Getting Through Hepatitis C Treatment: How a Thankfulness Journal Helped Me

June 25, 2013 By Connie M. Welch

In getting through Hepatitis C treatment and post treatment recovery, patients discover many helpful tools. Keeping a Thankfulness Journal was one of the tools that empowered me to take the harshness of treatment and turn it inside out to see more good than bad.

Let me preface this by saying, I knew I had could not do treatment or even see thankfulness through treatment and recovery without God's help. I relied on His strength, not mine.

When treatment side effects were raging I had to choose by an act of my will not my emotions, to ask the Lord to show me things to be thankful for in each moment.

I did not want the enemy of despair and depression to take me on a wild emotional roller coaster ride. Pardon my southern expression, but "when you're being dragged through a knothole backwards" you better be looking for something besides the bad or you'll go crazy.

I made intentional choices each day to be active in God's Word and look at treatment through the precision lens of binoculars focusing on all the positive things going on instead of the negative.

My Thankfulness Journal

I was "Wowed" each day. I could have recorded more things than my thankfulness journal could hold, but I chose to list only ten each day. My thoughts needed to rest on all there was to be thankful for and what God was doing through the treatment.

Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things He does for me. Psalm 103:2

My focus during treatment was not only on killing the virus, but being on a joy hunt. It ushered in hope, healing and gratitude. It helped give each day a bright purpose. My circumstances did not change, but my attitude and actions did. My mental, emotional and spiritual state was uplifted and I am convinced it had positive effects on my physical body.

My physical body felt the roller coaster effects of Hep C Treatment but the rest of me was standing on solid ground. I know without a doubt, Christ being my anchor and all the good things He was doing in the midst of the storm, I would not have done as well as I did.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life. Psalm 138:7

I knew prior to beginning treatment it was important to build my arsenal and have strong armor going into battle. Hep C and treatment side effects were going to attack on all fronts. Preparation was vital.

Thankfulness changes your focus. It helps you to look outside of yourself and your situation. There is always so much more to be grateful for than not. When our focus is solely on our circumstances and negative outcomes, we're setting ourselves up for disappointment, despair, depression, resentment, the list goes on. These emotions then effect our actions and our health.

Need I say more! Everything begins with our thought process and attitude and that defines our day!

One bad thought can lead to a negative attitude, which can lead to bad choices and actions. The same goes for good thoughts, Thankfulness and Focusing on God and His word. These things bring God's peace and allows Him to show us life from His perspective, not ours.

Carole Lewis mentions in her book, "A Thankful Heart," Researchers have discovered that those who keep thankfulness journals on a daily basis exercise more regularly, have fewer health problems and make greater progress toward important personal goals. Gratitude-journalers experience less depression and handle stress more effectively. In addition, they have more energy and vitality. They even sleep better at night!"

When we choose Thankfulness, our day is defined by all the good things God is doing. We are full of gratitude; appreciation which is reflective in our attitudes, and our actions. Choosing to be Thankful is a proactive choice that changes who we are and our outlook on life. One choice begets another. Which will you choose today?

Has Thankfulness played a role in your life? I'd love to hear your thoughts.

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