

Date: Sat, Feb 22, 1997 5:20 PM EDT
From: HTHALLJR
Subj: just talking to myself
To: IRHall

February 22, 1997

Dear Mother,

I got your message on my answering machine last night, and also your E-mail message. I sincerely appreciate your continual expression of concern and love. I stopped changing the date on my machine during my trip and decided not to change it any more because I keep forgetting and am afraid I'll cause you more concern than I alleviate. Also, people who don't know why I have been changing the date are puzzled by it, and I didn't want to explain why I do it. I'll do my best to stay in touch.

One of the effects of depression on me is social phobia -- when I'm depressed I have a powerful (and completely irrational) dread of human contact. For example, I went to the BYU choirs concert, and I loved it, but I dreaded meeting anyone I knew before or after the concert, and after the concert I quickly went home. It's crazy, I know. Why should I dread being with those I love? I think this manifestation of my illness is one of the reasons Betsy finally gave up on me. When I'm ill, I just totally withdraw. I dread phone calls, I dread going to work, and I even have to force myself to go to church.

I think the children pick up on this, and they dread being with me, too. Out of consideration for the stress they are under right now, I've written to them and told them that I won't pressure them any more to spend time with me. Thankfully I still seem to be able to communicate in writing when I'm in this state.

One reason I was eager to try moclobemide is that I read that it's been found to be effective both for general depression and for social phobia. I'm up to the normal recommended dose now (100 milligrams 3 times daily, after meals), which is half the recommended maximum dose, and I

haven't experienced any bad side effects -- just a minor bit of gastrointestinal disturbance and tiredness, which could be as much an effect of stress as of the medication itself. I'm starting to feel a little better now, but it's probably too early to attribute it to the medication -- most antidepressants take a month or longer to become fully effective.

Some researchers think the delayed effect of antidepressants might be because the improvement in mood is not so much a direct effect of a restoration of normal levels of neurotransmitters as a secondary effect resulting from the reorganization of the nerve cells and their connections with each other to accommodate those levels. That may be why talk therapy helps many and why others can just will themselves to "snap out of it". Many are able to reorganize their brains by thought processes alone.

My bishop is paying for 6-8 weeks of therapy through LDS social services, and even though the therapist is just a graduate student intern, I feel that it will benefit me. I'm also going to continue to exercise. Virginia just sent me some information about how researchers have obtained remarkable improvement in epileptic and cerebral palsy patients by means of changes in their diet, and if diet can help people with that such severe brain disturbances, I am going to try to find a healthier diet, too. I feel like I have to accept every possible source of help if I am going to defeat this monster.

I was feeling a bit better after my trip to Tijuana to obtain the moclobemide, but I have had a pretty rough week since then. The house in which I rent the basement for \$475 per month has been sold and the buyers, who have 5 children, want use of the whole house. I asked for 4 weeks to find a new place, which would have given me until March 8, but my landlady left a message last Saturday saying that the buyer are moving in next Friday. Legally, I could insist that the new owners honor my lease, and my landlady said that I could have all the time I needed, but I don't want to cause a hardship to them and will do my best to move out by next Friday.

This place was a real bargain, and I love my ward. I'm having a hard time finding a decent place at a decent price and am dreading going through the

whole process of integrating into a new ward again. When I'm depressed, obstacles like this seem to become almost insurmountable. But I'm going to keep looking for a new place and am going to force myself to go back to work Monday, as I promised Joe Fox (my immediate boss) and David.

The divorce has lately been a huge source of stress, too. Betsy refuses to communicate with me except through her lawyer, and he is ruthless. (Her former lawyer retired for health reasons). I asked my own lawyer to withdraw because I felt that she was needlessly confrontational and because she filed a motion for a court hearing for an "order to show cause" against my wishes. She had filed it on Christmas Eve and then left town for two weeks, with the hearing scheduled for the day after she got back. (She even managed to muddle the filing, sending the papers that should have gone to Betsy to me). I managed to get her to postpone that date and then dismissed her.

I had a very upsetting experience trying to cancel the hearing, which had been rescheduled (can you believe). When I called the judge's secretary to ask to cancel it, her computer was down and she couldn't see the docket. She mistakenly assumed that the hearing had been requested by the plaintiff's attorney, but she didn't communicate her misunderstanding to me. She just told me that I'd have to get the consent of the other party. So I visited Betsy's new attorney and gave him several reasons why I wanted to cancel the hearing, including the fact that my attorney had asked for the hearing against my wishes, that I had experienced a change of heart toward my wife and was seeking reconciliation, that I was trying my best to avoid any adversarial conflict, and that if Betsy refused to meet with me to discuss reconciliation (which she later did refuse), I wanted at least to settle with her out of court.

