

Renewed Hope and a New Friendship

By Mike M.

MY MOST VULNERABLE MOMENT OF MY LIFE: Somebody I know challenged me and others to post on social media about the most vulnerable moments of our lives. After some reflection I decided to go for it and write about something I have never talked about until now. This is a long post so please bear with me. Here goes: A few years back I was working retail. I had a lady for an assistant manager I did not care much for at the time. (Let's just call her "Sarah". Not her real name) I was having a little get-together at my house and invited some co-worker friends of mine among other people I knew. I also invited Sarah because I knew if she found out through my co-workers she was not included there could be potential animosity so I extended the invite to her as well. She ended up coming along with about 10 others total that night. I had recently suffered a major loss in my life and was having trouble holding it together and thought the party atmosphere might help. I bottle up my emotions usually (typical guy thing) but I was on the verge of losing it. Sadly the party was not helping much. I sneaked away for a bit and went in my bedroom. I thought maybe a quick shower might help to relax and try to forget about things. There is a bathroom in my bedroom so I undressed and got in the shower. They say a shower is a good place to let a good cry out so I did. I just lost it and started sobbing. I got out of the shower and dried off but I still couldn't stop. I completely lost it. I was on the floor curled up in a ball naked and just crying my eyes out. I tried to get up but I tripped and fell down. Luckily I wasn't hurt. I then resumed the fetal position and my uncontrollable crying. The bathroom door was open and then at that moment of all people Sarah walked in! She heard the crash when I had slipped because she had happened to be walking down the hallway by my room. She came in to see what it was and found me curled up crying. I was like a deer in headlights when I first saw her and just froze. Then she asked me ever so sweetly "Mike are you ok? Do you need anything?" I said "I don't know what to do! I just don't!" She told me "You may be surprised to know this but I used to be a grief counselor. I think I can help if you let me." She sat down next to me and held my hand and hugged me. I then spent the next few minutes going over everything I was feeling. I literally bared my soul to her. I was naked both physically and emotionally. I was at my most vulnerable I had ever been. But I slowly started feeling better getting everything out in the open. She was so kind and understanding and reassuring. After I started getting my composure back she helped me up off the floor. She helped me walk over to my bed and we both sat on the bed and talked some more. I had never opened up to someone so much in my life. I saw a whole new side to Sarah and knew I had misjudged her the whole

time we had known each other. After some more talking she asked me to stand up and walk back into the bathroom and look in the mirror. She followed behind me and then said "I want you to look at yourself and tell yourself that you can do anything. Nothing can hold you back. You are strong, you are brave and you are amazing! "I took a deep breath and looked in the mirror and said exactly that. I can do anything! Nothing can hold me back! I am strong and brave and amazing! I looked at myself in the mirror and smiled and felt good for the first time in a while. It then suddenly hit me...I was so involved in the moment this whole time I had actually forgotten I was still naked! I began to blush and Sarah asked me what was wrong. I said " Um...I just realized this whole time I've been uh....naked. I've been standing here in front of this mirror and you've had to stare at my butt the last two minutes! Not to mention seeing the rest of me! "She just replied "It's ok. You needed to get it all out. I didn't want to stop you to tell you to get dressed. You had to get it out right then and there and I'm glad you did. Besides baring your butt, is nothing compared to baring your soul!" I had to laugh a little at that last part. She was so happy to get me to laugh. I thanked her and we gave each other a big bear hug. I then walked over to gather my clothes and get dressed. As I was dressing I thanked her profusely for helping me in my darkest hour. She was so kind and loving and offered to help me again anytime I needed it day or night. We both ventured back out to the party and had a good time the rest of the evening. We continued to work together for a while after that and as you can imagine became very good friends. We never spoke of the incident again (until I decided to share it here) but things were never awkward between us because of it. On the contrary an unbreakable bond formed between us. We still maintain a friendship to this day. I finally decided to talk about this in the hopes it inspires others to get help when they need it...even if that help comes from an unlikely source. Never be afraid to open up to someone who genuinely wants to help you. Stay strong my friends!

P.S. I did tell Sarah just before I posted this I would be sharing our story (and not using her real name). She was fine with it and encouraged me to do so!