



CHRONIC JOY® DEVOTIONAL

DO NOT DESPISE SMALL BEGINNINGS

By Cindee Snider Re

Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin. (Zechariah 4:10)

In late November, I spiraled into a serious migraine flare that left me with challenging new symptoms: weakness in my left leg and tremors in my arms, legs, hands, core, lips, jaw, and vocal cords.

After ten weeks of limited activity, I stepped back onto the elliptical, ready to begin again. That first day was painfully slow. Although I felt worse after moving, I kept at it, adding music and minutes over the next several weeks in the hope that my stride would sync with the rhythm of the songs, creating new neural pathways and stemming the tremor.

By week four, I'd found a cadence and began to look forward to my time of movement and prayer, praying for those I know who can no longer move as they wish they could. I began to think differently about the words of 2 Corinthians 8:14: *At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need.*

Each day, I could only offer whatever I had – courage, time, and whatever strength God granted me. I began to grow grateful for each step, no matter how slow or seemingly insignificant.

Weeks stretched into months, and my prayer list grew to include short notes to those I had prayed for as I moved, words like:

- *You are seen. You are known. You are treasured.*
- *I pray you feel God's presence as close as the beating of your own heart today. You are so loved!*
- *God bless you, Warrior Mama, for the love you pour out every day. You are amazing!*



- *I am honored to pray for you and the lives of all those you touch.*
- *May God wrap you in His deep, abiding, and unending love today.*
- *I pray God is undeniable to you in everyone you're with, everywhere you go, in everything you do, for as long as it takes.*

As Easter neared, I was consistently moving, and though it worsened my physical symptoms, the time I spent moving also drew me deeper into God. Some days, my steps were slow, some days they were shaky, often they required intention. Yet on the most challenging days, prayer felt more determined, and more fervent too, because on those days, I felt my need for God acutely.

Movement has become my favorite part of the day. Alone, I can do so little, but with God (in Him, through Him, and all because of Him) my little loaves and fish (my time, strength, courage, and prayer) become immeasurably more than all I could ask or imagine. Always at the pace of grace.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for the joy of movement, for inviting me to begin with whatever courage, time, and strength You give me. Grant me resilience and teach me to be creative in how I define movement. I've been in this place of humble beginnings so many times, but that makes this time no less a gift, no less nourished by grace. So we begin again, Lord. Here I am. In Jesus' name, amen.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- How do you feel about movement today? Is it a friend or foe?
- Do you have a favorite kind of movement? What do you enjoy most about it? How could you lean into it a little more this week?
- Sometimes we view movement only as exercise, but what if we considered it creatively instead? Cooking is movement. Singing is movement. Laughing is movement. This week, make a list of all the creative ways you move.
- Is the courage to begin again in short supply? Why not stop at the Prayer Pond and ask for others to encourage you? There could be no better (or safer) place to begin: chronic-joy.org/prayer-requests
- Are you interested in putting #PenToPaper to let others know you're praying for them? Check out: chronic-joy.org/pentopaper where you'll find everything you need!

