

Phoenix Rising

This grief newsletter is sent to members and friends of Paradise Valley United Methodist Church following the loss of a loved one. PVUMC pastors are available to you if you need one-on-one support. Contact the church office for more information at 602-840-8360. If you wish to be removed from the mailing list, contact the church office or e-mail ddoran@pvumc.org.

Debbie Doran, Editor

The Process of Grieving

Grief can arise from many life situations but know it is not a permanent state of being.

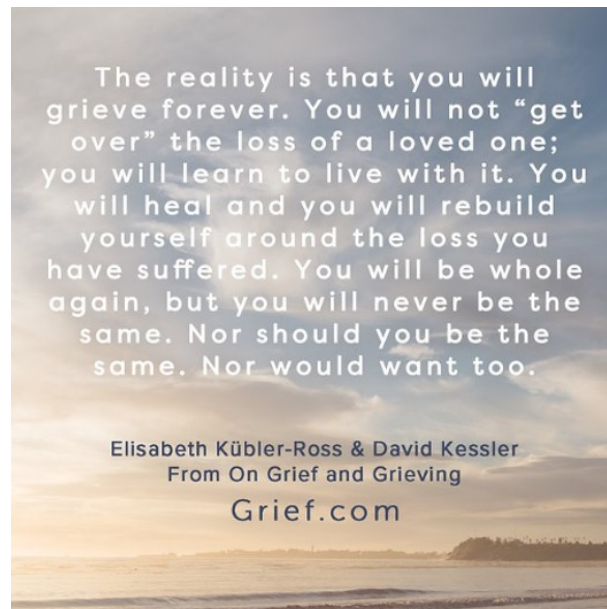
When we experience any kind of devastating loss, feelings may arise within us that are overwhelming or difficult to cope with. And while it may feel like we are caught up in a never-ending spiral of sadness and emptiness, it is important to remember that the grief we are feeling is not a permanent state of being. Rather, grief is part of the process of letting go that in many ways can be a gift, allowing us to go deeper within ourselves to rediscover life amid the seeming darkness.

The emotions that accompany any kind of loss can be intense and varied. A sense of shock or denial is often the first reaction, followed by anger. Sometimes this anger can be directed at your loved one for abandoning you; at other times you may feel outrage toward the universe for what you are enduring. And while there are stages of grief that people go through, moving from denial, to anger, to bargaining, to depression, to acceptance – the cycles of grief often move in spirals, sometimes circling forward and then back again. You may even experience moments of strength, faith, and laughter in between. While these emotions seem to come and go sporadically, it is important to feel them, accept them, and allow them to flow. With time, patience, and compassion, you will eventually find your center again.

As we move through our grief, we may find ourselves reluctant to release our pain, fearing we are letting go of who or what we have lost. We may

even regard our movement toward healing as an act of disloyalty or giving up. Know that while the hurt may fade, the essence of what you had and who you loved will have already transformed you and forever stay with you. If anything, once you are ready for the pain of your loss to subside, their memories can then live more fully within you.

Remember that healing is a part of the spiraling cycles of grief, and when you let yourself feel restored again, you are surrendering to a natural movement that is part of the dance of life.¹



Grief is Love

“Grief, I’ve learned, is really just love. It’s all the love you want to give but cannot. All that unspent love gathers up in the corners of your eyes, the lump in your throat, and in that hollow part of your chest. Grief is just love with no place to go.”²

DENIAL HELPS US TO
PACE OUR FEELINGS OF
GRIEF. THERE IS A GRACE
IN DENIAL.

IT IS NATURE'S WAY OF
LETTING IN ONLY AS
MUCH AS WE CAN
HANDLE.

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross & David Kessler
From *On Grief and Grieving*

Grief.com

Gone From My Sight

I am standing upon the seashore; a ship at my side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and starts for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength, and I stand and watch her until at length she hangs like a speck of white cloud just where the sea and sky come down to mingle with each other. Then someone at my side says, "There! She's gone." Gone where?

Gone from my sight, that is all. She is just as large in mast and hull and spar as she was when she left my side and just as able to bear her load of living freight to the place of destination. Her diminished size is in me, not in her. And just at the moment when someone at my side says, "There! She's gone," there are other eyes watching her coming and other voices ready to take up the glad shout, "Here she comes!"

And that is dying...³

Musings on a Monday Morning

My license plate reads:

JOY42DA
(Joy for today)

To me JOY is not happiness in the way my life is unfolding. JOY is not a giddy, laughing time to express pleasure. Happiness is a temporary feeling, depending on the circumstances.

JOY comes from deep inside. It is an emotional state, an inner feeling of peace, upon which I can rest when I am facing challenges, trials, heartbreak and tears. This JOY does not originate from me. It is a gift from the God. It is a gift from my creator and sustainer. It is a presence in which I can rest. It is this sense of peace, knowing that I am not alone, no matter what my situation. The JOY I have is based on my understanding that I am held in God's arms, and He sustains my inner sense of peace and contentment.

In the midst of your grief, I pray you find a bit of JOY42DA.⁴



Footnote:

1. The Daily OM
2. Jamie Anderson
3. Henry Van Dyke
4. Paula Rugen