

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

The False Expectation of Time

“Time heals all wounds,” they said, but they were wrong. Clueless even. Time changes us. It allows our pain to evolve and change shape. But heal? I’m not convinced.

It has almost been two years since he died and time has not carefully stitched me back together again the way I expected it to. “The first two years are the hardest,” they said. I suppose this might be true, but not always the case. “It takes two years to get back to normal.” I throw my head back and laugh at the absurdity of that statement. Normal? There is no normalcy in the case of losing a child. I assume what they meant was that it would take two years to get to a point where I wasn’t a snotty, ugly crying, crunchy Kleenex holding, depressed wreck every single day. I don’t think that constitutes as normal by any stretch of the imagination.

No matter what they had intended when those words were spoken, the expectation was set. That with time I would “get over it” and “move on”. I know people thought that with time I would work my way back to the old me again. That it would be a slow process but the further out I got, I would get better. I used to think that too, but almost two years have passed and things are not normal. They are better than they were in the thick of it all. But by no means are they normal nor are they the same as they once were.

Grief knows no time. It does not count the days, weeks, or years. You don’t wake up on the second year anniversary of their death and think, “oh hey, Grief – it’s time for you to go now. You’ve worn out your welcome so it’s best that you just move along.” We had no control on how or when it entered our lives and we have no control on when it will finish.

Time works so differently where we are – in the aftermath of it all. Because in the aftermath, the days drag on, yet years fly by in an instant. It feels like only yesterday they were here, yet oddly it feels like we have lived an eternity without them. Time isn’t some magical cure-all. It doesn’t erase the pain and heartache. It is merely a distance, a long and winding distance from the day we said goodbye, to the present, and to the day we are reunited.

“Time heals.” No – time changes. There will always be an absence of them and time changes the pain we experience from such a profound absence. Time gives us space to grow in our grief. It gives us a measurement of how far we have come and how much further we have left to go. While time gives – it also takes. And it blatantly reminds us of that. All the birthdays, holidays, and missed milestones that pass with every year. The things that could have only come should we have had more time with our children.

While time may ease the pain, it will forever be a constant reminder of what is missing. The expectation of time and healing does not apply here. Grief is not an open wound that heals and scars with the passing of days. In some ways, perhaps, it is similar. But the pain of it all is not as easily healed. So know this, it does get better. Slowly, it does. But do not let time make you feel bad for not being better, or further, or healed. Do not let time hold a cloud of expectation over your head. Whether it has been a month, a year, or 20. It is okay to miss them. To have days that are hard. To still have the days that bring on the insuperable pain. Time is so different where we are and it’s okay to allow it to do its thing. To change you and your grief.

No amount of time will change the deep love you so fiercely cling to. It’s okay if in the blink of an eye your pain reemerges as mercilessly as it did on day one. Time does not dictate your pain. In my heart, I know that while time takes me away from my last goodbye, it also brings me closer to my last hello. That is the thing that makes time so very bittersweet.

<http://stillstandingmag.com/2016/07/the-false-expectation-of-time/>

*Life is
changed not
ended*



*“Life is eternal;
and love is
immortal; and
death is only a
horizon; and a
horizon is nothing
save the limit of
our sight”*

Rossiter W. Raymond

*Death does not
end our
story...
Death does not
end our
relationships*