

MAKING YOUR HOME A SANCTUARY FOR YOUR GRIEF AND YOUR GROWING

By: Mary Helen Robinson



A house is not a home, a chair is still a chair...so goes the song by Luther Van Dross. A lot of truth in that, but the fact is the place is yours and you need to figure out what to do about it.

Some widows flee the memories and decide to start again somewhere else. The memories move with them, of course, but they aren't quite so "in your face" in a new address. Some widows stay where they are and can't bear to move or change a single thing. Some widows stay put but decide to make some changes. Some widows, in their own time, make changes only when they are ready.

I don't think this is a pass or fail grief test. There is no right, no wrong answer. The only wrong answer is the one that makes you feel worse, makes you feel less. No matter what you do, somebody somewhere is going to have something to say about it. I really don't know why the non-mourners of the world think it's a good idea to comment on every move, every choice a widow makes, but they do. Your sister, your co-worker, your neighbor... somebody's going to have an opinion about this choice and others you make. They can't help it. Ignore them.

I have a dear friend who lost a teenage daughter in a tragic car accident. Nothing in her child's room has changed for years. They don't need the space, it's not inconveniencing anyone, and it's no one else's business. This lovely lady is one of the most active, productive engaged people I know. She accomplishes more in an hour than I do in a day. I'm sure she likes to go in that room from time to time and just quietly sit. What a cruelty it would be to deny her that comfort.

There are friends of mine who, alternately chose or were forced to find new living arrangements, sometimes in new towns. Whether you stay or you go, there are large and small things you can do to your home to set it up to be a soothing place. A serene or cheerful place. Look at the pictures below. Which room would lift your spirits? Which one makes you smile? See what I mean?

In terms of small adjustments, you can add candles and flowers. Maybe prayer books and journals and a cozy blanket. You can also completely redecorate or remodel, or something in between. Find more ideas on my Widows - Homes for Healing Pinterest board, and more boards here <https://www.pinterest.com/mhocht6462/> Whatever you do...make sure it is your sanctuary. Make sure it's a place that makes you feel better. Make sure that it's a place where you can grow...in your own way, on your own time table.