

When I told Linda months ago that I would plan a morning of prayer for today I didn't know what it would be about, and it took me a while to discover it. I was at a loss until I was reading Richard Rohr's daily meditations in August titled "Everybody Grieves." They touched me as timely and necessary because for the most part we don't like to think or talk about grief. This led me to begin the process that brings us to today.

I do have my own familiarity with grief. Twenty-five years ago, the same day Princess Diana died, my 31-year-old brother, Johnny, was killed in a jet ski accident. It was horrible. Then about 12 to 13 years ago, an avalanche of major life events happened. My husband's construction business was hit by the Great Recession and he became addicted to oxycontin. He closed the business and quit working. We sold the business property and our home and our marriage collapsed. Then in 2011 I was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. I've made it this far to a pretty good place but I still do mourn these losses.

"Blessed are they that mourn." A line from the beatitudes. When I look at the beatitudes I see that although we may not see ourselves as merciful or pure of heart or any of the others, mourning is one that we can all identify with. Francis Weller says, "To be human is to know loss in its many forms."

Or to quote the Rev Dr. Jacqui Lewis. "Because we're human, our hearts are broken. Because we're human we understand that loss is a universal language. All of humanity grieves. All of us have broken relationships or unrealized possibilities. All of us have bodies that just don't do what they used to do. Though grief is personal, every person grieves."

Richard Rohr writes, "The great wisdom traditions are trying to teach us that grief isn't something from which to run. It's a liminal space, a time of transformation. In fact, we can't risk getting rid of the pain until we've learned what it has to teach us and it – grief, suffering, loss, pain – always has something to teach us! We must go through the stages of feeling, not only the last death but all of the earlier little (and not-so-little) deaths. If we bypass these emotional stages by easy answers, all they do is take a deeper form of disguise and come out in another way – by all kinds of internal diseases, depression, addictions, irritability, and misdirected anger."

Mirabai Starr shares, "There is no map for the landscape of loss, no established itinerary, no cosmic checklist, where each item ticked off gets you closer to success. You cannot succeed in mourning . . . You cannot fail. Nor is grief like a malady, like the flu. You will not get over it. You will only come to integrate your loss."