

A close-up photograph of several red tulips in a snowy environment. The tulips are vibrant red with some yellow-green at the base of the petals. They are heavily covered in a thick layer of white snow. A single, clear, teardrop-shaped ice drop hangs from the bottom of one of the tulips. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a garden setting. The overall mood is serene and resilient.

endurance through depression

endurance through depression Jan Dravecky



My anger at God grew into rage. **I shook my fist and screamed**, “I can’t feel you, I can’t see you, I can’t sense you, I don’t even know if you exist anymore. And if you do exist, **why aren’t you helping me?”**

That’s how I felt after my husband Dave’s cancer returned in May 1990. I was absolutely **exhausted and so depressed** that I couldn’t leave the house.

I looked for strength and comfort **in the words of the Bible**. But I did so with a heavy heart, as if **scavenging for scraps of hope** I didn’t really expect to find. I prayed I would soon return to my normal self, but **things got worse**. When Dave had surgery to remove the tumor in his arm, the doctor found more cancer. It was only a matter of time before Dave would lose his arm.

One afternoon our kids came begging me to take them for a swim. I could see how much they wanted me to go with them, but I was numb. I couldn’t move. So Dave, who was suffering the effects of radiation treatments, took the kids to the pool without me.

Something inside me snapped: “I can’t even go to the stinkin’ pool with my kids!” I was **incapable of carrying one more burden** or doing one more task, much less feeling joy in anything.

provision of time

Clinical depression often triggers a **downward spiral**. In my case, fellow Christians didn't understand why I couldn't "snap out of it" by praying or confessing my sin. But there's no easy answer. God never said there would be. The truth is: **suffering isn't pretty**.

So how does a person endure through depression? Even though I couldn't feel God's presence, I kept turning to the Bible. I was desperate to reconnect with the One who had claimed me as His own and had **promised to never let me go**.

Five years passed before I finally made it through that dark season. Looking back, I've learned that **it takes time**. Even with encouragement from the Bible. Even with counseling and treatment. And even if you have a friend who lets you honestly express your feelings **without spiritualizing or sugar-coating** them.

Those things can eventually bring healing, but the seeds of endurance are buried deep under the surface. And it takes time for **tender stems to push their way up** out of the darkness—and even more time for joy to reach full bloom. I share my story so that others who struggle with depression will know that they **are not alone** and that they, too, can find the **patience to endure**.

Please share this brochure to encourage a friend or loved one.

Show me your ways O Lord,
teach me your paths;
guide me in your truth
and teach me,
for you are God my Savior,
and my hope is in you
all day long. **Psalm 25:4-5**



Jan Dravecky is the wife of former San Francisco Giants baseball pitcher Dave Dravecky. Together they founded Endurance, a ministry to encourage those who are facing serious illness, loss or depression.

Dave is known to baseball fans around the world for his dramatic 1989 comeback to the major leagues following cancer surgery on his pitching arm. Just as dramatic was Dave's departure from baseball after the return of his cancer and the amputation of his left arm.

Through an incredible journey of physical and emotional pain, Jan and Dave have experienced the heights and depths of joy and despair, faith and doubt, intimacy and aloneness. They have come to know the power of Endurance—not in their own ability, but in the comfort, strength and hope that God provides.

Their story, written in the book, *When You Can't Come Back*, has been a source of encouragement to readers of every age and background. Jan tells of her own "comeback" from a crippling depression in her book, *A Joy I'd Never Known*.

For more information, resources and faith-based speaking engagements, please visit www.endurance.org.



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