

Susan “Worry” Manis

Our son Kyle always told me that my middle name should be “Worry”. I thought that my being overly concerned, planning ahead relentlessly, obsessing over options, and stressing over details were good things to do. Kyle took them for what they really were—a huge case of being a worry wart!!

As my faith in God has grown, my worries seem to fade a bit. I often place my concerns in God’s hands and sometimes even leave them there. I can rest in my belief that God is in control and try not to worry over those things I can not change. Sometimes it even works, and I am worry free. The Serenity Prayer has become my mantra.

Now on the other hand, Bob never seemed to be too much of a worrier. I guess that might be because it was my “job” and I worried enough for the both of us. Maybe he had worries and concerns that he kept hidden. He was a big tough cop and a man’s man. Maybe he just didn’t openly share his worries like I did.

So now the tables have turned. Flipped upside down would be a better description. Bob worries about everything

- We need to shut our blinds because there are people in our backyard that can see in.
- We need to lock every deadbolt as someone might want to come in our home.
- We need to hide the TV guide and remote away, so no one steals them while we are sleeping.
- We need to move to a different house as the trees behind the house are going to fall and crash our home.
- We need to not park the car under the garage door as its going to come falling down and crash our car.
- We need to drive in a different car lane or even a different road to stay away from boulders on the

hillside.

- We need to watch where we are walking so, we don't get "that sickness" from the red ants.
- We need to not go too close to the ocean because of sharks.
- We need to not use our backyard "fire table" as we will burn our house down.
- We need to turn the picture frames around so that they don't catch on fire from the sun coming in the windows.
- We need to take a coat and gloves with us when we leave the house on a 95 degree day.

The worries are endless.

I attempt to use logic and reason with Bob to no avail. It is like I'm speaking to him in a language he can't understand. That's the truth, actually. He doesn't understand. I try to tell Bob with love that I am going to take care of him, and he need not worry. That doesn't seem to help either. The worries continue.

So as Bob becomes more and more worried, I turn more and more of my concerns over to God. I try to reassure Bob and not make fun of his concerns just as I know that God cares for me in the same way.

I wonder if God is looking down on me and laughing just a little. Is God saying to me, "remember how much you used to worry and I had told you I was in charge, why did you doubt me, why didn't you trust me"?

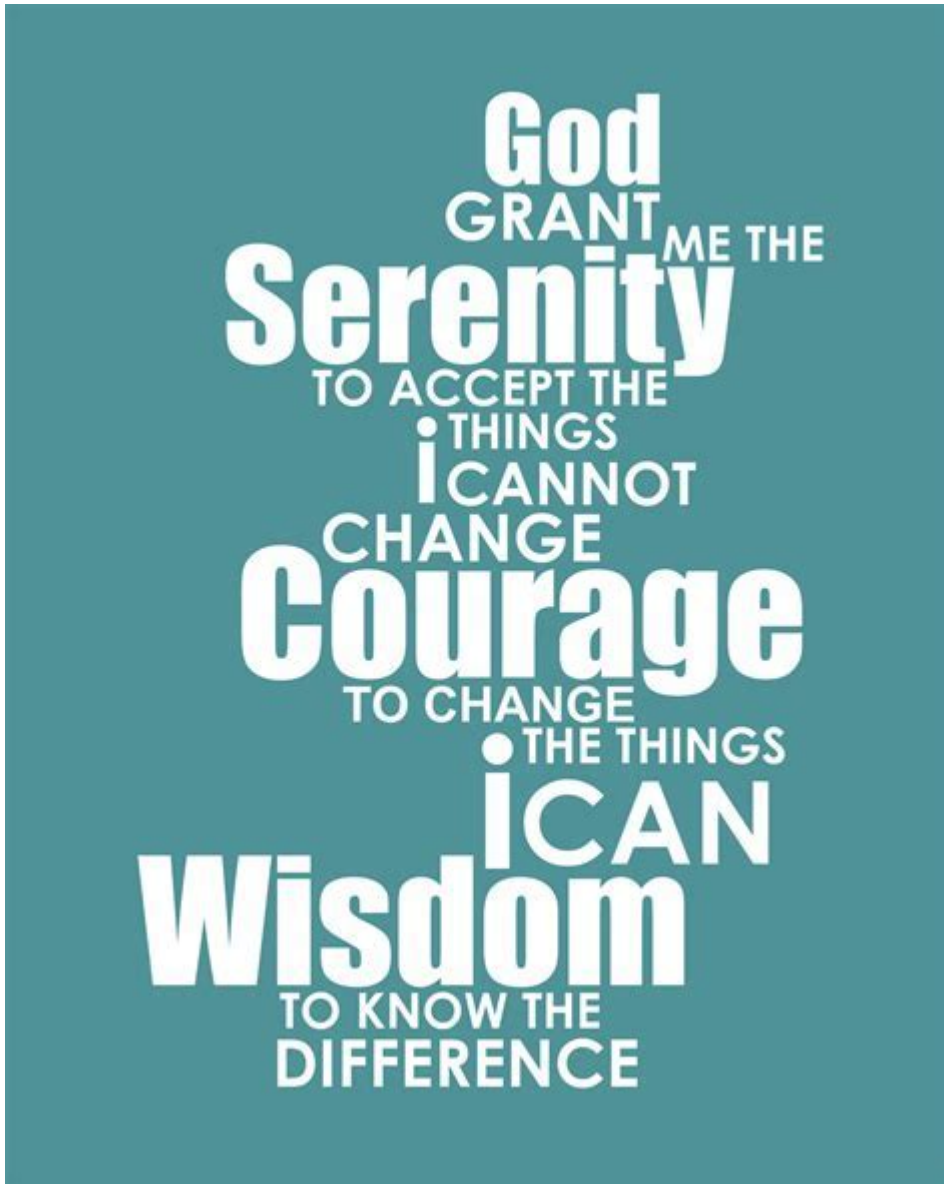
I'm discovering so much as Bob and I go down this path. And those lessons are not always about dementia and caregiving.

Maybe my worry days are not over completely but I'm learning.

Philippians 4:6-7 From The Message

Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions

and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.





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