

## WE ALL NEED A LITTLE SHMUG-A-LA, SOMETIMES....

Before this book was even published, several adults, caught in the throes of difficult and trying times, and familiar with the theme of the book, contacted me. They all said essentially the same thing, emphatically:

**“/ NEED SHMUG-A-LA, NOW!”** I could hear the desperation in their voices and their circumstances

**IF YOU FIND YOURSELF IN A SIMILAR STATE...PLEASE...**

**FIND SOMETHING THAT IS SACRED TO YOU**, that safely brings comfort. Is it reading, drawing, journaling, meditating, music, knitting, praying? Or is it something you have been meaning to do? Something that will revive your heart, and give you **NEW FOCUS**. Is there something that has been tugging at your heart, begging you to find time for it?...Maybe...make that call to your niece, your uncle, your neighbor...Make up with an old friend...Write your memoirs...take up a new hobby...renew an old one

**REKINDLE YOUR SELF-WORTH AGAIN, APART FROM YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES.**

Celebrate it. Celebrate you. Be you. Choose **LIFE**, in spite of it's pitfalls. Live **LIFE** in the moment. This moment. Now. Not when everything is fine again. Find meaning *now*. Find something to enjoy *now*. **FIND A DISTRACTION**, a discovery about life, about yourself. **TAKE TIME FOR YOU**. *You* are precious. Validate yourself. Determine to grow through everything. There's always more to discover about *you*. Find the parts of *you* that haven't surfaced yet, that haven't bloomed yet. Excavate a hidden talent. Or maybe one you thought you lost. Talents never leave us, though we may leave them...for a season. Delight in your discoveries. Pat yourself on the back. Be honest with yourself, about yourself, but with **LOVE** and **GRACE**. It's ok to be wrong, to make mistakes. Forgive yourself, and others. It's ok and healthy to love yourself. **BE KIND TO YOURSELF**, even if no-one else is. Be kind to someone who hasn't been kind to you. You'll like yourself for it, and secretly, they will too. Do something for someone who hasn't asked for it.

**LIFE CAN GET UGLY, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN IT WILL STAY THAT WAY.** Even if circumstances don't change, we can change, and follow a new perspective, with precious focus on the positive aspects of **LIFE** that are still ours for the taking. Take time and enjoy the little things often overlooked in life, like sunshine, a raindrop, sweet music, a puppy, a sunset. Snow. Nature can be very restorative.

**DON'T LET YOUR FEELINGS BOTTLE UP.** Don't dismiss them or try to ignore them. Talk with a trusted friend, or 2. Maybe find some help from a trained professional. They are there to listen to your story, and help you through this difficult time. Don't hold back. Release your story with all of it's raw emotions. They've heard everything, they can handle your story and emotions, and they want to. Don't go through this alone. Some churches offer free counseling, and a helping hand.

**LET HEALTHY CHOICES AND RESPONSES LEAD YOU,** and grow you, past this rocky road, to greener pastures.

**BELIEVE IN LIFE. BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.** There is something good out there for you. I promise.- **READ THE PSALMS.** They are written by desperate people, lamenting their life circumstances, crying out for help and hope, and finding it. People's lives are showcased living and surviving the rollercoasters of life, with new hope and gratitude in the end.

**WRITE DOWN YOUR FEELINGS.** All of them, even the deepest ones. Chronicle this experience. Sometimes putting things on paper helps bring a little clarity. And, sometimes your writings may be just what others need, to help them through their tough experience. Your honest acknowledgement of your situation and your feelings, can help others to acknowledge and deal with theirs. Nothing is wasted. It can all be a catalyst for growth and change. Even though painful, this experience can produce remarkable life enhancement in the long run.

**DON'T RUN FROM YOUR PAIN,** loneliness, heartache. Don't self-medicate in harmful ways. **SEEK HELP FROM HEALTHY SOURCES.** Find solace and encouragement in safe ways. Read, talk, walk, pray, love, and let yourself be loved.

**GROW THROUGH WHAT YOU GO THROUGH,** and **BLESS YOU,** my friend!

**I BELIEVE IN YOU!**

Sincerely,

Jane Carey

Author, Retired Counselor