

Nature Nurtures

The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely, or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature. I firmly believe that nature brings solace in all troubles.

Anne Frank

Nature nurtures us. If we allow it. Sometimes, however, in grief, it's just not possible. When what is outside does not sync up with what is inside us, it can be very hard to function. When everyone else around us is saying, '*Wow it's a beautiful day!*' depending on where we are in grief, we may want to pull down the shades and get under the covers. Even though many of the people we know may not understand such a reaction, we who are grieving certainly do. And it's ok.

I do, however, want to give a gentle, loving nudge for each of us to try to allow nature to nurture us through these difficult and painful times. Sometimes we need a nudge, a shove, or a kick in the ass.... Like most things, we won't know if it helps until we try it.

Humans have had a profound connection with nature since prehistoric times. Today, however, we frequently spend most of our days indoors in artificially lit rooms while staring at screens. It's important that we take advantage of all of nature's healing effects on the mind and body.

We don't have to go outside for long for nature to start doing its thing to help improve our mood and overall wellbeing. Research shows that being exposed to natural environments and greenspace reduces the body's stress hormones.

It helps to try to **be present to the present** while we take ourselves outside. We need to get our brains to notice nature. Allow yourself the opportunity to smell the air and the flowers, to see and appreciate the colors, to hear the symphony of song in the trees overhead, to feel the breeze and the sun on your skin, to smile at the chipmunk or bunny as it hops by, and to drink it in. Allow yourself to feel whatever it is that you are feeling at that given moment.

Look deep into nature,
and then you will understand
everything better.

Albert Einstein

We are about to begin our annual July hiatus - we will be closed through July until August 5th.

For those who volunteer and work at Stephy's Place, it is a much-needed break to regroup and rest. For our participants, perhaps this can be a time to try out some of the 'tools' we talk about in our groups, maybe even something you haven't tried before. Not every tool works for everyone, so I invite you to dip your toes into the water and see how it feels.

Important Reminder:

We ask you to please support the *Place* that has supported you...

Our annual Mourning Walk will take place on Sunday September 7th at 6:30am at Seven President's Park in Long Branch.

We're asking all our participants to please register, even if you can't attend (although attending is an amazing experience of solidarity). You can register on our website:

www.stephysplace.org

Stephy's Place is our Place of refuge, and our stewardship pays it forward, keeping our doors open for those who follow us on this arduous journey of grief.

Thank you for supporting this special and amazing Place!