

## **'Healing Images Transform Grief'**

When we experience the death of a loved one, we often feel so alone in our grief. You may tell yourself, "I'll never get through this gut-wrenching pain." Despite having family, friends, colleagues, and/or clergy physically available to offer support, you may still feel alone and unsure of what to do or how to traverse this journey through grief.

There's a myriad of books and online sites that share various coping strategies to help you process your grief over time; hopefully moving you toward reconciliation and integration of your loss. Sometimes a strategy may help to a point, but other times it doesn't help at all.

Personally and professionally I have read many of those books (and some over and over again!) and they truly have helped me with my own losses. Yet, they aren't the 'be all and end all.'

I have always been intrigued with not only the concept of inner spiritual images, but also their healing power. Psychiatrist Carl Jung called some of these images 'archetypes,' but to me they are my 'transformational spiritual symbols' ~ nurturing guides that not only fuel my inner healing process, but also activate me to outwardly share my own 'light and being.'

Two of my inner images that have helped me move toward 'healing' are my 'warrior spirit' (WS) and 'my rose.' To this day, they fuel not only my grief journeys, but my entire spiritual being.

I have been knocked down (but not out!) many times in my life, but my WS has often spurred me to get up on my feet and find ways to take one step at a time...one second/minute/hour/day at a time. It's an image more of passionate energy rather than a picture of Wonder Woman! I see and experience my WS as a soft yellow slow swirling nurturing presence of resilience and strength. It's been a powerful image inherently within me since my early childhood when my father died at age 36.

In contrast, ['my yellow rose'](#) image came to me as an adult when I was working through my grief process after the sudden death of our daughter in 1985. The lower closed rosebud was the shutting down of my 'fractured heart' the instant Kristen died, and the open rosebud symbolized light and love, as well as my slow transformation and growth through loss to a 'new normal me.' By visualizing my rose I harness Kristen's light and spirit weaving it within mine, especially during challenging times.

This may sound unusual or 'airy-fairy' for some, but never underestimate the power of your own inner images ~ spiritual healing can occur in many ways by opening your heart to the wonders of grace and forgiveness. Accessing your own 'warrior spirit' or 'rose' may just be that vision or loving guide to help you on your own life journey...

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Feb 14, 2013

[More on 'my rose' is on <http://fodsupport.org/rose.htm>]