DAY 13

Grieving What the Injury Took

Mourning Loss Without Self-Blame

Today's Diary at a Glance

In Day 13, Kimberly reflects on the complex grief of mourning what brain injuries, unretrieved memories, and misunderstood neurodivergence took from her life. Looking back, she recognizes how deeply her intellect contrasted with her personal vulnerabilities, leading her to pour her gifts, time, and resources into one-sided relationships to prove she was worthy of love. Operating in survival mode clouded her discernment, causing her to deplete herself while mistakenly believing that giving everything was the only way to earn acceptance. Now holding to Romans 8:28, she understands that God bringing good from her story does not mean her trauma was good. Instead of punishing herself for what she did not yet understand, she chooses compassion, learning that grief and gratitude can peacefully coexist.

Key Life Lesson

Mourning parts of life that cannot be recovered is painful, yet struggling with discernment during traumatic or vulnerable seasons does not diminish our intelligence or value. Being gifted does not guarantee emotional security or make someone immune to exploitation, and emptying yourself completely is never the same as loving well. Grieving the past without judgment allows you to recognize unhealthy patterns, protect your remaining boundaries, and honor the life you still have ahead.

Spiritual Reflection

Romans 8:28 (KJV)

Romans 8:28 assures us that God can weave purpose, wisdom, and healing from what remains without requiring us to pretend that painful exploitation was ever good. God sees the deep loneliness and confusion beneath our survival choices, meeting our grief with a sustaining grace that refuses to let the past dictate our ending.

Moment of Grace

You are permitted to lay down the exhausting practice of punishing yourself for what you survived when you lacked the clarity or support you have now. May you gently hold space for both your grief and your gratitude today, honoring the person you are becoming with deep compassion.

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Today's Self-Reflection

1. Have you ever looked back over a season of your life and wondered why you remained in situations that were clearly hurting you?
2. What were you searching for during that time—love, belonging, acceptance, security, or simply relief from the pain you were carrying?
3. As you reflect, consider whether you have been judging your past self by the wisdom and understanding you possess today. What would change if you allowed yourself to grieve those experiences without continuing to punish yourself for them?
4. Today, identify one boundary, one act of self-compassion, or one source of support that can help you honor the person you are becoming.

My Journal

1. If you wish, write a tender letter to the earlier version of yourself who was simply trying to survive, offering her understanding instead of judgment.
2. If you wish, list the gifts, time, or energy you have previously overextended, and explore what a healthy, mutual boundary might look like for you now.

Prayer & Application

Prayer prompt: If prayer is part of your practice, thank God for seeing the hidden exhaustion and longing behind the seasons where you struggled to protect yourself. Ask for the grace to release self-blame, trusting Him to redeem what remains and guide you into spaces of mutual care, wisdom, and peace.

Practical takeaway: When an old memory or past regret arises today, consciously pause and whisper, "I was doing the best I could to survive with what I knew then."

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Reading Circle Discussion

1. How can being intellectually capable or outwardly accomplished make it harder to recognize when we are being emotionally depleted or exploited?
2. In what ways have you noticed survival mode altering your ability to discern safe people and healthy boundaries?
3. How does Kimberly's perspective on Romans 8:28—that God bringing good from a situation does not mean the trauma itself was good—reshape how you view your own painful experiences?

Your written responses belong to you. You may leave any prompt unanswered and decide whether to share anything in a group.

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Read the complete chapter in your published book.

The Diary of a Neurodivergent Black Woman

30 Days of Faith, Identity, Healing, and Becoming · Kimberly J. Lewis, M.Div.

This companion includes manuscript-based summaries, the original questions in Today's Self-Reflection, and newly developed companion exercises. Scripture reference: Romans 8:28 (KJV). Source: Approved manuscript · Day 13 · pages 50–58.