

Face the Music

“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.” **Jeremiah 33:3**

I knew it last night when I went to bed. I knew when I woke up at 4:00 a.m. this morning that I was going to face the music. There's almost a sense of calm when we decide it's time to take a long, hard look at our life and make some changes.

When the alarm went off, I knew what I had to do after I started the coffee brewing; I pulled out the dreaded scale and stepped on it. What I saw was not pretty, but it was a starting point for me to get going again. By 4:45 a.m., I was on my way to Houston to work out. I walked three miles on the treadmill and I am now sitting at my computer in our townhouse writing my article for the June E-Newsletter.

Johnny and I have been at the bay for the last month staying in our Fifth Wheel trailer on our property. Most of you know that we had to tear down our home at the bay after Hurricane Ike and the trailer seemed like the most sensible solution for us to spend time at our beloved spot on the water.

We are enjoying our time there, but as with any change of place or routine, my schedule has gotten off track. Instead of working out two days a week with my trainer Donna, I have only been working out with her on Monday. Cooking meals has consisted of toasting a bagel, fixing a bowl of cereal, or cutting up some fruit. We have eaten out at least two meals a day for the past month.

Last week, we went to Edisto Beach, SC, for a week of vacation before going to Johnny's Oncologist in California. The news

was not what we wanted to hear. Johnny has been on chemo since February and his PSA is not coming down, so the doctor decided to stop the chemo and start a new drug that has just been approved for hormone-resistant prostate cancer.

While on Edisto Beach, I worked out every day. Vicki Heath and I rode bikes or I walked on the beach. I even went to Vicki's Body & Soul class one day. However, when we got the dreaded news that Johnny is becoming hormone resistant, I just threw all caution to the wind and started eating everything in sight.

We have been walking this journey with prostate cancer since October 1997, so it's not like this news was unexpected. Still, it is a jolt to hear bad news. What I want to say to you this month is that overeating never helps the problem; it only enlarges it (pun intended)!

When our last session ended, I was so pleased that I had lost ten pounds. I am sorry to say that for the last month I have not kept my Tracker and have gained weight rather than continuing to lose weight. Today is a happy day for me because it is the day I faced the music. God has forgiven me and I have forgiven myself. Many years ago, I heard it said that "an excuse is a reason wrapped up in a lie." I may have reason to be concerned right now about Johnny and our future together, but everything I have neglected the last month is nothing more than an excuse for doing what I wanted to do and for not doing what I knew to do. Well, I'm back and I'm so relieved that today is going to be a great day and tomorrow will be even better. The following story is a great illustration of what I am trying to say:

The Mayonnaise Jar

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle—when 24 hours in a day is not enough; remember the mayonnaise jar and 2 cups of coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class with some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and started to fill it with golf balls.

He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured it into the jar. He shook the jar lightly and the pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else and he asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous YES.

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

Now, said the professor as the laughter subsided, “I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life.” The golf balls are the important things—God, family, children, health, friends, and favorite passions, things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the things that matter, like your job, house, and car. The sand is everything else, the small stuff.

“If you put the sand into the jar first,” he continued, “there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes

for life." If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. So...

Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Every day, spend time with God, play with your children, exercise, eat for good health; take time to get medical checkups and get enough sleep.

There will always be time to clean the house and fix the dripping tap. Take care of the golf balls first—the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand.

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked" It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend.

What are the things that are filling up your life? Face the music today and prioritize the important things, the things that matter and the small stuff so that your life is filled up with the "great and unsearchable" things of God.