



PONDERINGS ALONG THE PATH

Dear Compassionate Friends:

I recently watched an interview with a husband and father who lost his entire family-his wife and two young sons-to a Russian tank attack as they attempted to flee Ukraine.

His anguished words brought me right back to the pain of my own losses, and yours as well, as parents, siblings and spouses. This man asked how he could go on living and wondered aloud **why** he should go on living-only to cry and grieve for his family? He described his family as his “heart”. His life and his heart had been ripped away, and he didn’t know how to go on living without his heart. Do these words and emotions sound familiar?

We are going into the holiday season this month and face the wrenching decision of whether to ignore the celebrations and remain in our prison of isolation and grief, or to go through the motions of holiday traditions. Do we attend the family Thanksgiving dinner and attempt to be thankful for our blessings, despite the empty chairs for those we have lost, and “put on our brave face and smile” despite the emptiness in our heart? Do we set up the Christmas tree and wish others “Merry Christmas” and “Happy New Year” despite the sadness and desolation we feel without our children, grandchildren, siblings and spouses?

Our topic for the November meeting will be “handling the holidays”, and I hope sharing ideas will bring you comfort and healing. In addition, we will be hosting several memorial services in December to honor the memories of those we have lost to death, but will continue to live on in our hearts forever. We cannot take away your pain or give you your old life back. We can listen, offer understanding, comfort, reassurance and hope toward your healing, celebrate the life of your child or sibling through your pictures and stories you share to help you go on living and honor your child’s life and memories.

This season I am thankful for the
Hearts that hurt with me
Arms always ready to hug
Family who always remember.

Hands that hold mine
Ears that always listen
Friends that always support

From **the Grief Toolbox**

We need not walk alone. We are the Compassionate Friends.

Nadine

