



# The Health Nugget

## Bud and His Angel

One early spring day my daughter and I were taking a walk in our new neighborhood. Eager to meet and get to know those I live near I saw an older man walking on his front lawn. “Kierra! There’s our neighbor! Let’s go meet him!” We crossed the road and met Bud. Little did he know then that his life would never be the same.

While my “can we be friends?” enthusiasm toward Bud was not initially reciprocated, I felt deeply impressed to not give up knocking on his 100-year-old white washed cottage. His home itself told stories of decades of love he had shared there with the beloved wife of his youth. After nearly 60 years of marriage, he had lost her 10 months before. Faithfully he had cared for her for five years as he watched her slowly fade away. His anguish over her death was palpable. Initially she was the subject of every conversation.

Not only was Bud experiencing deep depression, but his own personal deteriorating physical health needed attention. Daily walks became our pastime together. Every step was painfully slow and faltering. We would not walk far as he would suddenly lose strength and become very dizzy. His large 230+ pound frame was more than I knew I could hold up, but at least I could help steady him as we stumbled home. He suffered from many ailments: painful arthritis, hypoglycemia, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and triglycerides, gallstone pain, enlarged prostate, indigestion, gas, constipation, insomnia, etc. His list of medications covered them all. When his antidepressants did not arrive in the mail, I suggested we try vitamin D and omega-3 fatty acids to see if they would help. Just to hold him over. When the antidepressants did finally arrive, he realized that he didn’t need them anymore. His favorite prescription dealt with his hypoglycemia.

Up to half a dozen times a day he would open the drawer in which he kept his candy bars. He skeptically listened as I shared with him how I had dealt with my own bouts of hypoglycemia by completely eliminating all refined sweeteners for a period of time.

As our friendship blossomed, I gained courage to suggest that Bud start the new year by going on a one-month diet. For one month he would abstain from his heavy meat and sugar intake, which he loved. We would continue our daily walks, try to lose some weight, and address his excessive medication load. For this we would need professional help. After a two-hour visit with a like-minded doctor, Bud was convinced that a plant-based diet and taking charge of his own health could transform his life. We began at once. Bud ate at our home daily. We began grocery shopping and cooking together. We set walking goals. Daily we would walk a little bit farther through the covered bridge and down the quiet country lane. It was a cold, wet winter, but without fail we followed the regime. As he discontinued using his medications, I would seek to help him supplement with various alternatives. Among these, bio-curcumin, a prostate formula from Life Extension, red rice yeast, garlic, vitamin D, flax seed oil, and dandelion root extract seemed to have the most dramatic benefits for him.

Bud had lived with pain for years. But when he began experiencing significant gallbladder pain he knew this was something new and sought relief. His doctor lined him up for surgery. When the date arrived though, his pain was gone and the surgery was no longer needed.

Bud himself was shocked as he felt his joints loosen and when he kept awakening to pain-free days. His blood pressure was a concern. The

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sphygmomanometer (to measure blood pressure) and scale (to see how much weight he was losing) became our weekly barometer for how he was doing. Bud's blood pressure, without his blood pressure medication, had been high with a systolic reading between 175 to 192. When we returned to the doctor's office two and a half months later his blood pressure was 116/72! Our response was probably heard down the hall. With a questioning look the nurse said, "That's close to what his blood pressure was last time." I explained that last time was with three different hypertension medications and today was with none.

Equally dramatic was the change in his digestion. The stomach distension, gas, and constipation disappeared. After experiencing the difference, the only milk carton you will see in his refrigerator is Silk Vanilla Soymilk. He will have no other.

Bud began calling me his angel who saved his life. I explained to him over and over again that it was not me, but that he had a real angel who had prompted me to keep knocking on his door. You see I was oblivious to what his real angel knew. His angel had seen Bud's preparations for taking his own life. He saw the depression that had taken over. The most significant change I marked on my calendar, January 17. "Bud so happy that he wants to live again."

For 80 years God had stationed this angel to watch over Bud. For 80 years this angel had waited patiently for Bud's heart to warm to God's wooing. I have witnessed God's miracle working power in Bud's physical life. But I have also seen a man who once sailed the shore-less sea of skepticism come to a realization that there must be a very personal God who thinks that he is worth it all.

Months later, Bud continues to be a most-of-the-time vegetarian. We continue walking and are up to two miles now at a strong, steady pace. He has lost 50 pounds. Bud takes his supplements daily and maintains medical health care from his local fam-

ily doctor. While I miss no longer needing to daily inquire of his pain, his digestion, etc., our conversations now encompass deeper heart issues. This is how God works. He often reaches hearts through our efforts to relieve physical suffering.

Bud is smart. He had witnessed Christians trying to get him to go to their church. He had experienced the pressure of feeling like you were just a number, a potential brownie point. He wanted nothing to do with it. It took time and consistency for him to realize that I was his friend, that I didn't need any brownie points, and that my salvation was not based on my service but on my Savior. He believes me now.

The only thing I have not been able to convince him of is that I am not his angel. I have been humbled as I have come to realize what an awesome experience it has been to work with Bud's angel on his behalf. "All who engage in ministry are God's helping hand. They are co-workers with the angels; rather, they are the human agencies through whom the angels accomplish their mission. Angels speak through their voices, and work by their hands."<sup>1</sup> It is completely amazing that God wants to pour out His healing power through us who are so in need of healing ourselves. The promise is as we seek to be channels of healing to others, "Then your light shall break forth like the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily" (Isaiah 58:8, NKJV).



<sup>1</sup>White, Ellen G. *Education*, p. 271.