

One Post, One Year

Contributed by Administrator
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Somewhere around early afternoon today, my Mom will be gone for a whole year. Since the beginning of January, I'd spent time thinking and worrying about what I would do today. As expected, I was reluctant to go to bed last night because as long as it didn't turn into today (May 5) it had been less than a year since my Mom had been gone. As the clock ticked over to eleven o'clock the idea that May 5th had already come to my Dad and the sibs came into my head and I realized that, like the Grinch, I wasn't going to be able to stop May 5th from coming.

Overnight I dreamed of my Mom. She was happy and healthy and whole again. We talked and laughed together, like two old friends. I asked her questions that she answered. I knew, in that dream, that this moment with her was just a glimpse, a second in time, but I was so happy to talk with her again, that I didn't care that it was fleeting. I've frequently had dreams of my Mom this year, insisting that she's okay. That she's fine. That she's happy and healthy. That she's okay.

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Are you okay?", I always ask in my dreams, intensely concerned.
"Yes," she always says, "I'm fine."

The fine is said finally, insistently, firmly. She is fine.

Most of the time I'm fine too. I've realized this year that grief is a journey and that there isn't a right or wrong way to handle it or deal with it. It just is what it is. I didn't miss my Mom in the huge intense way I expected to at Christmas time, but when Cadence took her first steps the ache in my heart was so big it almost overwhelmed me. That's when I miss her. Not at holidays and events when I'm busy and her obvious absence seems less obvious, but in the quiet moments; when the kids do something or grow in some way, when I saw the first red-winged blackbirds this spring, when I get lonely for someone to talk to during the day and I realize that there is just no one else I want to talk to. My Mom and I kept each other company while she was ill and I was pregnant and had a small baby that hardly slept. We would talk every other day for hours (but we couldn't talk every day because neither of us did enough on any single day to talk about it daily). We would watch *The Price is Right* while on the phone, bidding on items and picking on contestants.

And I admit that I cried at Bob Barker's last hosting of *The Price is Right*. Not because I would miss Bob Barker, but because it seemed like just another piece of my Mom slipping away from me.

We've tried hard in our house to make sure that the presence of my Mom is here and real and not sad. We talk about Gran and the things she liked to do. We have pictures. We talk about the good times and all the fun and I weep when Emily says with sadness that she has forgotten the song my Mom would sing when drying her off after a bath. I sing it to remind her and Emily's face lights up in recognition, but I know well that little bits of my Mom fade from her memory every day and the day will come when Gran is just a soft impression in Emily's mind of someone she loved with a few over characterized details all that really remain. That about breaks my heart and even worse is the fact that I know this is inevitable. It's no one's fault that this will happen, it just will.

And today, on the day that she died, all I really want is to find the peace I prayed so desperately for as she lay dying. That my sadness is tempered and that I can find ways to think about my Mom and smile just a little bit. And I want people to think about her.

My Mom loved Steve Yzerman, hummingbirds and the color purple (the color, not the book or movie)
My Mom did NOT like "depressing" books and subscribed to a mail order romance book club, not for the books but for the purple wine glasses. I don't know if anyone ever read those books
My Mom could make a cat meow by snapping her fingers at it, she was not a great cook but she made really good meatloaf.
My Mom didn't like oranges or roller coasters (she got scared on one once and didn't like riding them). She didn't like snakes, either. Or mice.
She was kind and funny. She washed her hair with Balsam shampoo. She used jergens hand lotion that she would buy in big pump bottles that she kept by the sink.
She didn't like when I borrowed her shoes. She told me I had big feet even though our feet were the same size. She always knew when I was lying. I could never keep the truth from her.
She liked to color in Christmas coloring books. She loved Trixie Belden books. She gave me all of my sister's Berenstain Bear books for Emily, but wouldn't give me the Christmas one because she liked it. And found it funny that I had to buy my copy off of e-bay because the book was out of print.
She loved her Granddaughters. She loved babies in general. She was thoughtful and considerate. She wrote letters and postcards. She liked pansies (I like them too) and spider plants and fig trees.

She was tall and thin and beautiful and brave.

And I love her and miss her. Like crazy.