**Change: A Celebration of You**

"The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are." Joseph Campbell

Ask any person in early grief and they would probably not agree with Mr. Campbell's quote. The reason...fear. Why would anyone WANT to be themselves when they are grieving? In grief, most people experience anger, denial, despair, fear, guilt, depression, sadness and the whole gamut of feelings. Why would anyone want to be themselves with this inner chaos?

Usually, sometime in the process, the griever reaches a point of letting go (through acceptance of those feelings; feeling what they may have been resisting) During this letting go or acceptance, one feels unanchored due to the uncomfortableness of the unfamiliar territory.(be it their former pre-grieving life or their "comfortable uncomfortableness" of the roller coaster of feelings) Studies, as well as those who have grieved in their past say that an "ah ha" moment, a breakthrough or an epiphany usually occurs before one can begin their accent out of the abyss of grief. What usually follows this breakthrough is the griever's newly discovered ability to view the world through different eyes and to identify new meaning or purpose in one's life.

The transformational change that occurs when an individual experiences the death of a loved one is irreversible unlike developmental or transitional changes. This is because in a transformational change the new state of being was created as the result of the death of the old state of being.

Ok, so...now we know about the mechanics of change and we are in the midst of our own grief, how does this relate to the griever? How DO I change?

We want the "how" but there is no one-size-fits-all formula to describe the steps to follow for transformational change. We want an external force to create our change when

the only true path to change is to change the self.

If you are unsatisfied with your current environment or situation, examine your thinking. The inner landscape of you must be explored. But change is frightening if you are troubled with or unaware of your inner self. But to notice you, you must focus on and work for you.

Fear holds you back while courage releases you. You may be inclined to acquiesce to your situation and remain rooted in the familiar but there will be no growth without change. A positive attitude toward change can move you toward the unknown and allow you to risk.

You are in charge of you. Growth, change and transformation comes through you, channeled through your willingness, openness, challenging fears and self-determination to grow and learn.

It's your choice to embrace change, to choose a new path and to transform yourself by replacing inner turmoil with inner peace.