

PONDERINGS ALONG THE PATH

By Nadine Boyd

Dear Compassionate Friends:

You may be feeling right now that Spring is never coming. I feel that five months of winter is plenty for anyone and I know I have shoveled more snow this winter than I have the last ten years! But Spring is a tricky season, especially in Montana . We may have a howling blizzard one day and 55 degrees the next. Birds are chirping, the sun is shining, the snow is melting and the days are getting longer.

Healing from grief is a lot like waiting for Spring. Grief is cold and isolating, and you want to hide away from the pain and darkness. You may not want to leave your house (or your bed). You may feel like you will never experience any joy or happiness again or feel warmth.

But winter does end, and again, softly and slowly you begin to heal from your grief. You may suddenly realize one day that you haven't cried that day. You might suddenly realize that you actually could read an article (yes, a whole article!) without losing your concentration and having to start over and over. You might realize that you remembered something without having 6 post-it notes. One glorious day you realize you have a happy memory of your child and yes, you can smile again!

Just as in the stages of grief, you don't smoothly transition from one season to another, and it's sometimes "one step forward, two steps back". You may go from denial to anger to "acceptance" and back again to denial and anger. You may be in shirtsleeves and flip-flops one day and back to jackets and snow boots the next. I think that's why the Lord in His infinite wisdom made tulips, hyacinth and daffodils so hearty. When you think you just can't take the snow and cold any longer you see a tulip peeking out of the snow! That little peek of color tells us soon the world will no longer be black and white and gray and dreary. It's a little sign of hope-a sign of warmer days and sunshine coming-an end to the cold, weary winter.

When we have a "tulip" day when we are grieving it is also a sign of hope that we can live through the journey of grief; that we won't have as many dark days and that we can get through this pain and despair. You are stronger than you know and you will get through this journey, with the help from those who love you and understand.

I wish you many "tulip" days in your path to healing. I wish you comfort and healing and sunshine and warmth to chase away the darkness and cold of your pain.

In friendship,

Nadine

