



Introduction

Recently I received 50 empty prescription bottles. I am not a doctor or a pharmacist. I cannot readily tell you the specific purpose for each prescription or how much each one costs. I do know that some of the empty bottles contained anti-depressants, muscle relaxers, tranquilizers, pain relievers, and sleeping pills.

I had asked a few friends who regularly take medication to send me their empty prescription bottles. They have, and I am currently overstocked. I recycle them and use them in my heavenly pharmacy. I remove the labels, wash the bottles, affix new labels and fill the bottles with m & m's. The labels read:

**Rx: Prescription for Healing
m & m's: mercy & miracles**

Take as often as needed.

For unlimited refills, see Dr. Jesus.

Each package of empty prescription bottles reminds me of my own quest for wellness and sanity. It breaks my heart to see all those prescription bottles coming from the same addresses again and again. There is a big controversy about the best way to help the mentally ill. One of these deals with the use of medication. After reading "Toxic Psychiatry" by Peter R. Breggin, MD, I realized it was not just a controversy, it was more like a war.



When employed as an industrial engineer, my boss rebuked me for being critical of certain methods used in the factory, which I thought to be inefficient. He said, "Peter, unless you have a better idea, I don't want you to criticize the way things are being done." Those words have stayed with me for the past 40 years. Please read on; I do believe I have a better idea.

Peter D. Laue

Beloved, if you have ever cared for someone who has schizophrenia, is manic-depressive—also called bipolar—or struggles with severe depression, your nursing skills have probably been challenged. Caring for the mentally ill can be a taxing, yet a rewarding, experience. It often challenges the sanity and patience of the caregiver. Many have learned that the care and treatment of those who live in the twilight zone of reality can be costly, lengthy, and even hazardous, but it can also be rewarding. Just one person made whole is our greatest reward. Our hospitals, prisons, and streets are full of unsolved problems, hidden saints, and lost sheep.

A consistent diagnosis for the mentally ill is still elusive and can vary amongst even the most highly trained professionals. There seems to be more disagreement than agreement about the causes and cures. Some advocate that there is a chemical imbalance in the brain, while others search for answers in a dysfunctional past. Our own past, our unique personality, our own value systems and beliefs are bound to color the way we see and appraise the mental health of another individual. It takes more than a doctor to diagnose and treat the mentally ill; it takes a saint.

What is considered as acceptable behavior in one culture or one era is often looked upon as deviant behavior in another. The world has always had a floating standard of healthy and unhealthy, right and wrong, normal and abnormal. What is viewed as a vision by one person may be diagnosed as a chemical imbalance by someone else. One person may hear voices and interpret them as the voice of God, the next person as the voice of Satan, the third person as "too much pizza," etc. and etc.

How we interpret and respond to what we experience in our inner world of dreams, visions, and voices is just as important as the experience itself. Most of us keep our private thoughts very private. Some may talk to a best friend, a counselor, or priest. Others may ignore the voices as so much uninvited, senseless, and intrusive chatter. A few may take all their guidance from the voices within. Some have been known to jump off bridges or commit murder on the basis of this inner guidance. Others, like King David, have killed giants. Where do those voices come from? Are they all good or all bad? How are we to respond, if at all?

I recall a young man who had continuous conversations with spirits that toyed with his mind. He both heard them and saw them. Sometimes he spoke to them out loud and laughed at their entertaining antics. They were his friends. When I asked him if he ever told them to go away, he said, "Oh no, I am afraid they would get mad and play tricks on me." No counsel or medication could reach him. He never found an audience for his "messianic visions." His angry heart and angry methods stopped him at every turn. He committed suicide in a state institution before the age of thirty. My heart still bleeds for him, his family, and others like him. I ask the question, "What else could I have done and what am I to learn from this tragedy?"

