

“You are my refuge and my shield; your word is my source of hope.” Psalms 119:114 NLT

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I have had difficult days. I have had days that just threw me off so badly that I felt like running away, I would be boiling in angry conversations in my head, my heart felt like it was spinning out of control. It would all happen so fast. One text, one email, one voicemail sent or taken the wrong way would trigger me into these tailspins. Embarrassingly, these moments would last a day or two, maybe three. I remember feeling inadequate, dumb, misunderstood and sometimes even pinned against the ropes of the ring and going down. All of these feelings left me feeling so trapped. Trapped by a lack of control, which I hate. Trapped by people I could never please. Trapped by my past and unable to break away from perceived failures. And, I knew in those moments - I cannot let words or people MAKE me feel these feelings or dictate my emotions or behaviors. I have to learn how to get out of those emotional traps without blowing up my life or those around me. Whether it's from someone above you (a boss or authority) or someone below you (a direct report, or a volunteer) it was critical that I learned to talk my self down or out of rage to get a clearer picture of what was really happening. I believed I needed this person(s) to unknowingly help me deal with these sudden and explosive thoughts. The Psalms capture the only thing that worked for me! The only way I could stop the angry thoughts and poisoned feelings was to get with God and let His word do it's work in my soul. God's word to comfort, console, correct and CHANGE my heart. The situation never changed! I had to change. God is that refuge (brief moment of solitude), my shield (protecting my heart) and most importantly, my HOPE. By the way, those raging emotions changed my blood pressure, pulse, and stress levels - they were very REAL and dangerously high during those times.

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Dad,

For a very LONG time, your Psalms has worked in me when I was feeling out of control. Every time I felt like the victim, your Word was there for me. I would run to a quiet place, dive into your arms, bury myself in the Psalms and let it do a work in my soul. I am so very thankful for your Word. I am so very thankful for your love, long suffering, mercy and kindness to me. There are some days I feel like I just can't take on the world, people or my past, yet you are with me. Your rod and your staff comfort me!

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rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root