

GROWTH

Sometimes when loss is too painful to bear, there seems only one possible way to cope. There seems only one way out of entrapment in unending sorrow. There is only one thing you can do. So, of course, you do it.



You take a big, determined breath. Then you seal the chambers of your heart shut and resolve with your brain to forget about what you lost. You use your brain some more and you train your thoughts not to veer close to anything remotely related to what you lost ever again. And you move on with your life.

Except you can't move on. Not really. You can perform the daily motions that are required to move through your life, but that's a different thing. You can't move on when you leave part of you behind.

Moving on means growing, flourishing, and expanding into bigger joy and a more deeply meaningful life. You can't do that when your heart stays behind in its cage remembering.

You can convince your brain to forget, but not so your heart. It will forever hold and protect the cherished remembrance of what you lost. And it will wait forever - for ever - with huge, forgiving patience and love, for you to unlock the cage and allow it to express the feelings your brain understands in three small words.

I am sad. Six letters. That's all it's asking to have.

But the brain screams PAIN! so loud it terrifies you. No way does it want you to grant those six letters. It won't hesitate to use bribery if that's what it takes. It'll make what appears to be a better offer. It will give you eleven letters. That's five more than requested. Almost double.

No you are not.

Those four words may sound attractive. You may be tempted to accept them. But beware. I warn you. You are being scammed.

You can't ever forget a loss, but what can happen is a transformation can take place that makes it all right to live with the loss.

When you invite, seek, encourage and nurture healing, the seals break, the chambers open and your experience of loss can finally have room to expand past the stricture called despair. It can encompass all the beauty, joy and love

embodied in what was lost. You can finally reach it again. You can dare to touch it. You can let it flood what has become the barren interior of your heart.

And when you do, you will feel that rich, unrepeatable patch of life's landscape come alive again.

That is what the heart can offer you and the brain cannot. Because the brain does not understand what the heart knows. It has strength to endure the sorrow, and it is not afraid. The heart lives in love.

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