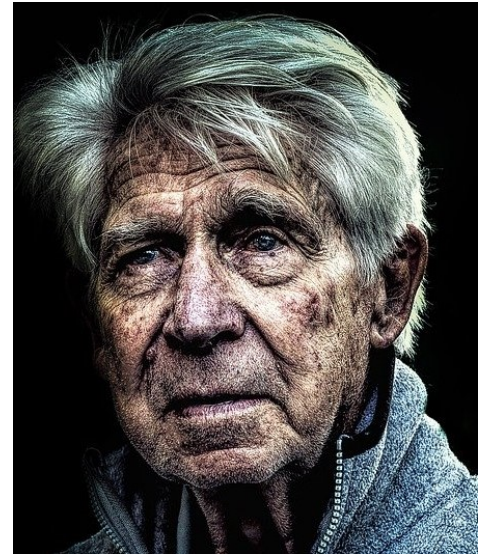


# Touchstones Theme: Consolation & Desolation

Real grief is not healed by time. It is false to think that the passing of time will slowly make us forget ...and take away our pain. I ...want to console you ...but not by suggesting that time will take away your pain.... I would not only be telling a lie; I would be diminishing the importance of ...life [and] underestimating the depth of your grief.... If time does anything, it deepens our grief. ...The pain we are now experiencing shows us how deep, full, intimate, and all-pervasive ...love was.



...I want to comfort and console you, but not in a way that covers up real pain and avoids all wounds. ...Consolation and comfort are to be found where our wounds hurt most.” *Henri J. M. Nouwen*



At times even the most mature of us want someone to dry our eyes, encircle us with welcoming arms, and offer us a cup of hot cocoa.

...The origin of the word “comfort” means “to make strong.” As comforters, we often believe we have to take away the pain, only to discover that we are only able to help those in pain find the sources of their own strength.

...We’re never quite sure what will truly comfort another, or what special act will comfort us.

...Perhaps those of us who would be comforters could ...put aside our ...fear of our own loss or the pain of our own pity, then love might find its way of bringing strength to the weak and light to those in the shadows. *Barbara Rohde*

## Join us in exploring Consolation & Desolation

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