

Dismissive Grief	Accepting Grief
I should just move on	Observing emotions & thoughts as they come
"it'll pass" "you should do x" "I have been through worse"	"how can I be in this moment" "what am I feeling?" "what do I need right now?"
immersing yourself in distraction: work, substances, and harmful behavior	seeking support, connection, & situations where you are your highest self
judging your reaction & trying to change it	supporting the inner child's reaction with acceptance
Just be positive	allow joy & grief to co-exist
	@the.holistic.psychologist

## PONDERINGS ALONG THE PATH

By Nadine Boyd

Dear Compassionate Friends,

October, this month of Halloween and wearing masks, is a good time to talk about the masks we wear while dealing with our grief. Often, we wear masks to cope with our grief to keep the world away from our pain, to keep taking care of our loved ones and deal with the day to day business of living. When we are asked "how are you doing?", do you wonder if the person really wants to know, or is just making polite conversation? Worse yet, do you worry if you will be "grief shamed" if you are honest about your pain?

By "grief shaming", I mean the dismissive examples made in the first column above. Let's face it: we make others uncomfortable; whether they feel helpless to deal with the magnitude of our pain, whether they just want us to "go back to normal", or just do not realize how encompassing our grief is. Maybe it's been a while since your child died, and you feel you should be further along in your healing than you are. You may start to wonder if you will ever have better days-if you will ever be able to take off the mask. This is the time to remember your grief journey is your own. You can't hurry it or hide your grief, but you can acknowledge and validate it. By giving yourself permission to feel your feelings and acknowledging that you often cannot do it on your own, it also gives you permission to heal and feel joy again.

I wish you comfort and healing, and the peace that passes all understanding.

In friendship,

**Nadine**