Satan, the Father of all Lies and great deceiver, has many clever ways of gaining our attention and loyalty. For example, he has convinced some that reincarnation is an indisputable fact—multiple rebirths in a variety of different bodies. A woman may see herself as Mary, the mother of Jesus. Or she may see herself as Mary Magdalene, the woman out of whom Jesus cast seven devils. In her current incarnation she may see herself attempting to atone for her past sins. We know someone who believes she was a harlot in a former life. In order to atone for her past sins, she never married. Our mental hospitals are full of patients who believe themselves to be the reincarnated saints and heroes of the past. Many believe themselves to be Jesus Christ. Jesus warned us that this would happen (Luke 21:8).

Many people are very insecure and compensate for their insecurities by seeing themselves as a well-known historical personality. The writer struggled in this arena for many years. Instead of being content with his role of "delivery boy," he saw himself as a modern-day deliverer. Once we are trapped by such delusions, the grace of God is required to extricate us from them. We can be like, or aspire to be like, a person of great renown, but we dare not think ourselves to be that person. If we do, we have crossed over into the world of insanity. This truth reached me during an unguarded moment and set me free. May these words accomplish the same for someone else.

I am very disappointed, saddened, and at times angry because of the position some mental health professionals have taken regarding visions and voices. Far too many treat these experiences as auditory or visual hallucinations. Consequently, they make a blanket indictment as to their validity and discredit all spiritual or supernatural experiences and attempt to drown out these experiences with medication. As a direct result of such a hostile perception of spiritual realities, I—like many others—did not divulge my inner world to anyone. This is unfortunate because we are thereby denied many opportunities to help one another sort through our spiritual nightmares or to rejoice with others in their heavenly visitations. But I finally decided to go public with my inner conflicts and search for sanity. It may be the best and only way I can help others.

I recommend the Bible to mental health professionals as a current and most useful mental health textbook. Do not take it away from your patients or belittle its value. Make it easily available to those who are searching for answers and reality. Every hero of the faith saw visions and heard voices. They saw and heard things that were often so overwhelming that they fainted away as if dead, only to hear the words, "Fear not." (Revelation 1:17). These heroes had to dodge a lot of insults and abuse to stake their claim in the halls of faith. I wonder how many of these heroes would be wearing the label of schizophrenia on their lapel today? We all know that the Pharisees tried to discredit Jesus by saying He had a demon and later crucified the Son of God. We are likely to do the same in the 21st century, but in different disguises, carefully sanitized and removed from public display. At this point I will quote words spoken by the apostle Peter to add credibility to my words:

Then Peter stepped forward with the eleven apostles, and shouted to the crowd, "Listen, all of you, visitors and residents of Jerusalem alike! Some of you are saying these men are drunk! It isn't true! It's much too early for that! People don't get drunk by 9 A.M! No! What you see this morning was predicted centuries ago by the prophet Joel: 'In the last days, God said, I will pour out my Holy Spirit upon all mankind, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men dream dreams. Yes, the Holy Spirit shall come upon all my servants, men and women alike, and they shall prophesy.'" (Acts 2:14-18, The Living Bible).

Fighting for my sanity was a life-and-death struggle. I saw things and thought things that caused my mind to resemble a courtroom in continuous session. Sometimes I was the accused, sometimes the accuser. At other times I was the judge or jury. My thought process was compelling, relentless, emotionally charged, exhausting, and totally unproductive. For a brief period I was on medication. It did not solve my problems, but may have kept me from doing something stupid. For this I am grateful. Much like an aspirin, it provided temporary relief for a bad headache. But it was the Word of God and the grace of God that eventually created order out of chaos. Only as I believed the Word, and obeyed it was peace and order restored to my mind.

The significant turning point came when I became convinced that God was not the author of my accusing, confusing, grandiose, and tormenting thoughts and emotions. When I began to police them and adopted a militant posture, I began to heal. Healing came gradually. I learned to identify my enemies more and more quickly and developed a variety of strategies in dealing with them. I cut them off at the pass, so to speak, and did not allow them to gain an inch of ground. After an exhausting battle, I soothed my emotions by playing music like King David might have played.

