

Cold Soup, Gritty Eggs, and Soggy Waffles

If I were to write a book or article about my current situation, the above would be the title!

Greetings to family and friends who I love and care deeply about. When I look back on the past few years, I basically dropped out of contact with all of you. It is hard to know where to begin to bring y'all up to the present. I am now living at a skilled nursing facility. I've been here for about three years, somewhat off and on (mostly here for therapy the first half of my stay). It seems, unless things dramatically change, that this'll be my final residence.

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And Now The Rest Of The Story:

This place is one of the better "homes" in the area. I have a private room with some of my personal things. I add more stuff as time goes on and as I realize more and more that this is my home. I've been unable to be on my own this past year. I was falling too often and no longer safe being alone. I had moved to my sister's place in Hiram, OH and had a nice little area in her above ground basement. I had a bedroom/tv/computer room, my own bathroom, and a kitchen of sorts. It worked out nicely until the falling started. The EMTs were making regular visits; "I've fallen and I can't get up!"

The straw came when I fell three times in 24 hours. The EMTs said I was at my limit! They hauled me out and I was headed to the hospital. After a lot of prodding and poking a young foot doc figured out that I had a major infection in my right foot. In the process I gave up my little toe and had a good-sized hole in my heel. They scraped/removed the infected areas and I was considered good to go.

My heel is still healing but is still very painful. Although I have no real proof, I spent the first three years after moving to Ohio driving the Amish. My right foot was my accelerator foot and with the hundreds of miles of driving I developed a sore on my heel. We did treat it but it apparently got infected anyway. The upside to all this is that I made a lot of good friendships among the Amish.

The surgery on my foot put me on my back in bed for about six months because I was hooked up to a wound vac. I eventually got loose from the vac and graduated to a wheelchair. A few months ago I was given an “electric” chair. I had a couple weeks of drivers ed and passed the driving test. I am now able to get out and about.

Prior to my Ohio adventure, I was in Odessa, TX, Flossmoor, IL, and Austin area, TX. The last contact I had with many of you was when I was in Odessa, Texas. During that time I had been able to develop a fantastic counselor education program (my opinion of course). The major emphasis was on Adlerian counseling and included some elements of Individual Psychology in all the Masters courses.

I brought in many good friends to present workshops on various Adlerian topics. This was all done at no expense to the university. With the kindness of these friends and nominal charges to the students, we were able to broaden the learning experiences offered in the counseling program. I had tremendous support from the Dean in terms of the program that I was able to offer. However, he decided to retire and the new Dean didn't have the same attitude about what I was doing.

Mary and I decided to not stay at UT Permian Basin and Odessa even though we had many good friends, I was a full professor and Mary had an excellent job at the Educational Service Center. The opportunity came up to accept a position at Governors State University in Illinois. We moved to Flossmoor, Illinois after 13 years in Odessa. GSU had an excellent program and I really looked forward to the change. Mary was happy to be closer to her family in Ottawa. I discovered that I had to shift from thinking like the “Lone Ranger” to be that of a “team player.” That was not an easy transition for me!

The Department Chair that hired me retired at the end of the first semester I was there and my Adlerian approach was not held in favor by the new Chair. It was a very competitive environment which became uncomfortable for working there. The worst blow was the denial of a promotion to full professor. It didn't help that I had failed a student in practicum. I decided to semi-retire. I had been teaching at the Adler School in Chicago so continued on there teaching one course. I also worked a few days a week at an Adlerian counseling center.

I don't remember the year but approximately 10 years ago, Mary made a suicide attempt. I had an extremely difficult time dealing with it; was not being very effective with my teaching or with my clients. I also resigned the NASAP presidency to which I had been recently elected. (Steve Stein graciously took over and was an excellent president in my stead.). I pretty much gave up on everything. Decided to go back to Texas and wound up in the Austin area. I made some bad decisions financially and, being basically broke, I moved to my sister's in Hiram.

I've discovered a new skill set as a Bingo caller. I work three days a week, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, calling numbers for a group of the residents. We play about an hour or so and winners are awarded small prizes. I also have taken over as a co-organizer of this facility's reading library. Not too many of the 80 or so people here are readers, but those who are deserve some degree of organization.

Now you have it! The days are relatively routine. Sundays are the most boring. I seem to keep busy most days. Just to keep up a positive attitude about being here I've adopted the following belief:

If you can't do what you do, do what you can!

I'd love to hear from you.

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