

## Loving All Times

Written by Kathy Almeida

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It's been almost a year since Mark (our son) went to the hospital. So much has happened since then and it has been an amazing journey. Not one I particularly liked, but looking back, I can see an important one of discovery and opportunity for each member of my family.

Mark is still healing and with each day I see more and more of my son coming back to us. Now with spring almost upon us, I'm anxious for our own springtime to come too. During what I'll name as the final stretch of our journey back home, the days seem long and forever standing still. I miss the days that were; all that we were able to do and had accomplished over the years in our work in loving and helping Mark become all that he can be. This past year was like being in a sailboat set in one direction and because of strong winds and the storms that followed set us on a completely different course. It's a similar story to Christopher Columbus's landing on our shores instead of the West- Indies. He may not have made his destination but at the same time what he discovered turned out to be a huge gift.

Although I'm not sure of the gifts per se yet, I can make up a list of some of the discoveries I've made along the way. For one, I found out that I could get through really tough times, sometimes just by the pure act of "hanging on" and affirming "this too will pass" all day long. The point is I did it. And that's a great feeling. Or discovering what a great team Frank and I make during crisis mode. We really learned how to be there for each other while at the same time keeping our energy and focus on our son in helping him to heal.

A useful tool that was a great help and continues to help, is looking for the good. Especially during the rough times when we're two seconds from throwing in the towel and giving up, I'll look at Frank and say, "Give me 5 reasons why this is good." And before we've reached the fifth one, (and believe me, sometimes we just make them up) we're laughing and back at the place of light heartedness. We're ready to jump back in and continue fighting the good fight. I'm proud of us for going the distance and seeing it through (it, being our son's recovery). We're being shaped by the fire and becoming more of who we're meant to be.

You too may be going through difficult times or be in a place you're not really happy with. I've heard that we may not be where we want to be, but we're definitely where we need to be. So I hope that you too can find what you need to pull you through. It's in there, trust me. All you have to do is affirm it and you'll see it. Until the next time...here's to loving all times.

Kathy

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