I discovered that the only way I could be an alert and effective soldier was to do away with all tranquilizers and mind- and mood-altering drugs. This strategy is certainly not new, but it was new for me. I never wavered in my decision to throw out all medication that had been prescribed. Mind- and mood-altering drugs, both legal and illegal ones, are like chemical bullets that can and do misfire and cause debilitating side effects. Even innocent-looking sleeping pills can cause havoc. Violent and unpredictable behavior has been traced to the sleeping medication Halcyon. Our personalities can be altered and sabotaged without our knowledge or permission. Enslaved by drugs, we can experience a false sense of security and wellbeing and turn into wimps instead of warriors.

I did not hide in bed, reach for a sleeping pill, cigarette, alcoholic beverage or run to the television when wrestling with raging and ungodly thoughts. I got up, got dressed, and walked and prayed vigorously. With all my heart and might I called upon the name of Jesus. Although this is a season of joy, peace and victory for me, I never let my guard down. Adversity continues to be my taskmaster and teacher.

I am very grateful the courts have ruled that patients cannot be forced to submit to drug therapy. Had that ruling not been in place, I would be a compliant patient today, instead of a crusader. I realize that these are strong words and recommendations. Do not accept them or suggest them to others unless the Holy Spirit explicitly directs you to do so. They are not intended to make anyone feel guilty or condemn them for taking drugs, but to serve as a challenge and door to permanent freedom.

I will quote from one of my favorite authors, Frances J. Roberts, to underscore what I have written. In her book, "Come Away My Beloved," she writes on page 93:

You cannot risk giving your thoughts free rein. They will never choose the right path until you bridle them and control them by your own disciplined will. You are master of your own house. You do not have to invite into your mind the foul birds of evil thoughts and allow them to nest there and bring forth their young.

Whatsoever ye sow in your secret thought-life, that shall ye reap. Sow love and kindness, and ye shall be rewarded openly. Sow charity and forgiveness, and ye shall reap in kind. Sow generosity and gratitude, and ye shall reap in kind. Sow generosity, and ye shall never feel poor. Sow hope, and ye shall reap fulfillment. Sow praise, and ye shall reap joy and well-being and a strong faith. Sow bountifully, and ye shall reap bountifully. Sow! ye shall see your seed and be satisfied.

I am willing to expose my own captivity, my own season of insanity, to be able to convince just one person that there is a way out. The Book of Daniel, Chapter 4, tells my story and maybe yours also. I can easily place the name of Peter D. Laue alongside the name of King Nebuchadnezzar. The last verse of Chapter 4 could have just as easily read:

"Now, I, Peter D. Laue, praise and glorify and honor the King of Heaven, the Judge of all, whose every act is right and good; for He is able to take those who walk proudly and push them into the dust!" The story of King Nebuchadnezzar is to remind and warn us that God's penalty for pride may be insanity.

You do not have to be a ward of the state for the rest of your life. You do not have to be a prisoner of drugs for the rest of your life. You do not have to make endless trips to a counselor or psychiatrist for the rest of your life. Your mind does not have to resemble a courtroom or smell like a garbage can full of delinquent and unfruitful thoughts, visions, and voices. But you do have to adopt the posture of a warrior. You do have to police your thoughts and emotions, and how you express them.

Our heavenly Father does not give His children a spirit of fear, torment, or confusion. He gives His children love, forgiveness, power, and a sound mind. Systematically sort through your thoughts, visions, and voices and consistently refuse those that are contrary to God's nature as revealed through the life and words of Jesus Christ. It helps to write down your visions and special dreams and carefully review them from time to time. Do not jump to conclusions as to their meaning. Ask God to help you interpret them. Share them with a trusted friend. Offer to help others sort through their unresolved spiritual experiences and dreams. Listen kindly. If you do not have an answer, say so. A close friend can be of much help by offering his listening heart.

Twenty-five years ago my mind mirrored the word picture taken from the movie "The Ten Commandments" produced by Cecil B. DeMille. When Moses was cast out of Egypt for refusing to bend his knee to Pharaoh, this monologue shadowed his trek through the desert. Moses survived. I have survived and so can you. Allow me to be your cheerleader. Give the gift of victory as your legacy to future generations.