So he had no doubt about who had asked for the hearing or about my desire to de-escalate the conflict. He looked me in the eye and lied, telling me I would have to obtain the consent of his client. He represented to me that he personally had no objection to cancelling the hearing, but that he would have to learn his client's wishes. Then he called Betsy and talked her out of giving her consent and left a message on my answering machine that ended gleefully, "so we'll see you Friday in court."

I spent two days researching the law and court procedure but found no discussion or precedent for how to cancel a hearing that my own attorney had scheduled. Finally I wrote a long motion documenting eight reasons why the hearing should be cancelled and pleading with the judge to cancel it. I filed it with the clerk of the court and then called the judge's secretary to tell her I had filed the motion and asked her to bring it to the judge's attention before Friday's hearing. She said that nothing but a request for an order or for a hearing would come to the judge's attention. I asked if a hearing was needed to cancel a hearing.

As she explained to me the procedure for cancelling a hearing, it dawned on me that she thought I had been trying to cancel a hearing that had been requested by the other party. (In a divorce case, a hearing for an order to show cause is usually requested by the parent having temporary custody, to obtain temporary relief from the court if the other parent isn't paying child support or spouse maintenance, which I have been paying all along). When I explained to her that it was my own hearing, she said "well of course you can cancel your own hearing without the other party's consent. All you have to do is inform the other party."

The reason I hadn't been able to find any procedure or precedent for cancelling my own hearing is that it's just an obvious fundamental right. Betsy's lawyer took advantage of my ignorance and the judge's secretary's mistake to deceive me about the law and my rights. So the motion I wrote and filed was completely superfluous. At least I finally was forced to read the Utah divorce code and Utah's Rules of Civil Procedure, so I'm better prepared to defend myself from now on. And when my posterity reads my motion in the file of my divorce proceedings they will know that I sincerely sought reconciliation.

I don't believe that Betsy intended for her lawyer to lie to me or was even aware of the fact that he had done so. Her previous lawyer also lied to me, first in telling me that the law required me to leave my home (if I had known my rights I would have stayed put and would now be in a much stronger negotiating position), and secondly in lying to me about the filing of Betsy's complaint and attempting to deceive me into losing by default. In that complaint, she also artfully revised the terms I had offered Betsy (which were already foolishly generous) so as to require me to pay

alimony until I had completely paid off all the debts, thereby effectively making it impossible to ever repay the debt to our children, which, with interest, now stands at about \$127,000.

I wrote to Betsy documented her new lawyer's behavior, told her that I refused to negotiate any more with him (it's my right to negotiate directly with the other party), and asked her to dismiss him and go to mediation with me. She had previously refused my request for voluntary mediation, saying that it would be too stressful for her.

I am willing to concede primary physical custody to Betsy. I'm no longer even insisting on my minimum legal "parenting time", although the court will insist on it. But she's demanding sole legal custody, which I do not want to yield. From my reading of the law, I have learned that when custody is at issue, the court must refer the parties to mediation, so at least there will also be movement from the court for some conciliatory interaction between us.

Anyway, this is all so stressful! I am sincerely trying to maintain the feelings of empathy and love for Betsy that have been miraculously restored to me. That gift has brought me peace of conscience about my efforts to save my failed marriage, and I am determined to hold onto that peace. I continue to pray for another miracle that will also change her feelings toward me, but I also sincerely pray for her happiness, even if it should, for reasons beyond my ability to understand, somehow require dissolution of our eternal marriage. I still hope that we can somehow be reconciled before the resurrection.

I am trying my best to look upon the separation and divorce as an opportunity for me to get my own life in shape. If I do so, perhaps someday she will again want to be my wife. And if that is not to be, at least I will have learned how to be happy without her and will be better suited for a new marriage. But it is so hard to let go!

What I forget too often is that the Lord still loves me and knows and wants what is best for me. He knows I have done all I can to save my marriage, and I know that I must finally surrender that outcome to Betsy's free agency. But I still believe I should fight to share in the legal custody

of my children. Surely He cares about that, and also about where I live, what ward I attend, what contributions I can make to society through my work, and every other little thing that in any way can help me to return to Him. So I'm just trying to put it all in His hands and trust that He will turn all things to the good of us all -- for me, for my children, and for Betsy.

Thanks for giving me this opportunity to sort out my feelings. I hope it hasn't been too stressful for you to read all this. And thanks for still loving me, despite all my sins, failures, and weaknesses. I love you, too.

Tracy Jr.