

Dear Friends I am giving you a painful yet wonderful story from a woman that I've been working with for a year and a half. You have a part in her story for she would not be where she is now if you didn't pray for and support Alpha. Thank you for all you do to make Alpha possible. So grab a Kleenex and read her story as she shared it in a class for work.

Richard

" My presentation tonight is going to be a little different than the assignment stated. I'm going to talk about my strengths. But instead of talking about how my strengths would benefit me in my job here at PSNS, I'm going to talk about how my strengths have helped me to get through the past 81 days.

When we first came into this classroom on January 2 of this year we were asked to introduce and tell the class a little bit about ourselves. At that time I had not planned on telling you that my husband passed away the previous month but somehow it came out. The thing I didn't tell you was that on December 2, my husband was sitting 5 feet behind me in our living room when he shot himself in the head. I am going to describe my strengths and how they got me from that life-changing day to today.

The first of my strengths is adaptability. I am thankful for this strength because when circumstances unexpectedly change I am able to adapt quickly. In the instance of my husband's death, I had to make a lot of changes in a short period of time. I have had to adapt to being the head of the household, making all of the decisions. I have had to adapt to being the sole source of income, figuring out how to pay all of the bills. I have had to adapt to not having a partner, being alone for the first time in over 25 years. In the paragraph explaining this strength it's stated, "Adaptability does enable you to respond willingly to the demands of the moment even if they pull you away from your plans." I don't think anyone ever plans to be widowed, but what I do now that I am is going to determine how the rest of my life will go.

My second strength is harmony. In trying to achieve harmony in my life and the lives of those around me, especially in the last 2 1/2 months, I have tried to understand how other people are feeling and to learn to balance my feelings with theirs. This has been especially helpful with my

in-laws and my adult children, working through each of our grieving processes.

Another strength of mine is deliberative. I think the words that best describe this trait is that I "walk with care." Since my husband's death, I have had to make many difficult choices. In doing so, I have tried to make the best decisions for everybody involved.

Intellection is my fourth strength. Intellection is "liking to think." This strength has served me well recently especially when I've needed to comfort others. I tend to be thoughtful when choosing words. I like to gather as much information as I can in order to best understand and respond to situations. I am introspective and learn well by thinking things through.

And lastly, I am a maximizer. A maximizer is someone who takes a situation and wants to make it better. Not only better, but the best! I am determined to not let my circumstances destroy me. I am looking for all of the silver linings that I can possibly find.

In conclusion, I know that my strengths have helped me get through these past days with courage and grace. My counselor asked me in one of our sessions in December how I was doing. I told him that I would survive. He said that his goal for me was to not only survive, but to thrive. All of us have the capability of using our strengths in a way that will lead us to thrive."

Webster Dictionary Thrive-to grow vigorously/to progress toward or realize a goal **despite or because of circumstances.**

Proverbs 14:11b **...the tent of the upright will thrive.** Amp

Philippians 4:13 **I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.** ESV

Alpha Counseling Services
20730 Bond Rd/Suite S-180
Poulsbo WA 98370/360.
(360)779.3624

Website: alphapoulsbo.org
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