

September 9, 2020

Dear Friends,

Even more than the dates and numbers on the calendar, for me personally I think it is the September weather that triggers feelings and memories of what happened on 9-11-01 more than anything else. It never ceases to amaze me how the weather, or the feel of the air on your skin, or the mere temperature, or the angle of the sun, or the change in seasons can be such a huge trigger in loss and grief. Everyone must remember the spectacular weather on that crisp, sunny, blue skied autumn morning. How could something so horrific, so world shattering, so catastrophic happen on such a gorgeous day? It doesn't seem possible or logical that these experiences can be juxtaposed to one another. And as many things do, it reminds me of a song, -in particular one by *Green Day* called "*Wake Me Up When September Ends*:"

*"Summer has come and passed*

*The innocent can never last*

*Wake me up when September ends...*

*Here comes the rain again falling from the stars*

*Drenched in my pain again*

*Becoming who we are*

*As my memory rests*

*But never forgets what I lost*

*Wake me up when September ends."*

Like most of us, I have wished I could have slept through the most difficult times in grief. I hear people say it almost every day in one way or another. This all being said, I would like to share Dr. Alan Wolfelt's reflection for today:

"Some days are too beautiful for grief. It's as if nature disrespects the darkness we are feeling inside. It can doubly anger us when we realize that the person who died would have loved the opportunity to experience this gorgeous day. So what do we do when we have such a mismatch inside and out? I find that when this happens, if I coax myself outdoors and spend some time being present to nature's glory, I usually achieve a bit of movement in my grief. I might have a

good cry as I walk through the woods. I might rake leaves giving my body something repetitive to do as my heart and soul ask their “why?” questions. Or I might have a silent conversation with the person who died, telling her how unfair it is that she can’t enjoy this day with me. Dissonance and tension are often springboards to forward movement.”

I find Dr. Wolfelt’s experience to be completely parallel to my own. When I find myself not enjoying, or even resenting a beautiful day, I try to get out there and let it minister to my soul just as Alan described. It almost always has a positive effect, as nature nurtures and heals broken hearts and wounded souls. Ironically, it can often be the most painful of days, those days that we find ourselves crying and releasing, that provide the ‘springboard for forward movement.’ Unfortunately, there is no sleeping through September or any other month for that matter, we must face it and plow through, knowing that it will bring us to wherever we need to go on this brutal and confusing journey of grief. But as we traverse, I certainly hope we have the inner knowing that healing is happening.

This coming Sunday, we have a unique and beautiful opportunity for ‘a bit of movement in our grief’ as many of us who are wounded from it and pressed down by the pandemic will ‘get out there’ for our annual Mourning Walk. Whatever the weather, it will be an opportunity to allow our hearts and souls to be ministered to not only by ‘nature’s glory,’ but also by the solidarity of coming together in loving memory and compassion as we continue together to ‘become who we are.’

I look forward to seeing you!

Peace & Serenity,

Kevin