

June 27, 2021

The Intention to Heal

Dear Friends,

In every support group, I always recommend the book, *Permission to Mourn*, by Tom Zuba. It is an amazingly helpful and insightful book for many reasons: First and foremost is that Tom truly understands grief; he lost two children and his beloved wife in a relatively short amount of time. His tremendous losses catapulted him into becoming one of the best grief authors and life coaches out there. Of course, it came at a tremendous and radically painful cost. Tom wrote a second book, *Becoming Radiant*, which has been on my shelf for over a year. I decided to read it this morning, and I couldn't put it down as once again I am blown away by the experiential insight and hopeful inspiration of Tom Zuba.

In the meditation that we use to begin our group sessions at Stephy's Place, we always say, "now, let us set our intention to heal." These are powerful and important words. When we can truthfully articulate that we want to heal, - that we really want to feel better, - that we truly want to move toward of place of light and life, of laughter and peace, we are already healing. The process has begun.

In *Becoming Radiant*, Zuba believes there is a healthy response to grief and an unhealthy one. "There is a response that will help us heal and a response that will keep us stuck. Drowning in a seemingly bottomless, hopeless pit of despair. And each person is free to choose to respond to grief whichever way he or she likes." He says that in grief we have three possible choices that we continually face: 1. We may choose to remain stagnant, 2. We may choose to fall deeper into the 'dark pit' or 3. We can choose to live. In setting our intention to heal, we are choosing to live, even if just for that moment.

It may seem weird to hear that there is choice involved in grief, but there is. Sometimes our grief has a hold over us -when we feel like we have no choice but to feel the pain and all the emotions that flood into our hearts and souls, and although this is true, there can also be a time when we can get a hold of our grief, when we can begin to choose life. At some point, a point

different for everybody, we may begin to realize that we have had enough of sadness and despair, and we can begin to make choices for our self, for life, for healing. “You must learn to love yourself so very much that you no longer create pain by holding on to all that has been causing you pain...”

What does healing look and feel like? Zuba does a great job of describing it, “It’s noticing the colors of life again. It’s enjoying a cup of coffee. Healing is becoming comfortable in your own skin. Again. For the first time... You know you are healing when you can say yes much more often than you say no. To life. To love. To yourself. Healing is feeling hopeful and looking forward.”

I can’t recommend both *Permission to Mourn* and *Becoming Radiant* enough. Even if you are having a difficult time right now reading or absorbing what you read, please give these books a try. Zuba wrote these books in a prose that is incredibly user-friendly to those who are grieving. He understands all the difficulties we face in grief, and he addresses them with grace and compassion, with deep understanding and both spiritual and practical insight.

“The greatest gift you can give the world
the entire world
the seen and the unseen
is to heal your broken heart
your broken spirit
your broken dream.
As you heal
I heal.
And as I heal
you heal.
We are all connected.” (*Becoming Radiant*, Tom Zuba)

-Just a reminder that Stephy’s Place is always closed for the first two weeks in July. My next reflection will be out the week of July 20th. Until then, I wish you all healing love. Please take good care of yourself these next few weeks.

Peace and Serenity,

Kevin