

FORWARD

I am writing this story simply because I MUST. I am so sad that if I didn't remember the lessons and gifts available to us when we are grieving, that I feel I might not be able to move forward. So, I write. I also hope that maybe in some small way I can help others who are experiencing loss in their lives, remain conscious during that trying period, and move forward in their growth.

Until you have experienced a significant loss, you have no idea how you will handle it. And while there are many books and essays on how to grieve and move forward, I wanted to address the needs of those of us who are on a spiritual path. How to use the pain and fear that a loss brings up to move forward in leaps and bounds in your personal homework. It is not easy. It is hard, painful work, but the opportunity for greater expansive change always arrives when we are our most vulnerable. And we are always our most vulnerable while experiencing a significant loss.

Loss has the potential to do two things: either break us wide open or break us down. To be broken open is to have all your hidden parts, unfinished childhood wounds, and toxic beliefs brought into the light for you to finally transform. To be broken down is to believe the loss is all there is to the situation and to go blindly back to the way things were – unchanged and feeling less than because of the loss.

Loss for me has been my greatest teacher and, in all honesty, a teacher that I hated for a long time. Like many people, I had back-to-back losses. I experienced the death of my beloved mother as well as my only aunt and uncle, the death of my NYC life and my career, and the loss of my spiritual mountain retreat. And now I am facing the potential death of my best friend, Rob, which is going on now. All of this in the last eight years!

It seemed that I would barely get my bearings with one loss when I would get slammed to the floor with the next one. I felt like I was being bombarded. And I hated it. The only thing that kept me breathing was my focus on my inner work. Because I had had a strong daily practice of meditation for the past thirty years, I knew this time, and even the timing, was no accident. I also instinctively knew that I was being forged. All old identifications, attachments, and patterns of being were being stripped away. I was in the void. It felt like I had nothing to hold on to that was familiar. Who was I without everyone I loved and everyone who made me feel safe? Who was I without everything that had come to define me?

I was being given the opportunity for true empowerment and freedom –something I knew I came to learn. So, despite my pain and anger, or maybe because of it, I did the work – grieving what had been and slowly deconstructing and rebuilding my inner landscape and foundation. I finally finished healing my remaining childhood wounds. I let go of old disappointments through owning and understanding the whys of those disappointments. I uprooted and threw out old imprisoning beliefs about myself and the world. I turned over every stone within and discarded anything based on fear and not love. It truly was a forging, a forging of the soul.

I am not sure I would have been able to go to the depth that was necessary without the losses.

But I am glad I did, for today, while still looking at a potential loss, I can say I feel less afraid, more in my power, and more soulfully authentic than ever before. Loss forced me to become who I always was before time, and the world had me forget.

It is still an ongoing process as a potential loss rears its ugly head once again. I will often wake up with the feeling of deep sadness, which tends to trigger my ego big time! “See, your life is just so sad and lonely. That’s all there will ever be. You are done with the good times. Nothing but sadness and loss and loneliness will fill your remaining days”. It will use anything to bring me down. While I may know that it is not true, it is nonetheless a battle. Your ego always knows exactly what to say to bring you down, to take you off track. And mine is an expert.

Some days are better than other days. And since my coming out of the ‘dark night of the soul’ coinciding with my grief period over my mother, more days are better than not. The one thing that can keep me going is knowing I have truly freed myself from my past and reclaimed my power to choose what I believe about myself and my world. I have gone into the dark void and come out alive! Therefore, I will be damned if I allow any ego ploy to take me out now. I have come too far.

My hope is that if you have been on the path of trying to understand and reclaim your true self, you won’t miss the opportunity that loss brings you to leap forward in your process. I want you to know that there are great lessons and gifts to be received while in the void if you will stay conscious and do the work. These lessons and gifts are not only helpful in dealing with loss but are energies we all will need to master at some point on our soul’s journey.

You CAN come out of the void with more than when you entered - This I promise! While I am just now beginning to awaken my dreamer again, I know that whatever new dreams my heart reveals to me will be based on self-love and expression of that love. The reward is well worth all the blood, sweat, and tears- now, on to ROB’S STORY. I hope it helps.