



Dear Barry,

Life has had its challenges in the past few months, and I do not feel as if I can get a break. It seems that I dread waking up each day, for fear of what negative personal news I might hear. I use to be a very outgoing and optimistic person, and now I just want to stay in bed, not read emails or pick up the phone. My friends seem to be moving on with their lives, as carefree as it is. They do call and try to show up, but nothing they can say or do is helping.

My mom was diagnosed with cancer a few weeks ago, there are rumors that the place I work is closing down, I am starting to have my own health issues and might need surgery, and my car was hit beyond repair by an uninsured motorist. And on top of that, I read the congress did not extend the unemployment benefits, and my brother and his son might have to move in with me.

I wake up with anxiety and emotional pain every day. It is affecting my work, my relationship, and my ability to be there for my family. I use to be the rock, and now feel like mud. Will it every stop? Do you have any words of wisdom to help me through this tough patch? I have never experienced anything like this in my 48 years.

Signed From the Rock to Mud

Dear Rock to Mud,

I doubt that many people would want to be in your shoes these days, unless they were Prada. All kidding aside, it is understandable that you are shutting down..... It is called fear and depression. There is an old saying that the universe does not give us more than we can handle.

If you break it down piece by piece, most of it is something that I am sure you have had to handle somewhat in your past, or watched a friend or family member deal with. If not, you have led a very charmed life until now.

There does not seem like much else that can go wrong, so, I would get out of bed, call your mom and make sure she is ok. If not, take advantage of it and spend valuable time with her, as that is the gift the universe is providing here.

As far as the job, get proactive and start looking. If you think you need surgery, take care of it while you are working and have insurance. As far as your brother and his son, that can be a challenge or a gift. Either way, embrace it, as you are both lucky you have each other. You might even get to see how good an uncle/parent you are.

Go to the doctor and get on an antidepressant or at least into therapy for now. Your friends, although they are showing up, are not professionals to normalize the situation and help you get through the emotional feelings you might be afraid to show or continue to talk about.

It will get better, (I hope) that is the beauty of life. It is like a rollercoaster and you finally have gotten off the Ferris wheel.

Barry