

Day 1

“Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand.”

—Jeremiah 18:6



I remember watching my youngest son take Play-Doh—whole gobs of it—trying to force it into the factory mold he had. Not realizing that the gobs were too much for the mold, he’d get frustrated at having to clean it all up and start again. Although I had tried to tell him that gobs wouldn’t work, he had arrogantly tried his own way anyway. He diligently worked that clay until, in frustration, he came to me for an explanation as to why *his* ways hadn’t worked.

Don’t we do the same thing? The “gobs” of our own expectations, hopes, dreams, wishes, and desires may be too much for our mold, or else we deny the mold we’ve been given. Perhaps we had different expectations, huge dreams, secret desires...but when we found out we had bipolar disorder, we dropped our “gobs” of hopes, dreams, and wishes on the ground in anger, giving up everything in despair.

Others of us, despite the diagnosis, try to make it all fit, doing it our own way, shaping ourselves, or letting others shape us, into some image we (or they) think we should be. Then one day, frustrated and with childlike tears, we throw down all the clay, wondering why it didn’t work!

I remember my feelings as I watched my son’s frustrated efforts—I wanted to do it *for* him. I wanted to save him from the frustration, to help him through it, to teach him the right way to do it, to prevent his suffering. And then I remember the grief in my heart, knowing that there was no way he would listen to me...that all I could do was sit and watch, letting him make his own mistakes, knowing that he would have to learn his own way—the hard way. That there was nothing I could do to stop him, no matter how much I loved him.

This is much like God must feel when He looks at our frustrated efforts, trying to do it all our own way, making our own mistakes, never once asking Him for help or direction. As much as I loved my son and wanted to do it all for him, and out of that love wanted to ease his suffering—

