





# Discomforted Comforter



Lord God,  
When what You ask of me  
As a caregiver  
Creates discomfort  
Remind me  
That love  
And sacrifice  
Are practically synonymous  
And that  
On that score too,  
You paved the way.

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—  —

# No One Cares for One at a Time

—  —

My parents  
Or my children  
Or other people's children  
Or my day job  
Or the medical needs,  
God?

The question is haunting.  
Which one needs me most  
Right now?  
Which is more important?  
How can I ever know for sure?

*My Child,*  
*Do you think I know all things? Even this?*

Yes, Lord.

*Then here's an idea.*

*Follow My lead.*

—  —

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# Guide Me



“Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

Once sounded like

A cry for You

To illuminate my path, God.

Today it leaves my lips

As a plea

For You to guide me

In the best ways

To accompany

Those I care for

On their journeys

While deftly navigating mine

And conducting myself

In such a way

That they're grateful

For the company

And I'm grateful

For the privilege.

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# I'm Only Human



God of All  
Only Wise God  
I'm feeling my humanness more acutely  
As the ones in my care  
Increasingly need me  
But I still need them.  
You who sees what I can  
And what I can't  
Help me listen for  
Your direction  
Your whispered cues  
So I don't misstep while  
Trying to keep them from falling.

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# The Impossibly Hard Conversations



God of inextinguishable Light  
And Life,  
May Your Love  
Pave the path  
We must travel  
To meet at the conversation table  
To talk about Unspeakable things  
That so often mark  
The offenses both we  
And those in our caregiving circle  
Must bear.

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# A Prize Too Compelling



If left to myself, Lord,  
To my self-protective ways,  
I'd hold onto  
My well-deserved resentments  
Until my dying day.  
But the beauty of Your love  
For me  
Leaves no  
Viable  
Option  
Other than  
Loving and forgiving.  
Peace  
Is too compelling  
A prize.

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## Caregiver's Ode



I wanted to keep you safe.  
I forgot that laughter made you feel safe.  
I wanted to keep you healthy.  
I forgot that joy is better than adding  
a medication.  
I wanted you to feel comfortable.  
But the pillow I bought did less than the  
“Andy of Mayberry” rerun we shared.  
I wanted to serve you.  
You needed to tell your favorite joke.  
Again.  
I wanted you to be happy.  
The joy of the Lord is still our strength  
(Nehemiah 8:10).

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# Who They Once Were



Father God, help me celebrate  
The tenacity  
That made my parents  
Survivors,  
The perseverance  
They passed on  
To me.  
Guide me  
To use it well,  
In ways that  
Respect my heritage  
And honor You.

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# A Harvest of Gratitude



Help me, God, to see this season  
As a season of thanksgiving.  
Grow my gratitude  
To full maturity,  
A ripe harvest  
Of thankfulness.  
And show me ways  
To express it  
So those in my care are blessed  
And You retain the glory.

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# A Creative Difference



Creator God,  
For whom inventing worms  
That make silk  
And bee regurgitation  
That becomes sweet honey  
And foxgloves  
That provide medicine  
That regulates  
A human heartbeat  
Were no great challenge,  
Feed me ideas  
Daily  
For how I can make a difference  
In others' lives.

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# Worthy



God, thank You for loving us  
When we had nothing more to offer  
    Than our devotion,  
    Fickle as it can be.  
Thank You for infusing us  
    With worth  
Because of Your Son's Sacrifice.  
    Move through us  
    By Your Spirit  
So that our faces,  
    Words,  
    And hearts  
Convincingly express  
To the ones we care for  
Their inexpressible worth  
    To us  
    And to You.

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# Lord, I'm Lost Again.



Adrift.  
Bereft of words.  
No.  
More than that,  
Bereft of good words  
That will warm  
Another human soul,  
Light a spark  
Of recognition.  
Ease the pain.  
Infuse peace.  
And I tire,  
I admit it,  
Of carrying the full burden  
Of hope.  
But I hear You say,  
“Come  
All who are weary.”  
I hear  
Your Voice.  
And it comforts me.

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# Choosing to Serve



Of the things  
That occupy my time, Lord,  
Serving others  
For their sake  
And in Your Name  
May be  
The most honorable  
Challenging  
And soul-satisfying  
Of all.  
But I cannot do it  
Not any of it  
Without You.

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# Shaking Free from Guilt's Grip



Father God,  
Caring for someone who's hurting  
Or needy  
Or broken  
Or all three  
Is consuming,  
It's an inconvenient time  
For guilt  
To demand my attention.  
So with Your help  
I'll let You handle it  
When it insists  
On camping  
In my heart.





# Lean On Me



Lean on Me  
Has never meant  
So much  
As it does now, Lord  
When You whisper it  
Over my weary soul.

Lean on Me  
Has never meant  
So much  
As it does now, Lord  
When You whisper it  
Over their tired soul  
Through me.

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# When Caring for Aging Parents



With me even here, Lord?  
When I have to turn my eyes away  
Because my parents' hands tremble  
And I know they will not stop?  
With me even here, Lord?  
When he can't remember how to swallow  
And I'm coaching my father  
In a task he cannot master?  
With me even here, Lord?  
When my mother tells me  
She wishes she'd been able  
To have children?  
With me even here, Lord?  
When I'm performing tasks  
Better suited to a newborn  
Than a parent?  
Even here?  
"Lo, I am with you always"  
(Matthew 28:20 NASB).



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## Picking Berries



God, let me be  
The berry-picker  
Who wisely glances back  
From where she's been  
To see the hidden bursts  
Of storied color  
Tucked among the leaves  
Of caring for another.

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# The Common Thread



The common thread  
Woven through  
  Humanity  
Unbreakable  
  Inescapable  
Unavoidable  
With no regard  
  For status  
  Or ethnicity  
  For race  
  Or education  
For accomplishment  
  Or lack of it  
  For gender  
  Or politics  
  Or age  
  Is grief.  
Grief unites us.  
  Makes us one.  
We have that in common.  
  Help me remember, Lord,  
We all have that in common.

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