

Life Goes On

Welcome to all and thank you for allowing me to share! The stages of life are basically the same for all of us, regardless of our gender, our ethnicity, our cultural beliefs, our upbringing. We are born. We live. We love. We laugh. We cry. We learn. We share ourselves.

Then God presents us with a life altering transition, unfortunately, more than once in a lifetime. It can be anticipated, supposedly with time to somewhat and somehow prepare for that next phase of life's journey. It can be sudden, unexpected, overwhelmingly devastating.

The time that follows is as different for the individual who suffered the loss as who was lost. Such is my case.

I have come to realize the differences are not only who was lost, and even how, but more significantly how and why I loved them. In my lifetime, I have experienced and grieved many different losses or transitions of loved ones – grandparents, parents, siblings, to name a few - from this life. Even though the departure had a significant impact on me, I thought I was as prepared for the impact of the transition – the departure – of the man I loved for most of my adult life. I wasn't. I still am not!

My grief for him has given me a different perspective of dealing with and adjusting to loss. There have been times when I have wondered if our relationship was real or a fantasy I imagined and lived unrealistically. Was he all that I thought him to be? Was he as devoted to me, to us, as I believed? For all my years dedicated to, invested in and loving him, were we really “that couple”?

While I'm still learning that in the grief of a non-blood Significant Other - someone I chose to be with - that unfounded doubts surface which can cloud some memories. Not only was the relationship long term, but it was also long distance. Of course there were occasional questions of fidelity, but more importantly, there were questions of why it lasted so long. Were we happy together with each other? Did the long distance and scheduled times together help make it work?

Life and memories don't always sync or even make sense! While I believed with all I am that he was my person, my soulmate, I was always fully cognizant of our circumstances and my choices. Regardless, I still chose him and fully believe he chose me as well.

It's been a little more than a year since he departed, yet I still find myself occasionally expecting his call, his coming through the door. While I do acknowledge and mostly accept he's gone, I do so miss him. I miss us. I miss his presence, the sound of his voice, his laughter, his smell, his way of looking into my eyes, his touch. I miss him totally.

While being with him was far from perfect by traditional norms, it worked for us, and for me most of the time. He often shared he felt the same, but life can be complicated. We were each loved and well liked by those in our individual life who mattered most. Although sometimes we were questioned over the years why someone did not relocate, our career choices and family obligations often dictated the difficulty to make those decisions. Now he's gone!

Grief is not something that you get over or go through for a specified period. It's a personal journey and process which takes as long as it takes. The pain may lessen over time, but it never goes away completely. There were many things we shared, and many things I learned from, with and because of him. I guess the most important thing was he chose and loved all of me.

I used to be amazed whenever anyone remarked how he looked at me with such profound awe and love. There are no words to express what it feels like when someone else could see the love he felt for me. That meant it was real, not just my hope or imagination!

The adjustment to his absence has been, and, frankly, still is difficult, heart wrenching and lonesome. Yet because we both believed life is for living and loving, I will continue to strive to honor that for both of us. Learning to love and trust another man again seems hard, but I know it is not impossible.

It's going to take effort and openness on my part, but I know what I want and deserve to be happy and content. I know he'd want me to be happy, feel loved, desired and cherished. But I'm not actively seeking.

Life goes on, and the future remains to be seen, shared and fulfilled. Be encouraged.