"Into the blistering wilderness of Shur, the man who walked with kings now walks alone: torn from the pinnacle of royal power, stripped of all rank and earthly wealth, a forsaken man without a country, without a hope, his soul in turmoil. Like the hot winds and raging sands that lash him with the fury of a taskmaster's whip, he is driven forward, always forward, by a God unknown or a land unseen; into the molten wilderness of Zin, where granite sentinels stand as towers of living death to bar his way.

"Each night brings the black embrace of loneliness. In the mocking whisper of the wind he hears the echoing voices of the dark, his tortured mind wondering if they recall the memory of past triumphs or wail foreboding of disaster yet to come. Or whether the desert's hot breath has melted his reason into madness. He cannot cool the burning kiss of thirst upon his lips, nor shade the scorching fury of the sun. All about is desolation. He can neither bless nor curse the power that moves him, for he does not know from where it comes. Learning that it can be more terrible to live than to die, he is driven onward through the burning crucible of desert, where holy men and prophets are cleansed and purged for God's great purpose. Until at last, at the end of human strength, beaten into the dust from which he came, the metal is ready for the Maker's Hand."

One mental health professional concluded his evaluation of this writer for the benefit of the courts:

It is my professional opinion that his psychotic processes are still dormant and will be waiting for expression for the rest of his life. Thanks to his preoccupation with fundamental Christianity, his most recent letters to me show a total covering up of this schizophrenic process. I doubt, however, that Mr. Laue could ever assume a job in the traditional employer-employee model. I believe that such stress would be the catalyst for a resurgence of his schizophrenia. Everything should be done to encourage him to remain phobically centered on his Christian endeavors."

I will conclude with this prayer, "Lord, may all who battle for their sanity, who have had a foretaste of hell on earth, have a preoccupation with fundamental Christianity." This preoccupation with fundamental Christianity was the key to my healing and I hereby hand the key to as many as will accept it. To know our God and the purpose for which He has created us is joy unspeakable and full of glory.

World, do not compel anyone to subscribe to your shifting definition of normal! God can never bless such a mindset. Please remember that many of us cannot bloom where we are planted. Please treat us with love and respect and allow us the freedom to be different. Without apology have I adopted this prayer: "**Lord, let my life be Your glorious contradiction to the world's definition of normal.**"

I will close with a poem written by one of those "different" people. Her name is Debi. You can find this poem on our web site: www.stretcherbearers.com

THE PAINT BRUSH

I keep my Paint Brush with me, wherever I may go,
in case I need to cover up,
so the **Real Me** doesn't show.
I'm so afraid to show you Me; afraid of what you'll do;
you might laugh, or say mean things;
I'm afraid I might **Lose** you.
I'd like to remove all my **Paintcoats**,
to show you the real, true **Me**.
But I want you to try and understand;

I need you to **Like** what you see.
So, if you'll be patient and close your eyes,
I'll strip off my coats real slow;
Please understand how much it hurts,
to let the **Real Me** show.
Now my coats are all stripped off. I feel naked, bare and cold.
If you still love me, with all that you see,
you are my friend, pure as gold.
I need to save my **Paint Brush**, though, and hold it in my hand;
I want to keep it handy, in case somebody don't understand.
So please protect me, my dear friend,
and **thanks** for loving me **True**;
But, please let me **Keep My Paint Brush** with me,
Until I Love **Me** Too!

It takes courage to let the "**Real Me**" show and wisdom to know when not to. Jesus—or Yeshua, if you know the Lord Jesus by that name—is the author of both. I speak and write these words not only to you, but also as a reminder to myself. As I do, they become more and more a part of who I am. The best way I can be a blessing to you is to let the "**Real Me**" show. I challenge you to do likewise. It's an essential step towards sanity. To be a blessing to those near and dear to us, we must be so well and so real, that we are contagious in a good way. It's never too early or too late to become real. Be prepared for a battle if you accept the challenge!

Serving Jesus as:

- Spokesman for those who are or would like to be "different"
- Stretcher Bearer
- Crusader
- Cheerleader
- Delivery boy

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"God creates originals. Satan can only make carbon copies. Am I an original or am I a carbon copy?"

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