5 Tips When You're Scared With Liver Disease

When I need solace or solitude, I think of the arms of a tree where, as a child, I found safety in the shade of its large leaves.

May 29, 2021 By Karen Hoyt

Feeling safe while living with cirrhosis is not always easy. Eleven years ago this May, an ambulance ride to ER saved my life. A massive varices bleed had come on suddenly. It took 7 units total, of plasma and whole blood, to stabilize my body. Now I want to share what I learned with 5 Tips when you're scared with liver disease.

I was brain foggy and in a scary dream like state, but from time to time, I could see family members sleeping on the couch or sitting by my bed. It was a humbling experience that shook me to the core. If you're looking for safety, try looking both internally, and externally to find comfort.

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Inside and Outside Comfort

External – We look for appropriate medical care. You may not have had a bleed out, but may need paracentesis. Perhaps you are taking lactulose or other medications and simply need to know that someone can help you get the meds you need or take you to and from a procedure. You may need to rely on helpers, such as family and friends. If you find yourself alone, let the nursing staff know if you need emotional support. Access to good medical care can fill in all the other gaps.

Shelter – Knowing that we have a roof over our head brings comfort. Having a place to call home, where we have a space of our own means everything. When I was a child, we had a big house, but 4 children. Sometimes things got loud – especially if mom and dad were fighting. (Click to read how he quit drinking) I always retreated to my catalpa tree. With a nice fork near the ground, I could shimmy up and hide in the shade of the large leaves to find safety.

Even today, when I need solace, or solitude, I think of the arms of that tree. It's a symbol of peace and safety that always comforts. Of course there were worms to deal with, but life isn't perfect, you know? It was my place, and even though the old tree is now dead, I still visit it in my mind, and snap pics of trees I find. I know that finding your happy place isn't easy if your basic needs are not met. Again, if you don't feel like you have stable housing, reach out during your next medical provider visit. Don't face that alone.

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