

Hiding Your Feelings

Has a situation in your life been so painful that you hid it and locked it in your heart? Maybe you had hoped that it would just go away or you pretended that it wasn't a real problem. Have you ever felt so overwhelmed by fear that keeping your thoughts to yourself seemed easier than sharing them? Does opening up to others and allowing them to see what's going on inside you seem too hard? If so, then you are not alone. Many people have felt this way, including Violet Travilla.

"But I'll tell you something. I'm worried about our girl."

"How so?" Elsie asked. She had not yet discussed her own concerns about Vi with anyone else, and she wanted to hear Chloe's observations.

"It's hard to put in words, but she's just not like herself anymore," Chloe said....."It's like all the joy just drained outta Vi....One of the little boys was cuttin' up down at the quarters today, being funny, and I saw Vi smiling at him. But as soon as the child went his way, Vi's smile just vanished. Just vanished Miss. Elsie, quick as a wink. I thought to myself that she's not lettin' herself have even that little pleasure. It's like she's punishin' herself for somethin'."

Elsie agreed with Chloe that Vi was acting oddly and then confided her own worries to her old nursemaid. "Have you tried to talk to her?" Chloe asked.

"I have," Elsie said, "and I cannot complain of her responses. She is polite and she answers my questions honestly. But she is not ..." Elsie paused trying to find the right word. "She isn't forthcoming. Our Vi could sometimes keep her feelings to herself, but I never knew her to hold back like this."

"Your right that she's never been one to keep her secrets for long," Chloe concurred.

"Something is troubling her, Chloe, and I hardly know how to help her. I have an idea that she is carrying a burden... yet how can I help if I don't now what it is?"

From Violets Hidden Doubts

Tragedy had left Vi with a wounded heart and she was ashamed to share her feelings. Her family began to notice that something was wrong and they became concerned. Violet did try to talk with her older brother Ed, but she always held back out of fear. In times like this we can begin to feel as though we are shut off from the rest of the world, and we find it difficult to talk with anyone at all. The pain we try to shove deeper inside eats away at the joy that should fill us instead. Shyness, shame, fear, and guilt are some of the reasons we hide our feelings. Sometimes we do it out of pride. But what does God say about these emotions? Does He want us to feel alone or miss out on His joy? Of course not! That's why God has placed people in our lives with whom we can talk to-people who would love to help us.

Psalm 27: 1-3 says "I sought the Lord and he answered me, he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame."

When we look to the Lord He will come to our rescue and comfort us. He is the one who will give you the strength to overcome what is holding you back. God's children shouldn't be buried in shame or guilt-He wants to see you set free. Your problems are never too big for God to handle. It can be very difficult to hold our feelings inside for too long. "If you try to keep everything inside, you'll pop, and that would not be pretty at all," Vi's older brother told her.

When Violet had finally had enough of hiding in her pain she cried her problems out to her mother. She knew she couldn't hold her feelings inside any longer.

With enormous self-control, Elsie remained silent. She had no idea what Vi wanted to say, and she couldn't risk putting the wrong words in her daughter's mouth. Then she heard a little noise-almost, she thought, like a baby's burp. The noise was repeated and magnified-not a burp but a sob. Then came a gasp of pure anguish as Vi cried, "I can't hold it inside any longer, and it just won't go away!" There was another wrenching gasp as Vi at last released the secret she had been struggling for so long to bury.

Vi sniffled and then said, "It hurts worse than anything I've ever felt"

"And you wanted to blame someone for your pain, so you blamed your self," Elsie said. "We humans tend to do that when we cannot understand the reasons for our suffering. But there is much that we are not meant to understand-things beyond our comprehension. God alone has infinite knowledge and wisdom, and He wants us to open our hearts and trust in Him even when we are suffering. . . .As we chose to trust him, we will find moment by moment the help and strength we need. The Bible promises that 'the Lord is close to the broken hearted.' He will never fail you, Vi. And what's more, He gives us the comfort of one another." She hugged Vi affectionately, and then said, "I am glad you have confided in me, darling, though I wish we had spoken of this earlier. Have you taken all your feelings to Jesus? Have you poured out your heart to Him?"

From Violets Hidden Doubts

Elsie gave Violet a new perspective on her troubled feelings, showing her things she hadn't seen correctly and helping her understand her problems. Most importantly, Violet now didn't have to carry the weight of her burden alone because she knew her mother would help her along. When you share your feelings with someone it will take some of the weight off you. They will help you deal with and heal from your problems.

Sharing with another may require a meekness or enough humility to admit your problems. You may need the courage and confidence to allow someone to see into your heart. Whatever it is, turn to God for help. 2 Corinthians 12:9 says, "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness' therefore I will

boast all the more gladly about my weakness, so that Christ's power may rest on me." When we are weak in a certain area or feel we can't do something, God will help you along even more.

TO SUMMARIZE, HERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT POINTS:

Understand that it is important to share you feelings. God's joy and love should be inside you, not painful feelings and emotions.

Talk to God. When you find yourself in Violet's situation, the most important thing to do is talk openly with your Heavenly Father. You can tell God your worst fears, darkest secrets, or hidden faults and He will still love you as His own. Nothing can take His undying love away from you.

Share you feelings with a trusted friend, family member, or adult. Your path of healing will begin there.

Read these verses to find more about Gods truths and promises!

- Psalm 20:7
- Psalm 31:1
- Psalm 22:5
- Psalm 139
- Psalm 27:1-3
- Psalm 25:1-3
- Psalm 25:20