

A dramatic photograph of a volcanic eruption. A massive, dark, and billowing plume of ash and smoke rises from a dark, rocky landscape. At the base of the plume, bright orange and yellow flames and lava are visible, creating a stark contrast with the dark surroundings. The sky is a deep, dark grey, suggesting a storm or twilight. The overall mood is one of power and transformation.

Raise Me Out of the Ashes

The Recovery

Isaiah 61:3

Rise Out of the Ashes

The Recovery

“To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.” Isaiah 61:3 (KJV)

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Cycles

Life Happens! That's a thing we all have in common. One day, seemingly out of nowhere, your life is forever changed. The Event crosses a series of classifications; death of a loved one, a medical diagnosis, loss of a home, employment termination, business closure, and the end of a relationship, are just a few. The common denominator is loss. Loss is traumatic. There is no unequivocal common response to trauma. The response is determined by what foundation or belief the incident/accident rocked.

Life Happens and moves in Cycles! *"While the earth remaineth, seedtime, and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."* Genesis 8:22 (KJV). The length of the cycles can vary, but the experience called time is what we all share. Time allows us to have milestone periods within the cycle of life. Some periods we label as positive, others not. It is within the space called time that we move through stages of recovery.

Life Happens, moves in Cycles, and Cycles change! *"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:"* Ecclesiastes 3:1 (KJV).

A cycle is just another season. The understanding that cycles like seasons can change is what allows us to navigate traumatic times. The beginning looks dark and bleak, but beautiful things are birth in the dark.

Broken

Life Breaks! No one is exempt from life's breakings. Breaking is impartial. Breaking moments are unexpected and sudden or expected and awaited. The Scriptural story of Job (Job 1:13-21) is an example. In one day, Job lost his oxen, his asses, his sheep, his camels, his servants, and his children.

Unexpected, expected, sudden or awaited, when breaking moments happen, the effect is traumatic.

Phillip:

This store holds my passion, my livelihood, and my future; this is all I have. I'm finally showing a profit and now this pandemic shut down. If I can't get customers back in soon, I'll have to close the shop permanently. What am I going to do?

Em:

After ten years, they terminated me with no notice, with only three months of severance pay. I'm 55 years old, how will I find another job? Why me?

Shay:

He's dead! My baby boy is dead! The Doctors told me they did all they could, but I'm not ready for this! I hate cancer! Jesus, it hurts! What am I going to do?

Joe:

Homeless. How can I be homeless? How could she change the locks and leave my stuff outside the door? Why? I thought we were good.

It may not be your story, but when life breaks, why and what am I going to do are the questions we frequently ask.

Life Breaks, and then...! One event by itself may not cause breaking. However, a sequence of devastating incidents in your life, added to those affecting family, friends, and society, will push you to the edge of your pain tolerance.

You continuously relive The Event in your thoughts. You experience insomnia, or when you sleep, you have nightmares. Negative emotions of fear, anger, anxiety, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and sadness become dominant. Eventually, you retreat from people and places that are reminders of the event. You use the defense mechanism of denial to cope. Then you are just numb.

The Prophet Elijah, in 1 Kings Chapter 19, can relate.

4 "But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." 5 "And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. 6 "And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again." 7 "And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee." 8 "And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God."

Life Breaks, numbness comes, and then you choose to recover! Recovery and healing are a process. Breaking affects people differently. Therefore, the healing process is unique to everyone. Slowly you learn to be okay. Today was tough. Tomorrow will be better. Then, there's another day.

Healing

Life Heals! Healing is hard. Explaining the pain is difficult. To recover from the breaking, you must take your sense of control back. You may not understand why the breaking happened, but you've broken before. You have experience with bouncing back. Your trust has been shaken. You must rediscover what makes you feel safe. You must answer the question; what forms the foundation of my trust?

*"For she said within herself, **If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.**"*

Matthew 9:21 KJV

Life Heals in degrees! Healing happens in stages. Any number of variable factors affect the timing of the process. Isolation was a part of the broken state, impacting relationships. Even your relationship with God. It was difficult, almost impossible, to pray.

Healing requires transparency. That's how you rebuild supportive relationships with family, friends, and God. Sharing your story is an empowering choice. You begin processing the experience healthily.

Life Heals in degrees, then, one day you're healed! Just breathe. You did not give up. You did not walk away. You were crushed. You were vulnerable. You survived.

Healed

A Healed Life! Surviving is not enough. The fear is real. Your anxiety is not to be ignored and you're tired. But you can't stop here. You came through your darkest hours to this new self because there is more for your life, there is more in you.

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." Jeremiah 29:11 (KJV)

A Healed Life asks for a sacrifice! You hear the request but after all you've been through you don't feel like you have anything left to give. The sacrifice is in giving yourself again.

A Healed Life tries again! Scars are a natural part of the healing process. The breaking scar created a new perspective; It's another way of looking at old experiences. You change the way you see yourself and the words you say to yourself. The moment you decide to try again, you become something new. You take the first step in rising out of the ashes.

"10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel." Genesis 35:10 (KJV)

Healed and Whole

Healed and Whole lives life to its fullest! It's a testament to your recovery.

- ❖ Embrace the broken pieces of your life.
- ❖ Love yourself, scars and all.
- ❖ Tell your story.
- ❖ Permit yourself to experience “exceedingly, abundantly, more than” you’ve ever imagined.

“11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; 12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.” Genesis 35:11-12 (KJV)

- ❖ RISE OUT OF THE ASHES!

“To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.” Isaiah 61:3 (KJV)