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HEALTHY SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR MIND

4 Things That Relieved My Depression and Restored My Faith in God

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“If you’re pregnant in the church, you get a casserole, if you have a cold, you get a casserole, you get a casserole for everything. You say that if you have mental illness, you don’t get a casserole. What’s the equivalent of a casserole for people with mental illness?”

-Amy Simpson, "Troubled Minds"

Hi all! My name is [Brian Caley](#) and I have PTSD, severe depression, and severe anxiety. My life was changed when I read Dr. Stanford's book "[Grace for the Afflicted](#)". At last I felt like someone outside my circle understood the struggle. At this point in my life I feel like the healed demoniac at Gerasene, sent forth

and wanting to share the good news that Christ has done for me. I would like to share **4 things that helped me on my faith journey** (in no particular order):

#4 My wife's relieving communication.

My lovely wife Ruth is my greatest supporter; our in-joke is if she dies first I am nominating her for sainthood. The main thing that has helped me from her is that she can explain things and tell me things without judging me or making me feel stupid. She was never afraid to tell me "it's ok to feel that way" or "it's not ok to act this way". It took us a long time and many intense conversations to get to the point we are. But trust me, it's worth working on communication.

"I learned about redemptive suffering and how Christ desires me to be made whole ... I was meant to use these illnesses for a greater purpose."

#3 My community changed my lukewarm faith to a loving faith.

When I married Ruth I was a lukewarm Catholic at heart. I was told my illnesses were the result of a lack of faith, and I needed to "trust God and pray more". This lukewarmness changed the day I joined an online Catholics with Depression support group. The new support system made all the difference and I fell back in love with my Catholic faith. The outpouring of love from this group was overwhelming. I made several new friends and we all help each other.

#2 My relationship with Jesus was no longer distant, but active.

My relationship with Jesus also changed over time. No longer was he a distant figure who felt alien to me in my illnesses. Instead He was now an active part of my life. I read about the lives of saints who had mental illnesses and how they offered up their sufferings. I learned about redemptive suffering and how Christ desires me to be made whole with Him in the picture. I was meant to use these illnesses for a greater purpose.

#1 My eyesight of a Good God meant He saw me with immeasurable value.

The faith journey looks differently for everyone. There were days I didn't want to get out of bed and face the day. But now I know that God has not left me nor forsaken me in the times my illnesses were at their worst. Instead, I now see myself in a different light; no longer do I feel worthless or beyond hope. In fact, I know the truth: that God sees me as a being of immeasurable value. No illness can take that value away. I pray, dear reader, that you see yourselves the way God sees you.

God Bless!

Brian

Brian Caley is the founder of the Behold Project, a blog focused on giving a voice to Christians with mental illness. He can be reached on <https://www.thebeholdproject.com> or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/thebeholdproject. He resides in Pennsylvania with his wife Ruth and two cats.

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