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College Writing 1~Monday 2:20pm

### The Hospital - New Life - Directions Needed

Among the chapters in my life's story, the two weeks I spent in the hospital dealing with anxiety and depression have undoubtedly had the most significant influence on my future. A plague of devastating events that seemed endless left me consumed with grief. I had suffered so much loss of things and people that I thought I could not survive without, that I began to fear that God would not provide a life for me that I would have wanted, and eventually I came to believe that He did not. The enormity of lies I had been believing about myself my whole life had overtaken every ounce of hope that I had that my life could get better. I subscribed to a narrative that left me feeling justified believing that what has occurred is the end of anything good happening in my life. That is when a Christian therapist suggested that I move from "hostility to hospitality", and I could not have anticipated that I would end up in a hospital to learn how to do that.

I arrived at the Morristown Behavior Center after I began experiencing loss of breath that felt like I ran a marathon with only a straw available to access air. I gave an account of what I had endured within the last years.

I believed that the childhood trauma I endured qualified me to use what I learned during that adversity to help teens or just anyone who felt like a minority. I was blessed with a makeup career in television which gave me the resources to give my testimony and purpose. And when that did not turn out the way I thought I was left stuck, suffering from all the judgements that

said there is something wrong with me. Can't be grateful for what you feel entitled to. And sting of betrayal and the awareness of who people were not what I built them up to be.

I was able to identify with those in the hospital who were in despair over the monstrosity of life they did not wish to endure anymore. We all trusted the lies of other people's judgments, and the lies that our circumstances were unredeemable. And worse, that our lives were going to be unredeemable, we feared the future and hated the past. We were all stuck in a life filled with pain heaped on you that is so unfair that you are left demanding God's justice. But God. But God strengthened my shattered spirit to encourage them and myself that if we calculated our circumstances with just an ounce of hope in God, that it would be okay. It had to be, we all had survived something to be in the hospital. Some people had attempted to end their life, others who had substance abuse issues, and people like me. They were people in the hospital not out of weakness but out of the severity of pain, the type of pain that brings you to the end of yourself or the end of your life.

I realized freedom would be attained only when I stopped worrying about what people thought of me, and my circumstances. I was exhausted trying to prove to people and family that I was normal, or that I am a good person, the real issue was I did not love myself. I walked around with a Bible workbook that ironically gave me the opportunity to encourage people in the Lord while at my lowest point to people at their lowest. They were in so much pain, bound by lies and no one to tell them there is nothing wrong with them. This led to a revelation with my own self-worth and how trauma has affected me. I felt this was the first moment God opened something new in me. A revelation of compassion like I never experienced before, it was something that was not from me, it was from another source, which was God. I was able to see differently, and with love and forgiveness in areas of deep rooted pain. Resentment left and

mercy came in my heart, I felt the love of God. The mercy and compassion I felt for the hurting was coming over me in a different way. I didn't want to help people because I had a need to be saved myself rather I wanted to help because God saved me. That purpose gave me a freedom in my life that I had not experienced before.

God allowed all the bad for my good, I am stronger today because of the pain I have endured. The pain will work together the way it should and I will become all that God created me to be, and my belief in that is true freedom is for me. Adversity and suffering taught me lessons that I could not acquire anywhere else, and there will be people that will need to hear my testimony to reach into their similar situation and touch their soul. The hospital experience taught me that I had to pick up the pieces of what I thought could not be repaired in order to build something in the future that would not be able to be torn down.