

I'm overdue in writing a new blog, and as I write now, I have no idea where this one will lead. I'm just coming off of a much-needed vacation but can't help but feel like I need more time. I guess everyone feels that way, but I really do mean it this time.

Usually after returning from time off, I feel refreshed and ready to face the day-to-day work schedule and the tasks and events coming up on my calendar. Two baby showers in the next two weeks for starters. I look forward to both of them; one I get to attend as a friend, one I'm responsible for. It's all good, and I am thankful. More rest would be welcome though.

At this moment, my heart is a bit heavy, and I'm not sure I understand why. I feel like I'm a bundle of emotions for various reasons. I enjoyed the last few days with all three of my grown kids, two daughters-in-law and one of their younger sisters, and of course my grandsons. These people are my world, so I don't think my feelings are a result of our time together. And maybe they are.

I do worry about how family can be a little harsh in their words to one another, yet kinder to outsiders and strangers. I witnessed a little bit of that this weekend, but that happens. I've learned more about what my daughter went through when she was at her lowest point, and that has grieved my mother's heart to be sure. While we were estranged, I often laid awake at night worrying about what she may be going through. Some of what she shared with me confirmed my deepest fears. I'm grieving and I feel guilty all over again.

As much as I enjoyed our time as a family, it still felt wonky. Even with all the time that has passed since my divorce, I couldn't shake the feeling that my ex-husband should have been there. These were our kids. We were all together, as well as the brides of our sons, our grandsons, and two more babies on the way. It hurt my heart that he was missing it, and that I didn't have someone to talk with when the day was over. If possible, I felt even more alone surrounded by my family.

I thought I was the only one taking pictures until my daughter showed me some of the photos she took. I was mortified at some of the candid shots she captured of me in my bathing suit and shorts, bending over to look for rocks in the mountain stream. Sometimes I'll look at myself in the mirror and will think, "I don't look too bad for a sixty-three-year-old woman." I've come through fires that would kill others yet I'm still standing. But after seeing the reality of what I look like in those photos, I am fully depressed right now. My inner child has always correlated that being fat means you will be unloved. I do not feel like anyone could love me right now.

My weight loss/gain journey is an interesting one. Just a few years ago, I finally faced my own truth that even though I have tried every diet known to man, I have never been able to remain committed for the long term. I start out determined and I would give it my all, until I don't. I become mean in my spirit which has caused me to question which is more important to me, my weight, or my sanity? The irony of being at this point in my life is that I hardly eat anything and I grow tired having to plan for food, and yet, my weight simply won't shift. I don't know what the apostle Paul's thorn was, but my weight and my lack of self-worth because of my weight, is certainly my thorn. God knows my heart, and I know he will see me through this too.

As I write, I can hear my friends and family question if I should share such personal thoughts and feelings. I have always been one to overshare, and most think of that as a bad thing. But then I remember why I started writing this blog in the first place. I want to help other people who may be feeling the same things but have no one close by to listen or to understand. And most importantly, to remind them that our God does listen, and he definitely understands. I wouldn't be here if it weren't for the love and grace of God.

I've concluded that my bundle of emotions is just another reminder of how precious and fleeting time on this earth can be. Yes, I'm growing older. I feel it physically in my body, emotionally in my heart, and intellectually as a human being. I hear myself saying things my grandma used to say. I see my kids fretting over things that I used to, knowing now how fruitless all that worry was. I ponder over my many regrets, my bad choices, and even my innocent mistakes, asking once more for grace. I find myself reflecting on the past, and longing for my heavenly home.

I guess that's it. My bundle of emotions is all about how I'm growing older. A natural passage of time, and yet so profound. I write these words with tears pooling in my eyes, needing to cry. But I'm not sad, just trying to understand. Even in my self-pity, I know I am not alone. You are not alone either, my friend.

Blessings,

Lisa Jo

