

Bounce

Rosemary Duris Hashimoto

I grew up in Washington and Northern Idaho, the daughter of a Methodist minister. I sang hymns, read Bible stories, attended church camp. I was surrounded by communities of good and loving people. This early foundation of the church, music and love gave me great comfort and a “home” when I was lost and very alone in my life.

My Mom, ElRose, was loving homemaker. She also taught high school English for many years. Mom enjoyed cooking and our home was often filled with the smell of cookies or casseroles in the oven. From a young age I emulated my mother. I wanted to grow up and create a love-filled home and teach music.

After completing college and graduate school, I married a wonderful man, Jerry Duris. After he finished medical school and internship, we moved to Southern Colorado and started our family. All three children, Jennifer, Susan and Joseph, were born in Colorado. Jerry and I loved being parents. I worked at home being a mom for several years and also taught music part-time.

When our girls were in junior high and high school, I was living my dream as a wife and mother, but spiritually, I began to struggle. We were involved with church as a family. I directed children and adult choirs, played the organ... played second base on the church softball team! Jerry and I were very involved in the lives of our children. I was present, doing good works...and I was not connecting most of the time with my spiritual self.

During the time when Jenny and Susie were beginning college, my mother passed away. Jerry and I were having difficulty and decided to divorce after twenty-six years. My dream, my life was crumbling. I felt gray, empty, spiritually dead.

After Joey finished high school, I moved to Eugene, Oregon. I knew only one person there, my yoga meditation teacher. I began teaching music in Eugene and went to meditation class six days a week. When I look back on that time, it was like being in a desert, wandering, lost and alone. I remember crying out to God, “Why? I was good. I tried. I was a good mother. Why?”

Chris, my meditation moved from Eugene. She suggested I go to counseling for my depression. Anna, my therapist, became my “mother.” She held me as I cried. She listened. She loved me as I was...broken, lost, full of fear. Little by little, I began to heal. I wrote poems and music about trees, about light and about tiny seeds and growth. Many of my songs were written for the young children I was teaching. They were, of course, for me. “The Tiny Seed” speaks to my healing process.

The tiny seed lies in the ground
Through winter's dark, cold days
Waiting, very silently, for sun and warm Spring rain.
The seed begins to open, it pushes through the ground,
It's free to reach for the sun.

See it grow, feel it's strength
You have the power of a seed.
See it grow, feel it's strength
You are free to reach for the sun.

Slowly, I began to be aware of life and light in my life. During this time, I wrote the song "Light the Candle," sung by my young school choir.

Light the candle, start the glow
Open your heart and then you'll know
That one small candle giving you light
Can guide your way through day and night.

If you are lost and afraid, there's no need to hide
The light of your candle will never fade
It's glowing inside.

Light the candle, start the glow
Open your heart and then you'll know
That all our candles shining so bright
Can fill the world with peace and light.

After the horror of 9/11, I sought out a church community. That winter, I attended a life-changing women's retreat. For some reason, I was very negative during the retreat. I didn't think the leaders were inspirational and the sessions were long and boring. The last activity was a labyrinth Saturday afternoon. I decided to skip it and I took a walk instead. When I returned, to my dismay, the labyrinth had been re-scheduled for Saturday evening. I wondered if there was a reason! Was it something I should do?

I arrived early, ready to be first in line so that I could finish and go to bed. The labyrinth had been set up in a large space. Candles were burning. I went in and began the walk. I looked down and saw a small, flat stone. When I picked it up, I had a vision of my dad standing in back of me showing me how to skip a rock on the water. I walked on. I picked up a scarf and saw my mother gently tying the scarf before I went out into the snow. I picked up a card that said, "Trust." Suddenly, tears were streaming down my face as wonderful, loving memories of my family and of my life came to me clearly. By the time I came to the middle of the labyrinth, the layers of pain and suffering, guilt and sorrow I had experienced after my mother's death and my divorce were beginning to lift.

I could see that my depression had made my entire life seem worthless. As I walked out of the labyrinth, I felt new gratitude for my children, for my brother and sister, my mother and father. I could feel again.

A few weeks later after the retreat, I knew it was time to come back home to the Northwest. I moved to Tacoma in the summer of 2005. My oldest daughter and her husband, Matt, had their first child, my first grandchild in January of 2006. A few days after Sadie, my grand-daughter, was born, I went online to check if I had any new matches with e-harmony, and there was Courtney Hashimoto. Courtney and I were married in February this year. He and his son Gavin are such gifts in my life. We are building a life together, full of love and hope.

Since moving back, I have also been experiencing a great deal of healing in renewed connection with my brother and sister in Olympia and their families. This summer, my former husband, Jerry and his wife, our three children, two grandchildren, Courtney, Gavin and I are all going to vacation together in eastern Oregon. It feels like "amazing grace" to experience the forgiveness and softening of hearts that has occurred since I have returned.

After my experience in the labyrinth, I committed to daily prayer and meditation time. This attention to my inner life, my spirit, has given me a foundation of love and trust and gratefulness. I am stronger, more alive, more present. This morning, during my quiet time, I read a passage from Psalm 50: "Offer to God a gift of thanksgiving with grateful heart. For what other return can you make for all that Love offers to you? Search for the still voice that dwells in the Silence. For God says, 'If you call upon Me in times of trouble, I am ever present to you. You will know Me in your hearts.'"

My heart is filled with love this day. My heart is filled with thanksgiving for my father and my mother, who taught me and always stood by me, for Anna, for people of the church, for my family. And I am so thankful for the gift of healing and new life which I have been given.