

PLEASE SEE ME THROUGH MY TEARS

by Kelly Osmont, a Psychotherapist, Certified Death Educator, and National Speaker

You asked, "How are you doing?"

As I told you, tears came to my eyes... and you looked away and quickly began to talk again. All the attention you had given me drained away.

"How am I doing?"... I do better when people listen, though I may shed a tear or two. The pain is indescribable. If you've never known it you cannot fully understand. Yet I need you. When you looked away, when I'm ignored, I am again alone with it.

Your attention means more than you can ever know.

Really, tears are not a bad sign you know! They're nature's way of helping me to heal... They relieve some of the stress of sadness.

I know you fear that asking how I'm doing brings me sadness... but you're wrong. The memory of my loved one's death will always be with me. Only a thought away.

My tears make my pain more visible to you, but you did not give me the pain, it was already there.

When I cry, could it be that you feel helpless, not knowing what to do? You are not helpless, and you don't need to do a thing, but be there.

When I feel your permission to allow my tears to flow, you've helped me. You need not speak. Your silence as I cry is all I need. Be patient... do not fear. Listening with your heart to "how I'm doing" relieves the pain, for when the tears can freely come and go, I feel lighter.

Talking to you releases what I've been wanting to say aloud, clearing space for a touch of joy in my life. I'll cry for a minute or two... and then I'll wipe my eyes, and sometimes you'll even find I'm laughing later.

When I hold back the tears, my throat grows tight, my chest aches, my stomach knots...because I'm trying to protect you from my tears. Then we both hurt... me, because my pain is held inside, a shield against our closeness... and you, because suddenly we're distant.

So please, take my hand and see me through my tears... then we can be close again.

More information about Kelly Osmont: A professional counselor and mother of Aaron Craig Osmont who died in 1982 at age 19. <http://www.oregoncounseling.org/Resumes/OsmontK.htm>