



Processing Your Emotions Through Pandemic and Pain

By Cheryl L. Bridges



Over these past several months, many have felt a barrage of emotions related to the persistence of the pandemic, the pain of racial injustice and the abuse of power in our country. If you've had difficulty in understanding how to handle these emotions, you are not alone.

I would like to suggest a few ways to help you process and deal with your emotions in a healthy and productive manner:

1. **Learn to RESPOND rather than REACT.** The goal is not to eliminate the emotions and feelings; that's impossible to do. The idea, however, is to change how you respond to them. Reacting gives your power away; responding helps you remain in control of yourself. Responding involves remaining calm, thinking things through and making good decisions.
2. **S.T.O.P.** Accept that you have the emotion or feeling, and then STOP:
 - **S**top and evaluate the emotion.
 - **T**ake a moment to breathe and think about the situation.
 - **O**bserve what is really happening; consider other possible emotions/feelings.
 - **P**roceed with a more positive and healthy perspective.
3. **PRAY:**
 - Practice healthy activities.
 - Resist the urge to watch the news all day.
 - Allow yourself to feel.
 - Yield to God.
4. **Have FAITH:**
 - Focus on how God has shown up and answered your prayers in the past.
 - Accept that He has already answered your prayers.
 - Insist on surrounding yourself only with positive influences.
 - Take time for you and God.
 - Help someone else.

Finally, the Word tells us, "*Dear Friends, do you think you'll get anywhere in this [world] if you learn all the right words but never do anything?*" *James 2:14(a) MSG*. Processing your emotions also requires getting involved. The issues of a persistent pandemic, the pain of racial injustice and the

abuse of power have all revealed the need to not only pray, but to protest. There should be deeds, there should be works, there must be action.

As you learn to respond rather than react, to STOP, to PRAY and to have FAITH, remember that feelings are not facts. Try not to BECOME the emotion. Learn to witness it, allow it and then release it.

Cheryl Bridges is the founder and CEO of Bridges 2 Life, LLC, a faith-based coaching organization created to offer support to individuals, families and communities and build bridges to a better life through Christian/spiritual coaching, temperament counseling and training, group coaching sessions, self-esteem workshops and much more. Cheryl assures us that God wants us to THRIVE, not just survive...even in the midst of struggles and challenges. Information about Bridges 2 Life can be found at www.bridges2life.com.

“I pray the power of love will overcome the love of power in this world and lead to peace.”
— Coach Cheryl