

GRIEF, UNLOCKED.



Dear you,

I'm sorry you're reading this. I'm sorry you're in pain.

The following peptalk can be read as many times as you'd like. Proud of you for being here.

xoxo,

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The day my husband suddenly passed, I was battling with wanting to give up on life. How could there be a path forward?

The love of my life was no longer here. My entire body ached to hold his hand, for him to hold me. I wanted him to comfort me from the terrible pain I was experiencing. Then others who had faced unbearable losses but found joy again reached out and gave me a small glimmer of hope.

All I can wish for with this pep talk is that I, too, will give you some light in that dark tunnel you're in. That you can take from this smallest seed of hope to keep putting one foot in front of the other.

No word I say can take away the unbearable agony you're in right now. But know that it will get better. I and so many others are all rooting for you from near and afar. Know that. So here are some thoughts based on personal experience:

Take it step by step. Your brain is trying to solve everything, but nothing will make sense for a long time. You will not feel this way forever.

The place you find yourself in now feels terrifyingly vast. And it is unbearably lonely in the space you're in. But little by little, I promise you some small cracks of light will seep into the darkness. It's going to be difficult to notice at first, but allow yourself. Look for the smiles in strangers, look for the sunsets, look for the perfect avocados. Those silly little things will build a momentum that will transport you into a room of light.

Write to the one you lost. I believe they can feel your love. And even if they can't, you will direct that love somewhere. Their love for you will never end, nor will yours for them. Ask them for guidance.

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And look for others who've walked the path before you that have faced their pain and made into something beautiful. Their experience will further light up the dark tunnel you're in. You will meet some of the strongest and kindest people you've ever met if you invite them in.

Some people refuse to face their grief and turn to revenge and blame. Vengeance is lazy grief. Don't fall into that trap. Your brain may think it helps you, but you are prolonging and increasing the pain. Cling on to love and gratitude. And forgiveness. Not to be confused with platitudes and toxic positivity.

Like any memory of physical pain, I can put myself back in your shoes. Or at least a version of it, because every path on this planet is different. I remember how lost I was. How painful it was. But like an injury, my brain has lessened the pain.

Being on this side of your pain, I wish I could step in and take your place because I know my words mean nothing against lived experience. You need to know: You are braver than you think. You will find your way back to life.

I will forever hold on to the words of Henry Scott Holland:

Death is nothing at all.

I have only slipped away to the next room.

I am I and you are you.

Whatever we were to each other,

That, we still are.

Biggest hugs. Your best days are still ahead.