

Taos News Article

*The Taos News has committed to implement a weekly column to help educate our community about emotional healing through grief. People may write questions to Golden Willow Retreat and they will be answered privately to you and possibly as a future article for others. Please list a first name that grants permission for printing.*

**April 16, 2015**

**Present Triggers Spark Memories and Feelings**

**Dear Ted,**

My life has had a lot of loss, especially in the last five years. My most recent loss was a year ago when my husband passed away. Due to many family members needing my support at this time, I really didn't have a lot of time or space to truly grieve my husband. Perhaps that sounds crazy or even cold, but it is true. The very real and present demands could not be ignored. They were life and death decisions and needed immediate tending to. My anniversary is coming up and I have been feeling a lot of different emotions and dropping deeply into a place of grief. This surprised me. It has been a year and I hadn't been consciously planning on working with this loss now. Do you have any thoughts about this?

Thank you,

Full but Open

**Dear Full but Open,**

What you have chosen to name yourself seems very appropriate. It sounds like loss has been very busy in your personal world over the last many years. Your life is very full and yet you show your openness by sending me this question. Life can be so full sometimes that it is difficult to stop and work with emotional stressors in your life. You may be told, "You're too busy, you are just running away, or you need to rest." Some, or all of these, may be true and yet there *are* times in our life when stopping and truly emotionally dropping into a healing process may be impossible.

I remember clearly, after my first wife had died, these well-meant nuggets of advice were readily given to me, but really, I felt I needed to take care of my daughters who were five and three years old. I did not feel I was in a place where I could truly process the magnitude of her death. To find that time and place is important. The psyche will wait, but in its discomfort to release dis-eased feelings, it will look for any opportunity for emotions to bubble up and be released.

As your anniversary arrives, it is not surprising to me that certain emotions start to be felt and, hopefully, acknowledged. Memories, good, bad, or neither may start to pop into your head. This is normal because the brain is like a computer. We store significant dates and when that date arrives, a file of all your experiences pertaining to this loss often opens.

As you acknowledge these memory bubbles, they will have the opportunity to subside and possibly even decrease the conscious or unconscious distress within your body and psyche. Remembering that there may be times that you truly cannot work on an emotional piece in your life, but that you promise yourself you will as soon as time permits, is sometimes the best you can do under the constant demands sent your way by the universe. Notice the bubbles that the unconscious sends, this will help dissipate the emotional dysregulation that may be causing the emotional discomfort.

Finding the time, somewhere on your path, to truly acknowledge your losses will be helpful and there are many ways in which people stop and allow emotional healing to happen. Thank you for taking this time now, this is also a way of stopping and taking a moment for yourself. This is a major aspect of personal healing. This is the goal.

Until next week, take care.

Golden Willow Retreat is a nonprofit organization focused on emotional healing and recovery from any type of loss. Direct any questions to Ted Wiard, LPCC, CGC, Founder and Director of Golden Willow Retreat at (575) 776-2024 or [GWR@newmex.com](mailto:GWR@newmex.com)