

PONDERINGS ALONG THE PATH

By Nadine Boyd



Dear Compassionate Friends:

“Be still and know that I am God”. What does it mean to truly “be still”? I have decided in this chaotic, fast-paced world it becomes daily more difficult to truly “be still”. The more time saving devices we obtain, and as quicker, faster technology comes available it seems we try to cram even more tasks into our allotted time. No one just daydreams any longer. No one just sits and breathes, listening to their heartbeat and just “being”. No one takes long lunches, writes long letters or enjoys leisurely conversations with family or friends. Whole relationships now exist by “text”, “email” or Facebook. When you speak to someone they may be checking their phone messages, “surfing” the Internet or something else. More and more churches are offering drive-ups windows for the truly time-disabled. I wonder how that works-do you drive up, put an offering in the window and get a prayer or a blessing and then off to your next errand or task?

Listening-truly listening with your heart and mind and no other distractions-has become a lost art. I have decided that truly listening to someone, not interrupting or interjecting, but just being still is truly a gift to that person. One of the most important functions of our Compassionate Friends support group is listening, because we know the healing power of telling your story to people who genuinely care. Grieving for a child or sibling can be incredibly lonely, because it can be for a lifetime. People who have not lost a child have difficulty understanding that our grief differs from any other kind. They care for us and want us to “hurry up and get better”, usually because they are uncomfortable with our grief.

When someone is newly bereaved, everyone asks “how can I help?” Often just “being still” and giving the gift of your presence, a gentle touch or hug or listening if they wish to speak is a tremendous help.

There were many times when I was newly bereaved I felt I just wanted to run away from the pain. I felt like I was just jumping out of my skin with anxiety, and needed to keep moving, but those people who reached out to me and truly listened when I shared my thoughts and feelings were so important. Especially important were those people who also had experienced the loss of a child, because I had so many questions. “How do I live through this pain? Am I going crazy? Will I forget what my child looked like, sounded like, smelled like? How can I honor his memory?” The list went on and on. My Compassionate Friends helped so much. It meant so much when I shared something in the group meetings that others may have found a little crazy, and Friends in the group were nodding their heads or laughing that they, too, had had those same thoughts. Our mantra became “Ok, I’m not crazy, I’m just grieving”.

As time went on and I was a little further along the path to healing, I began to want to feel the emotions and want to experience my memories of Aaron over and over in my mind. Sometimes they came in dreams, sometimes as I wrote them down, but more often unexpectedly in a quiet moment.

Sometimes you have to physically create those quiet moments to meditate, pray or just “be still” to listen to your heartbeat, and know that God “is”. Find a quiet spot, grab your cup of coffee and a journal (if you want). Turn off your cell phone. Turn off the TV. Put a “do not disturb” sign on the door and let the peace and serenity come to you. Let God in. Let your child’s face and memories come into your mind and just “be still”.

I wish you a still, quiet place to find peace and healing.

In friendship,

Nadine