

Christmas Desiderata* (Adapted by Stephanie WeberSlepicka)

Go peacefully.

- Amid the Christmas craziness and rushing, remember that you do not have to participate at anyone else's pace but your own.
 - As far as possible without giving away a piece of who you are, be on good terms with those who matter to you.
 - Speak of your grief quietly and dearly and whenever you feel like it: allow others to listen to you tell your story again and again.
 - Stay away from those who drain you and be with those who give you a sense of peace.
 - If you compare your grief with the grief of others, you may become faltering and discouraged: there will always be people in different stages of grief. Heal at your own pace.
 - Keep interested in your own plans and your own life.
 - Exercise caution in activities and traditions. Take care of yourself: be good to yourself. Set time limits on outings and events. Accomplish a few things and then rest. You heroically survived a death; you can heroically survive the holiday.
 - Be yourself. Cry when you feel like crying. Talk about your loved one when you are so moved. If "the world" can't handle a name or a memory, then the world will have to learn...as you are learning. Don't be bitter when someone talks of love. Love is still a rare and precious gift.
 - Listen if you are able, to those of us who are farther down the road in our grief. We walked where you are now walking. We remember that searing intense pain. It has gotten better for us. It will be better for you.
- * Nurture yourself. Take a break from all the "Why's" and "what if's."
- Fatigue and loneliness are not your friends. Reach for a tired peacefulness and some time alone.
 - Be gentle with yourself. You are a survivor of suicide. You have survived the death by suicide of someone you loved. You can survive anything. You are still a pretty nice person and you have a right to be happy. Someone you loved was in unbearable pain and they ended that pain. Don't allow them to pull you along. You have a right to live. Their reasons may not be clear to you and that's okay. And last, the whys are unimportant.
 - Therefore, be at peace with yourself and with your God. In the noisy confusion of the holiday season strive to be at peace with yourself.
 - In spite of all that you have faced, it can still be a beautiful world. Find new meaning in the word Christmas.
 - Take care of yourself. Reach for happiness...

("DESIDERATA — something desired as essential.) The DESIDERATA- the writing found in Old St. Pauls Church in Baltimore dated 1692" Reprinted From SAS Newsletter Oct/Dec 2000 SAS Culver City, CA 90230

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