

CIRCLE OF LIFE



NO ONE HAS THE PERFECT REMEDY TO HANDLE THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE. HOWEVER, FOSTERING NEW LIFE MAY HELP.



WORDS: JOANNE WILSON

There's nothing quite like the moving experience of the Sunshine Coast community together in silence in the early hours commemorating Anzac Day.

As we remembered those Australian and New Zealand Army Corps soldiers who fought and died for their country during the Gallipoli campaign of the First World War,

I contemplated our varied responses to grief.

No one is immune to the death of loved ones and we lament differently.

My surprising response I noticed last year when my brother died, was the urge to find the green thumb I didn't know I had.

Gardening is a past-time I've generally found rather tiresome, hot, fly blown and just so boring.

Even worse, I ashamedly have a limited, pathetic botanical vocabulary.

In contrast, having returned from my brother's funeral, I was out there in the wee hours at the Yandina markets solemnly yet eagerly searching for green foliage.

The children and I drove home precariously peering through massive flourishing fresh palms, bromeliads and peace plants I'd filled the car with.

Having proudly and tenderly planted, potted and lovingly nurtured them (only one has died so far), I've since shared my experience with other grieving humans.

It seems many have also turned to the soil for extended hours as they grappled with grief. Why? What's that about?

I went searching for answers and seems I shouldn't be so perplexed.

When you think about it, we are surrounded by dying each and every day.

Go outside and see an abundance of life. We're also seeing the results of the death, decay, rejuvenation, restoration and renewal as featured in the cycles of life in the garden.

It makes intuitive sense that a closer connection to nature can help us come to terms with death and the grieving process.

How about the research around the importance of reconnecting people to nature that proves faster recovery rates, reduced stress and eased symptoms of physical and mental illnesses?

Then there's the trendy term, "grounding" whereby we are encouraged to ditch the thongs and find health through natural electrical connection to earth by being barefoot.

Here is what one friend said, "It was one of the most powerful experiences of my life.

I learned first-hand the incredible role plants play in healing.

To be cultivating in nature was to be quiet, to connect, and reflect what is incredibly

important."

It is rather timely the Sunshine Coast Planting Festival is being held again next weekend from May 3 to 5.

The festival focuses on the important issue of conservation.

There will be book writing classes, horticulture lessons and how to recycle and re-purpose clothes.

There are also film and comedy showings as well as a full program for kids including singing classes, learning about bugs, face painting, dance lessons, magic shows and art classes.

How fun.

I'll go in honour of my brother.

Tune in to Salt 106.5 each Friday for my chat with Kristian on the breakfast show.

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