

ON WINGS LIKE EAGLES

*Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
but those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.*

Isaiah 40:30-31

Isn't it great when you see an older person with a youthful spirit having fun? Aches and pains forgotten. Living in the moment. I'd like to be that way, especially as I get older.

How I would love to forget about the symptoms of my condition and side effects of the medications I take! I want to learn how to live, caring for my body and mind, but not worrying too much about them. I'd like to live wholeheartedly, hoping in the Lord, renewing my strength, finding interesting and exciting things to do. Don't we all want this?

So many of us – young and old – feel burdened by physical and mental health problems. Life becomes hard to cope with. We are forced to adjust our lifestyle – sometimes a lot. But, even when things look bad, a positive approach is possible.

- How do you feel about living with your disorder and the side effects of your medication?
- Are you able to take a positive approach? How?
- What keeps you from being positive?

Joshua Prager, a writer who was in an accident at age nineteen and left hemiplegic, inspired me greatly. He said that “what makes most of us who we are most of all is not our minds and not our bodies and not what happens to us, but how we respond to what happens to us.”

- Does that sound simple to you? Or . . . ?

We have so many wonderful examples of individuals who responded well to their challenges. Their lives have left lasting impressions on us. Terry Fox, the young

Canadian who had lost a leg to cancer but ran 5400 km partway across Canada. He raised 24.7 million dollars for cancer research with his courageous attempt. Then there is Nick Vujicic, born without arms or legs. His wonderful sense of humor and positive messages of hope are an inspiration to many.

Many people who lived with bipolar disorder have left their mark on history too. Try googling “famous people and bipolar” and you’ll find long lists there. They include people like Vincent van Gogh, Lord Byron, Rosemary Clooney, Jesse Jackson, Jr. and Mel Gibson.

- Do you think you could be a Terry Fox?

I know we can’t all be as strong-willed as Terry Fox was. But if there were something you believed in strongly, would you trust God enough to follow Him and join Him in the work He’s doing?

- Tell us about how you’ve responded well to your challenges lately.
- What would you like to do if you had the health and the strength and the courage?

In Joshua 14:7-13, we read how Caleb wanted to enter the Promised Land though he had reached the age of eighty-five. He was eager to do God’s will.

Is that the secret? Is that where strength in “weary” people comes from? Enthusiasm to do what God wants them to do?

- What could our own response to life be, despite the problems we face?
- How could we, with God’s help, renew our strength?

The answer will be different for each of us. We are unique human beings, each with our own set of gifts. All we have to do is learn what God wants us to do with them. Ask Him and listen to what He has to tell you.

Let’s get excited about life and discover the many things waiting for us to do. God has much to offer us – even with our challenges. It’s in this hope that we’ll find strength.

... all things are possible with God.

Mark 10:27