

In today's column, I want to wish you all the best during this Easter Weekend.

I know, for myself, I am taking this weekend as the opportunity to "let go and let God". There are some things in all of our lives, which I believe are just bigger than us. No matter how much medication, therapy and support – things are just bigger than us.

For myself, I always seem to want to solve the issues myself. This generally leads to feelings of inadequacy and a sincere disappointment in me. There are many things in my life or mind that I simply do not have the power over. Some refer to these things as "their demons". I would like to take an SOS Pad to my brain! ☺

I have had a "not so good" couple of days. The details aren't important, but what I can say is that it is all in my head. Everything around me is good – but I think my mind or the illness has an uncanny way of wanting to tear me down, when life is good. It is as if I start to manifest all that I don't like about myself into reality. In the past, times like this have nearly destroyed me – but it is not like that today. My mother stayed up and talked with me for hours the other night. My friend Penny came to me and spent time just allowing me to talk unconditionally and my friend Gini used her incredible and unconditional support to combat what my illness tries to do and reassured me of my worth and that I am worth fighting the illness and all the paranoia that comes with it.

In the midst of these past two days I have learned something very important – I am still loved. With such support my "army" just deepened and I have a new level of understanding that I don't need to hide everything – I don't need to sabotage and destruct myself. I can open up and say, "This is how I feel!" and with that, real voices of love and concern are allowed to speak rather than only the voices in my head.

Today, it is bright and sunny and I will enjoy the day as well as the weekend. The paranoid feelings are still there, the sadness still lingers... but I refuse to be enveloped by it. When I came to the moments of realization, I immediately walk in gratitude. When I wake up (like today) and can breathe and can rationally see that I am safe and loved, I know that I beat the illness (with family and friends) once again.

I am convinced that love is the most powerful tool against this illness and love is fueled by God and his example. You don't need to search for the right words, the solutions or the answers – just love... simply just love. If you are coming from a place of love, you are not going to do the wrong thing and you are going to add the most powerful weapons in the army for your loved one that simply can't find it within him to love himself. No one likes to be torn down, but when it is your own mind tearing you down – and it knows every single wrong and insecurity you have, you can't believe how power that is! The absolute last thing a person needs when going through an episode of depression is anyone to validate they are flawed.

You must try to remember that the illness speaks for everyone and what it says is nothing good. Paranoia, voices and flashbacks are more powerful than anything I have ever experienced. No one else can see them. Everyone else's life is going on just as it always does and you are being beaten down and torn apart by an invisible enemy. The wrong look, the wrong words, the unanswered calls or the indifference is immediately translated and put in alignment with the voices and the paranoia.

I would love to get up every morning and write an inspirational and empowering column. That simply is not the reality of mental illness. This is an illness that no matter what I do – I will live with for the rest of my life. I get guilt ridden at times because I live a very beautiful life, most would dream to live how I do – yet I have days like the past two and I find it very disrespectful for all that I have been given. But that is not my choice. How I handle it is my choice, but the symptoms of the illness are not my choice and I ask all of you that live with mental illness to be good yourselves – it is an illness, not you!

So – with that all said... “Let go and let God”. Or whatever your belief system is... have faith in it – you will come through to the other side of the current episode and I want you to come through safely and undamaged. So many parts of who I am have died over the years, I (we) cannot allow more parts to succumb to these illnesses. You, who live with mental illness, know exactly what I am saying. So – I will leave you with this song that is dear to my heart! Many Easter Blessings and may you find a rebirth and enlightenment every day of your life!