

# Dr. Kathy's Corner.....April 2018

*I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing. And I will cause showers to come down in their season; they will be showers of blessing. – Ezekiel 34:26*

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As young Dr. Hopeless sat across from me in my office gulping for air, crying, and repeating: *I can't do this, I can't do this, I just can't do this anymore*, I wondered what had created the profound sense of helplessness and exhaustion I was witnessing. After what seemed like quite a while he said, *I just don't know what to do. That is why I called you, Kathy. My friends told me I really had to.* At that I stated "Tell me what you can about what is going on for you. Help me understand what it is like to be you in this very moment." He proceeded to tell me that he had finished his fellowship only 3 years prior and that his life was not at all what he had expected it to be.

And then he shared a day in the life... *"I get up before anyone stirs in my house and I am at the hospital before 6 am. I rush through my day never feeling like I am making a difference for the patients or my colleagues and then I return home at 7 or 8 o'clock at night. He took a deep, shaking breath and continued. When I get home, my wife has saved dinner for me. We have 2 small children who she would already have ready for bed. They have had dinner and are all bathed and just waiting for me to come home. When I walk in, I literally fall onto the couch in front of the TV and the kids just climb all over me. Most nights I don't even know what is on the TV or what the kids are talking about. My wife then takes them and reads to them and puts them to bed. I don't do anything to help her or really say much to the kids. Sometimes I eat, and sometimes I just go to bed and get up and do the same thing the next day. I just can't do it anymore!"*

He and I sat and spoke for a while longer about the details of his work and his desire to feel like he had a life. That he made a difference. That he was a good person, a good husband, a good father. At this point he was calmer and without the emotional charge that had started our meeting, and as our time together ended, I asked him if he would be willing to meet again in 3 days' time? He quickly agreed and then I asked if he would also do one thing for me that very evening. "When you get home tonight I would like you to take a shower." He looked at me quite perplexed and finally nodded in agreement and said that he could do that.

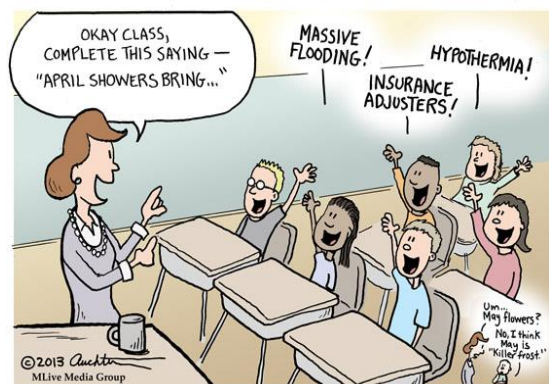
Two days later, a day prior to our planned next meeting, I received a call from him asking if he could see me sooner. We agreed to meet at noon that day. As soon as he entered my office and sat in the very same chair it was clear that a different man was present. He started straight away. *I couldn't wait to see you until tomorrow as we planned because I had to tell you what happened the other night.* When I said, I was anxious to hear that as well he explained. *When I got home that night after our meeting, I did what you had asked. I took a shower immediately. I put on shorts and a T-shirt and I came out to the family room where the kids were playing. I felt a little better. I asked our 6-year old daughter if she would like to go for a walk with me. (It was late, but it was summer.) She asked if she could take her new flashlight in case it got dark and we ventured out together as she held her flashlight proudly. We walked*

*around our block. I promise you Kathy it is not a long block. She told me a little about her day and we came back home.*

*Then I saw our 4-year old son looking up at me as if to say... how come I didn't go? And so, I said to him come on buddy, let's go in the yard and pick up some sticks. He asked for his sister's flashlight, which she gladly shared, and we went out and picked up sticks and stones. We were only out there 5 minutes at the most, we piled his collection at the door and came back in the house. That was about it Kathy. I helped put them to bed a little bit, but not even through a story. I felt a little better. But that is not what I want to tell you. It is what happened last night when I came home that I want to tell you about.*

*He once again took a deep breath and continued. As I opened the side door and entered the house, my 6-year-old daughter came running toward me saying: Daddy! Daddy! Daddy will you be the Daddy you were last night? He started to cry softly and my eyes filled with my own tears as he said to me, Kathy you have to help me be that Daddy. I don't know how.*

We sat quietly with one another and then I said to him "The beautiful thing about this story today is that you do indeed know how to be that Daddy. You were that Daddy. And your children felt it!" We talked about the fact that what he, and the children, had experienced was being present in the moment. I talked about the importance of **transitions** in our lives and how they give us an opportunity to shift our hearts and minds to the tasks at hand. He decided that he wanted to work together to learn to be more present, to understand more about transitions, and to live mindfully. He has been my hero! He decided then and there that he would work as hard at being **present** as he had to be a doctor. He found energy for his family, he notices beauty in places he hadn't before, and he finds meaning in his work. Who would believe a shower could be so powerful!



Thank you for all that you do! *Kathy*

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