

Ol' Fluffy in the dryer

Entertainer James Rogers – who starred in shows at Dollywood and Dolly Parton's Music Mansion and other venues – often sang about Fluffy the cat. Here's the gist of the song ...

A little boy decided, since his parents were away for a short time, that he would give Fluffy a bath. He washed the cat, went to the laundry room and put Fluffy in the dryer. Around and around, ol' Fluffy went.

When Mom and Dad returned, the boy proudly told them what he had done. "No, you didn't!" his mother exclaimed.

"Yes, I did," the lad replied. "I thought it was a quick way to get the job done."

Very concerned, Dad asked the child how Fluffy was doing. The boy replied, "Well, he just sort of walks around in a daze. I don't think the soap was too strong. I believe it was the spin cycle that did it."

Do you ever feel like ol' Fluffy?
Like you've been through a spin
cycle? And maybe even hung out
to dry?

Living through pain and suffering is like going through the spin cycle. Often our pain is physical, the result of illness or injury. But more often, we suffer from emotional pain like loss, fear, worry, rejection, loneliness, guilt or depression. In either case, we feel as if we have been through the spin cycle.

We hope for a world with no pain, no problems, no obstacles, no disappointments, no hurts, no handicaps, no troubles. But the reality is we live in a world of pain, and we all experience our share of it. We can run, but we can't hide from suffering. And should we even try to run from it? As much as we dread going through tough times – the spin cycles of life – even hardships help us to grow.

Helen Keller, without sight or hearing, suffered her share of pain. But after many years of anger and hostility toward her "solitary confinement," she was eventually able to say, "I thank God for my handicaps. For through them, I have found myself, my work and my God.



(more)

Perhaps you can't give thanks for *your* sufferings, but can you accept them as the indispensable teachers they are?

Find your way through the spin cycles and you just may come out stronger than ever. Here is what the Bible has to say on the subject:

We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Romans 5:3-5 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter