

Friend,

I am sending an article from the current issue of Lion's Roar called Death : the greatest teacher. It's about how the awareness of death and a positive embrace of its reality can transform your life. It's about the power of realization of impermanence as a great liberator from neurotic clinging to all the things we grasp onto and think we must have or must maintain.

I know from my personal experience that coming to terms with the reality of death and impermanence can open one to a more peaceful engaged life. I was devastated by my mother's passing at the age of 66 after being diagnosed ALS. I was numb and in shock for months, grieving for years. I was getting to a better place, when five years later, my father dropped dead in a doctor's office from a stroke. When my brother called me to tell me the news my immediate reaction was "I can't handle this, I'm not ready for this". But as unpleasant and uncomfortable the pain, grief, and angst was I stayed with it, present in the moment, the best I could. And with time and meditation and contemplation what was once so uncomfortable and painful changed into something that has enriched my life. I no longer take anything for granted. I savor every moment, every special, wonderful moment that occurs. I focus on what I need to do now and my priorities have become much clearer. When you live in fear of death and keep pushing recognition of its reality away, it makes you really neurotic, irritable, easily frustrated. When you fight against reality, against what is, you always lose and you degrade your life. There is a more effective and life enhancing response to this reality versus denial and pushing it away. There is making peace with it, making peace with your self , and savoring every moment with gratitude and wonder.

I hope this article is helpful to you in this process of find a new way forward. If you want to talk about any of this, just call. Aloha David