

Grief Scars

Unfortunately, wounds leave scars and scars tell a story. They are a reminder that we have been hurt, had pain, discomfort, and something has happened to us in our life's journey to leave the scar. This is what the loss of my husband at age 60 did to me, it made me hurt, as it cut deeply into my heart and soul, it created a very deep painful wound.

It bled, there were moments and days when I thought, "I have no way to stop the bleeding, the horrible pain, it just hurts so bad." No band-aid was big enough, no blanket strong enough to cover it and nothing could stop the bleeding, the pain, as it was a deep hurt that I was left to deal with alone. I had to find some type of healing on a new journey called grief, I had to get up and start my travels on the new road lying there ahead of me, I named this road, Loss and Grief. A road that had no companion sitting next to me, as he did for forty years, it is a new and lonely road.

Healing came, very slowly and it started to stop the bleeding, some days it seemed barely to slow down. When it did stop, it left a scab, a large one and it was a reminder that the healing wasn't complete yet. Sometimes the scab would just open up, I think it was the pain and sobbing as I laid on the floor that pushed it open, and I'd feel like I was back at the beginning of my wound journey road called Loss and Grief. Again and again, I talked to God, I brought my pain, my open wound, and my great loss back to Him, and asked for His healing, peace, and comfort.

"I know the Lord is always with me, I will not be shaken, for He is right beside me...My body rests in safety,"
Psalm 16: 8,9.

"When Jesus saw her weeping.... He was deeply moved in spirit and trouble." John 11:33 Yes, Jesus wept. He's healed my cuts and wounds in the past, and I can see from the scars on my face and on my knees from childhood falls, they did stop bleeding and healing happened. They all left a healed scar, a memory, a reminder of that fall and the pain that I felt. He's seen my tears and feels my pain.

Healing leaves a scar, a reminder that there was once pain, tears, and a time of sadness, my loss and grief has left a new scar. Maybe the scab is gone, the open wound doesn't bleed anymore, but the scar is there. Now when I'm thinking about the heart scar that's left, I am acutely reminded of my loss and my own grief journey, but more important it reminds me of my dear husband's love for me and his family, that my heart still holds onto. This beautiful love softens the scar and gives me a reason to keep on living, enjoying my family, friends, and worshipping God, just as he would wish for me.

Not long after my husband died of his aggressive cancer, one day I discovered an angry looking red area on my lower leg. It didn't hurt, I thought that it should just go away, but it didn't. I went to five doctors in various specialties trying to get an answer, I needed a diagnosis, a quick cure, and as each month passed the angry red area gave way to open wounds, deep and ugly. It took almost three long years before a diagnosis was made and treatment started. They said I had something very rare; no one had many answers to my questions. No one had the answers regarding how did I get it or where did it come from, or the other question, why? I started on a new slow physical wound healing journey.

My mind went to my grief journey and I wondered to myself, did this physical problem come from the strong and painful grief I was carrying around inside of me? I don't know that answer, but each day that I look down at my scars and the healing, I am reminded of the long and patient journey that it takes to get healing to happen. Both physical and emotional healing takes time, sometimes you need someone to help you through the healing

process and it's a good thing, help is there when we need it. Friends, family, counselors, pastors, doctors, other widows, and of course God our great healer can help lead us, finding that road of healing we need to travel on.

Right..., nothing on the journey of grief and loss comes easily or leaves quickly, it's slow, it's at times an open bleeding wound or an ugly scab ready to open up again with pain, bleeding, and discomfort. On the ten-year anniversary of Rich's death, I found myself on the floor weeping like it had just happened that very day. It's a journey in our 'own' time zone, each one will travel through it at a different pace from another. We find that there is no time table in loss and recovery, waiting for the day of healing when all our weeping turns to joy. My broken heart scar is the grief scar others cannot see, yet I feel it, I know it is still inside of me, it's with me always, it now is a scar that has softened with love, time, and precious memories.

All will be made new in Heaven, no more scars, no pain, healing is complete in Jesus. Still my scars, hidden or those only my eyes can see, still signify the pain in my past, my story. Someday all my past will be gone when I enter Heaven, made new, all that I bring with me is my love for Jesus and a heart that belongs to Him, His love and forgiveness, given on an old rugged cross, is the love I cling to.

"How long Lord? ...How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? But I trust in your unfailing love, my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the Lord's praise for he has been good to me." Psalm 13: 1-2, 5-6 He heals my wounds, He is my comforter, and He is beside me with each step on my journey of grief. I am not alone, thank you Jesus! Thank you that you are the healer of all of my wounds and brokenness, you are the healer of my wounded and broken heart. "He heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds." Psalm 147:3

God I am reminded of your deep scars, your sacrifice for me. Because of your pain, your scars, your cross, we have hope, we have salvation, and the gift of heaven a place where my loved ones who made the choice to follow you Jesus are in Your presence.

Grateful, thankful, and yes, I'm blessed to have many wonderful blessings and very special people in my life that I loved and love in this journey called life, many now gone, I cherish their memories and grieve my losses.

The only scars I'll see in Heaven will be on the hands that will welcome me and hold me someday, they are the scared hands that are holding my husband, my love, my companion, yes, it's Jesus,

He paid it all.

..... Renée

(Scars in Heaven by Casting Crowns, is a beautiful song

I listened to after writing my thoughts that reflect my own scars)