

# You Are Not Alone...

Julie Hryniewicz-Hache -- Sunday, February 4, 2007, 6:36PM



I guess I should be sleeping... or crying... or cleaning up my mess of a house, but instead I feel like writing. Since my Grandmother's death on Friday night, I figured that I would take the week off from all business matters and yet, writing is the one thing that I feel like doing the most right now.

Obviously filling over one hundred journals to date, writing has been my way of processing my thoughts. Now that I am also blessed with the opportunity to send my words into cyberspace, through my own column, it gives me another therapeutic outlet to deal with my "stuff". It is also amazing when my experiences happen to benefit other people along the way.

These past two weeks have been a whirlwind of chaos for my family. Finally realizing that my Nona wasn't going to be recovering from this second minor heart attack, due to complications with her arteries, kidneys, and long-term diabetes, and having to be shipped between the Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury hospitals, my Dad and our family had been taking turns at her bedside to make sure that she was never alone. She said to me, while going through this, that there is nothing worse than suffering and being alone. Although we could not make this situation go away, no matter how hard we tried, we could be there to comfort her.

I am so relieved that she is now at peace and grateful that my Dad and family does not have to go through that torture anymore. Holding her hand during her last few peaceful breaths, shortly before midnight on Friday, the agony of the experience was finally over. My Dad, Grandmother, Sister, and I all ended up with a flu virus, from the Sudbury hospital, throughout this mess, and I can honestly say that this was the worst week of my life. The timing of things also seems so bizarre

because it was actually the very moment where things in my life were truly on high.

This past week, I was to launch my first book, and yet the boxes sit unopened. I was to start filming my new segment for the local television show on Wednesday, and yet I had to postpone the shoot. I had a key meeting scheduled for a new wellness magazine that we are developing, I was wrapping up my last session for my first Sault College course on Thursday, and I was booked to run a workshop on Friday morning. All of this, including the five articles that I write per week, for local columns, had to be cancelled and I was feeling overwhelmed...

Why is this happening now? What did I do to deserve this? How could life be so unfair? These were the questions that briefly entered my mind until I realized that being so dramatic was not serving me. Beginning to wallow about my current drama, only drained me further. Life is not a smooth ride that gets "interrupted" with struggles. Life is the ride ... with the struggles! Everyone's body eventually dies, many people get ill beforehand, family members often have to care for their loved ones, and everyone has to deal with death at some point in their life.

Instead of turning this, already volatile situation, into a personal vendetta with God, the government, the medical system, or life in general, I came to understand that I will survive, we will all heal from this stressful time, and my "work" on this earth will not be hampered because I had to postpone some meetings, projects, and speaking engagements.

Besides, I only had to endure this agony for a short time, in comparison to many people who care for their loved ones for months and even years sometimes before they let go. I am grateful that this happened fairly quickly, in the grand scheme of things, and my Grandmother was surrounded by so many people who love her.

Making sense of life can be very exhausting at times and although I don't have all the answers, I am grateful for the hope, joy, and mystery that I still feel about life, even when my heart is aching. There is something great that happens when people come together with a common goal. There is something great about a family that can laugh, and hug, and support each other during times of illness and death. There is something great about a world where we can feel and express sorrow, empathy, compassion, and kindness for perfect strangers, because we share humanity in common.

Today, I am so grateful that my Nona is finally out of pain. Today, I am

hopeful that my Dad, and our family, will begin to heal from this loss. Today, I am thankful for the compassionate nurses, who were angels in disguise, while caring for my Grandmother.

Today, I am so appreciative that I get to inspire other people past their own pain, suffering, and confusion about life. Together, we may not have all the answers but we do have each other. We can be confused about life together! At the same time, we can support one another, spread kindness, compassion, joy, hope, inspiration, encouragement, and understanding, as long as we are breathing.

My Nona dedicated her life to taking care of, and feeding, other people and her purpose has been accomplished. My purpose is to share my experiences with others so that they never feel alone. May you know that through all of your own pain, suffering, obstacles, or questions that you have about life, that you can get through anything because you are not alone...

Embrace your loved ones, forgive each other, cherish your time on earth, express your gratitude daily, hug longer, kiss more passionately, hold hands, laugh, love, have fun, eat, celebrate the life of your loved ones who have gone before you, instead of fixating on their death, play, dream, and feel joy in your days. Life is such a precious gift. Live it!

*"Let's choose today to quench our thirst for the "good life" we think others lead by acknowledging the good that already exists in our lives. We can then offer the universe the gift of our grateful hearts."* Sarah Ban Breathnach

In memory of Lucy (Lucia) Hryniewicz