

Pandemic Lament

By Joyce Peachey Lind, March 20, 2020

This morning as I was scrolling through facebook
absentmindedly, of course,
I read a post by a friend whose
4-year-old daughter had melted into tears
because she couldn't find some little toys she forgot she had,
but is now remembering because she is at home.
She needed someone to help her find them.

But dad needs to work
and mom has work, too.
Both have full time jobs,
and other people depend on them--
one to keep computers running
so that people can be connected in the midst of so much disconnect;
and the other to create community for a group of 3rd grade children
and make lesson plans
and teach them how to learn in a new way
and to be a loving, calm bit of stability in the midst of so much instability.

Later in the same thread,
she added a note to her mom—the little girl's grandma:
"If *you* were here,
you would definitely not give up on finding the lost toys,
as all the rest of us certainly have."
Then she added, "We really are ok, Mom!"
and included a photo of the little girl
after the sobs had subsided. Grandma replied, "Glad you are ok."



Here's a hug and a kiss."

After reading their exchange,
that's when my tears came—
my first tears since all of this began.
My first acknowledgment to myself that this is hard--
hard on me,
hard on us,
hard on everyone.

This is so much new and unknown and anxiety all at once,
and life has changed,
is changing,
and will change.

And maybe like that little girl
we are all looking for things we forgot we had
that we are remembering because we are at home,
but we can't find them.

At least not yet.

And the people who could help us find them
aren't here.

And honestly,
the rightful response is to melt down into tears,
to take our sobs to our important people.
And instead of doing our schoolwork
to settle in and watch Mary Poppins and do finger crocheting
(which is what they did).
At least for a while.



The rightful response is to name our losses,
to name what is bringing us to tears
to give ourselves and each other permission
to sob,
to lament,
and share those with our family, our community,
our important people,
whoever they may be
wherever they may be.

And when the tears and sobs end,
to tell each other “We’re still ok,” and
“I’m glad you’re ok. Here’s a hug and a kiss.”
And maybe send each other a picture
or a video
just to make sure.

And then tomorrow we’ll get up and try again
and maybe we will find some of those lost things
or maybe we won’t.
But we can still be connected,
one way or another.

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