

The statistics are alarming: about one in six females and one in thirty-three males will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime. Half of these are 18 or younger. Less than 6 % of rapists spend one day in jail.

To get rid of the fear, take your fear back to the original place of fear. For Rosemary, her fear began in the inner city where she was brutally raped at gunpoint by a rapist who watched her show about sexual assault, and said [something to the effect of], “*Cute talk show host, now what do you have to say about rape?*” He told her he knew where she lived, and threatened her life if she ever told anyone, and who, incidentally, was never caught.

Her fear began in the inner city when raped.

Her fear began to pass away in the inner city with ministry to the poor and through a man who had been recently released from prison. Fear gets triggered. It can be triggered by smells, a certain look, sounds...etc...That man looked big like her rapist. (She never saw her rapist’s face but this big man reminded her of him.) She was deathly afraid. This former convict taught Rosemary about forgiveness. He told her his story, how he had been released from prison two weeks earlier. He told her that God forgave him as far as the east is from the west and remembered his sin and crimes no more, even though those sins and crimes were great.

1 Corinthians 5: 17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Psalms 103:12

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Hebrews 10:17

And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

She knew she had to forgive her rapist. She surrendered her fear and her right to justice over to God. She prayed for him, that someone would teach him about Jesus and his forgiveness so that they could spend eternity together in forgiveness.

When stuck in the cycle of fear, fear is easily triggered. It is a gift to you to break out of the cycle of fear. (*See GIFT to SELF Handout on last page*). Be gentle with yourself. Love yourself. You need deep healing. There are four flavors of blame:

- ❖ **Blame circumstances.**
If it weren't for the economy, I would be able to pay my bills...
- ❖ **Blame others.**
If it weren't for my husband, I would be happier.
- ❖ **Blame yourself.**
Why am I so dumb? I should have known better.
- ❖ **Blame God.**
“How could you let this happen to me, God?”

God can handle this kind of question. Just don't stay there and wallow in it. It is never God's will that we get hurt, sick, sinned against or brutally attacked. Other people have the freedom of their own will to choose life or death, blessing or cursing, evil or good. They may impose their will on us with no heed to our rights or wellbeing. But God can turn those awful things that were meant for our destruction into glory for Him.

Romans 8: 26

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.

(because we prayed in the spirit)

Invite others in. We tend to withdraw. When you hold it in you will bring to yourself more pain and hurt. We need to be Jesus with skin on to others. Get your elephants. *"I know Jesus is here with me but sometimes I just need to feel some skin."* Go to a counselor, a pastor, a friend.

Face your fear. Don't deny your fear or it will keep running after you. In Yosemite national Park there are signs that say, "Don't run from Bears." If you face your fears you can deal with them. Surrender your fear to the Lord.

Trust your pain to God.

Proverbs 3:5, 6

5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Rosemary felt like a cracked pot with the crack spelling out R A P E. Where does the light shine through in a cracked pot? The light shines through the cracks. God loves cracked pots.

- ❖ The woman at the well.
- ❖ Mary with the alabaster box.
- ❖ Mary Magdalene.
- ❖ Rahab.

We are all cracked pots with flaws. Trust your pain to God. Set your mind. Our feelings are not always our friend. They go every which way. We have a choice to think our own thoughts. The

average person has over 60,000 thoughts. 95% of those thoughts are thoughts we have thought before. 80% of these thoughts are negative. No wonder we are so tired!

Romans 12: 2

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Philippians 2:5

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 10: 5

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Interrupt the negative thoughts; captivate them to the obedience of Christ. Set your mind, don't be trapped in a negative mind set.

Philippians 8: 8

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Enjoy being grateful. Think of at least two things to be grateful for. It'll change your spirit. Love, laugh and Lighten Up. Find something to laugh about. A merry heart does good like a medicine. Forgiveness is a very powerful thing. It releases you from a captive grip. When God forgives, He forgets. The sin is ERASED. Gone....because of our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ, and the power of the cross.

GIFT to SELF HANDOUT

I have used these tools to maintain joy in my life and find freedom from fear and anxiety. May you be encouraged that the cycle of fear can be broken and lost joy can be found!

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| G | Guard your heart. | <i>What are two ways you could be gentler with yourself?</i> |
| I | Invite others in. | <i>Who are your elephants?</i> |
| F | Face your fear. | <i>What fear are you having difficulty facing?</i> |
| T | Trust your pain to God. | <i>What was your experience of surrendering something difficult to God?</i> |
| S | Set your mind. | <i>What does it mean to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind?”</i> |
| E | Enjoy being grateful. | <i>What are 3 things you are grateful for?</i> |
| L | Love, laugh and lighten up. | <i>What are 2 things you could do that would bring you more joy?</i> |
| F | Forgive. | <i>Who is someone you would truly like to forgive?</i> |

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