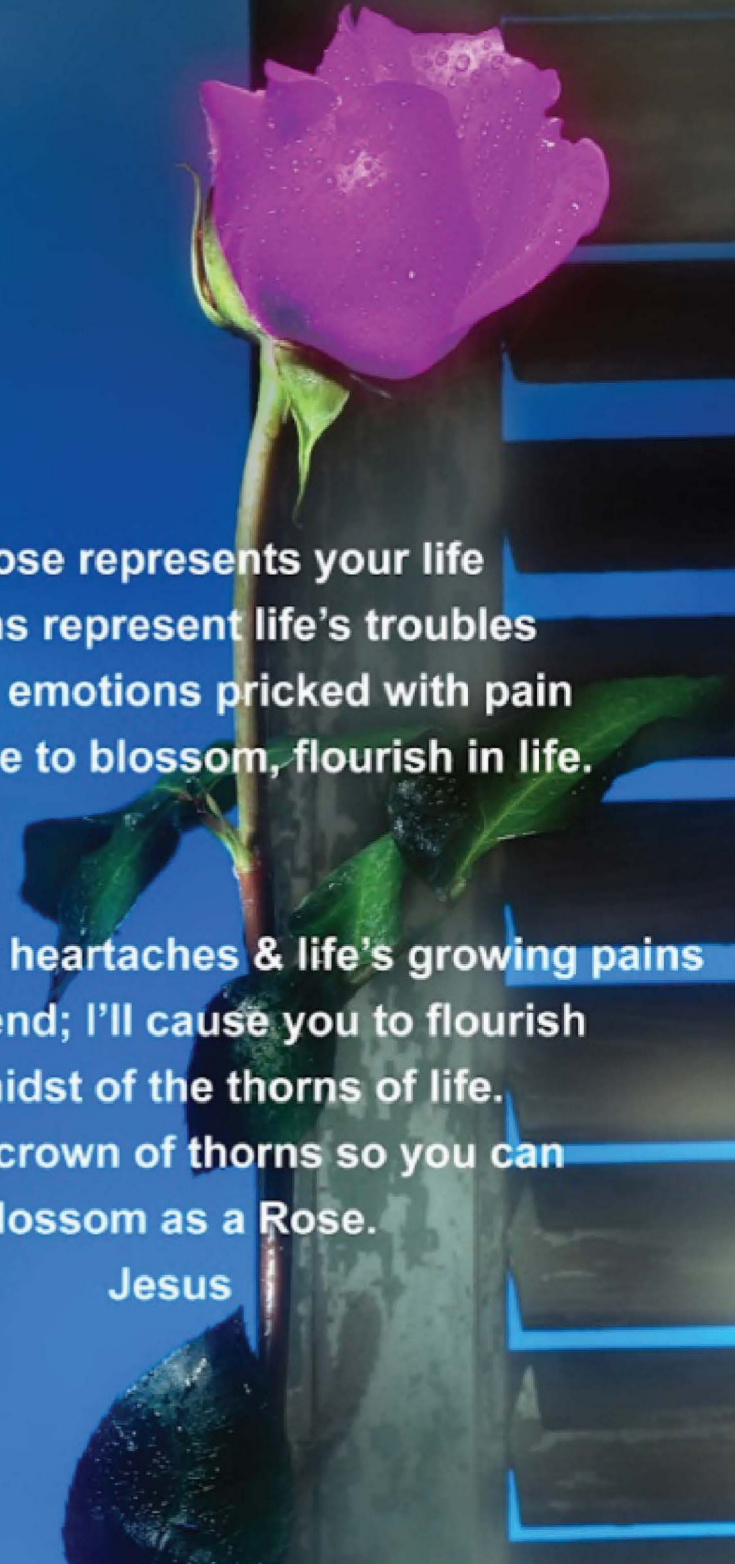
There are moments in this journey called LIFE that are final, and the pain hurts so deep. Alcohol/Drugs can't soothe the pain enough, can they? Jesus is aware of your heartaches, and your hurts! You can express your frustrations to him. No relationship is easy; however if you're willing to put in the work and put in the effort: Jesus will respond accordingly! Jesus loves you and will never let you go!! Jesus will never give up on you, no matter how challenging the situation may be. Don't react towards those who hurt you with anger, bitterness, and ugliness! Bless them as Jesus reminds us. They didn't know better! They are hurting within themselves! Speak healing and blessings upon them.

LIFE is beautiful! We have to find and see the beauty of LIFE, the beauty of people regardless of the "moments" and keep your faith. ENJOY THE PETALS of life, ENJOY THE PETALS of your relationships. I have no ugliness towards this young lady! Pain? Yes! (I still cry daily) I am sorry that our marriage didn't flourish, it's not as if I didn't try. I promise! I tried! Blessings upon her! For eternities sake: Let's reflect the nature of Jesus Christ in our relationships> REMEMBER! Look to Jesus, allow him, the word of God to influence your mind, will, and emotions, and you'll flourish like a Rose in the midst of the thorns in LIFE.

PTSD?Mental Health is a crisis in today's society! Thank you for reading this E-book! Hopefully you have been enriched and your life will flourish because of the nutrients in this book. Be sure to visit our products page; we're reaching millions of souls for the kingdom God

Enjoy the Petals of LIFE

To Someone Special



This Rose represents your life
The thorns represent life's troubles
Your heart, emotions pricked with pain
As you strive to blossom, flourish in life.

I'm aware of your heartaches & life's growing pains
I'm your friend; I'll cause you to flourish
In the midst of the thorns of life.
I wore the crown of thorns so you can
Blossom as a Rose.

Jesus