Drowning...

July 30, 2014 By Rae Lewis-Thornton

I’m drowning in the chaos of my life. It started back in February when I started this emotional eating and Cheetos was always in my right hand, going straight into my month. Now, in full disclosure, I took a moment a couple of months ago to examine what had gotten me so off track and all roads led to a man that I wanted, but who didn’t want a relationship. So I walked as hard and as fast as I could to a place where I could hold onto my dignity. For me it’s simple. No matter how much I want a man, I never want to keep him at the cost of me.

Even with HIV/AIDS I would much prefer to be alone then to be with a man who is half in/half out. My tail is to old to “kick it,” unless I’m kicking a ball in CrossFit.

Not only am I not going to waste my pretty, I'm never going to let a man suck the life out of me. That is, him getting what he wants, while I'm just hanging and hoping that I will get all of him as my reward. Women are good for that, sticking around with the hope and a prayer that staying on his terms will render us victoriously. Let me tell you, it will never happen. When a man tells you that he does not want a relationship he means it and it does not matter how wonderful you are or if you make his toes curl in bed. Furthermore, staying will not only suck the life out of you, but it will kill your spirit and topple your self-esteem.

While I know that walking was the best thing for me, it sent me on a down spiral of emotional eating. I mean who wants to be alone? Especially after you have started to bond and was hopeful for a future. I got sick after him with one back to back illness that sent me overboard. You do remember those sleepless nights caused by uncontrollable hot flashes that lead to mood swings and sleep deprivation, while the doctors tried to figure out the best combination of Hormone Replacement Therapy and HIV medication. After that, the health issues just kept coming. I had a bad case of HIV Peripheral Neuropathy in my feet and legs. Then I had a cold that turned into bronchitis and after that I pulled a muscle in my back and even breathing hurt. Then to pour salt in my wounds, I had a herpes outbreak that landed me back on IV medication. I was sinking, but fighting to hold my head above the water.

With the death of Sophie I lost all control and started to drown. I couldn't seem to keep my head above water no mater how hard I tried. Nothing seemed to be going in my favor and I took an emotional tumble. I was drowning and no matter how hard I fought, the depression kept coming and coming and coming. Eating became my enemy disguised as my best friend. I went from Cheetos to Flamin Hots mixed with Doritos and a Snickers on the side, and of course a cupcake or two. The three weeks following Sophie's death, all my healthy living died right along with her.

When I made it to BlogHer last week I got off the plane in San Jose on the hunt for food - good comfort food. I had onion rings and beef brisket and burgers and fried chicken and hand cut french fires and milk shakes. I ate the danishes at the conference each morning instead of the fruit. For real, my plate was filled with bacon and sweet rolls every morning with tea on the side. I knew that I was drowning, but I couldn't seem to gather the strength to save myself.

Now the best, and worst of it all, was this little bakery I found in the San Jose’s Public Market,

Chocatoo. Chocoatoo has the best freaking cookies that I have ever eaten in life. I'm not sure which was my favorite. There was the chocolate S'mores rich with graham crackers, marshmallows and big dark chocolate chips.

Then there was the basic chocolate chip with dark and milk chocolate but my God, that Reese's Peanut Butter with large chunks of Reese's and milk chocolate made my taste buds do a dance. I had 3 of these large cookies a day, yes I said 3, 1-2-3. It was over the top, but it sure seemed to ease the pain. I knew that I was out of control but I couldn't seem to stop myself. I kept trying to come up for air but the waves kept pulling me back in.

By Friday, I had been to Chocotoo twice for a total of 6 cookies. That should have been my limit

but when my girlfriend Dwana arrived to San Jose, I had to introduce her to the best cookies ever. That day I got 2 Reees's and 1 S'mores. I should have stopped there, but following Dwana's lead, I got the homemade marshmallow S'mores. This delight was 4 inches of homemade marshmallow between two graham crackers dipped in dark chocolate, with caramelized bacon on top.

I had eaten a cookie by the time we arrived back to the hotel. Once we arrived, I got me a fresh cup of hot tea and dived into the homemade S'mores. It was divine!!

That left me with two cookies and I was straight out of control. It's crazy when you can see yourself in deep water but can't seem to pull yourself to the top. After the MultiCulti party

that night I came back to my room, made another cup of tea and had my last two cookies ... well all but a ¼ of the Reese's. It was then time for sleep.

I need to pause and say my food for that entire day consisted of; bacon and sweet rolls for breakfast, roast beef sandwich and salad for lunch with a fruit tart for dessert. Then Dwana and I had a meal at local restaurant a local couple hours after lunch, where I had homemade onion rings and beef brisket. That was a lot of food, then we must add the 2 and 3/4 large cookies and a 4 inch high S’mores.

Missing Sophie, I curled into a tight ball hugging the pillow to let sleep take me away from my misery. I closed my eyes and nausea swept over me. It jolted me out of my semi-sleep. The nausea consumed my body and right to my very core, my soul. It was as if the universe was saying, “that’s enough Rae that’s enough.” Tears started to flow. I knew that I had to make a change. Sophie is not coming back, that man is long gone and my health hangs in the balance by what I do and don’t do.

“Oh God, ”I cried out. “Help me! God Help me!”

to be continued ….

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