

**12 10 09 Feeling Disconnected from Yourself and Others**

***The Taos News has committed to implement a weekly column to help educate our community about emotional healing through grief. You may write questions to Golden Willow Retreat and they will be answered privately to you and possibly as a future article for others. Please list a first name that grants permission for printing.***

Dear Ted,

A year ago, I had some losses in my life that shook me to my core. I was so sad and it's taken a long time to start to recover. What I have noticed is that even though I am doing much better today, I feel as if part of me has not returned and I don't have the same level of spirit and passion for life. Is this normal? Feeling Disconnected

Dear Feeling,

It sounds like this year has been a healing year for you and while being aware of your process; you've chosen to consciously work on your losses. This is so awesome and you should be commended for your efforts. When you have a major loss in your life it is as if your spirit/soul is yanked from your body. This is sort of a disassociation from your trauma is a type of protection much like the phase of denial which is to insulate you from the blow until you are ready to absorb the experience into your psyche. This is important and can protect you but it can also lead to becoming accustomed to not having passion or feeling connected. Some will try to do this work by reintegrating into familiar places and then force themselves to pretend to be happy or who they "used to be". This usually doesn't work due that your loss has redefined who you are as a person and some of your old ways of being with others may not continue to work anymore. The key is to reconnect with yourself and start knowing who you are and how you connect with society as well as yourself. As you call your soul/spirit back to yourself you can nurture the ways that allow you to connect in the world. After my daughter's accident, I was at the hospital as my oldest was still alive and the doctor came to me and said, "your daughter was hit so hard that her soul was yanked out of her body and she is now deciding to reintegrate or go on". She died later that day but this information has never left me and has helped me as this process happened. I believe as you are hit with a loss, a similar process happens. Your entire system is shocked into a place that feels as if you have died and metaphorically you have. As you "resurrect" you have the ability to heal redefine yourself and call your "soul" back into your being. Finding how to nurture and celebrate your spirit is a component of the healing process that makes the bravery and work to heal from loss worthwhile. I wish you well as you find ways to bring spirit and life back into your body and being. I know it is worth it. Until next week, take care.

*Golden Willow Retreat is a nonprofit organization focused on emotional healing. Please direct questions to Ted Wiard, LPCC, CGC, founder of Golden Willow Retreat and clinical supervisor for Teambuilders Counseling at (575) 776-2024 or GWR@newmex.com.*