

## *Live Fully*

Most of us have heard the phrase “carpe diem.” This simple phrase – *seize the day* – is attributed to the Roman poet Horace around 23 BCE, and has lasted longer than the language in which it was written.

What does it really mean to “seize the day?” We usually use it to mean to “get the most out of this day” or “enjoy this day” – both good intentions. But when we’re grieving, what is there in a day that we want to hold on to?

I believe that “seize the day” is deeper and more profound than simply enjoying the day. I think it instructs us to *live fully* in the day we have, no matter what it holds. Every day – whether full of joy, full of pain, or full of nothing special at all – is a day in our very precious, fleeting lives. There is something sacred about each and every day.

When we are newly bereaved, we may find ourselves wishing a day away. We wake in the morning, unwilling to open our eyes. We may think, “Please, just make this go away.” And that’s understandable, at least to those who have deeply and powerfully grieved a life-changing loss.

When I look back on the darkest days after my own loss, I realize that there was power and meaning in going fully into grief – the days that I wandered around tearful and uncomforted. There is something very human about the pain of losing someone who has been deeply a part of our lives, and there is something honest and powerful about living it out. When a loss is profound and life-changing, experiencing that loss fully is actually more natural and infinitely better than tip-toeing around the rim of grief, trying not to fall in.

Every single day – whether we spend it in laughter or tears, joy or pain, sun or shade – is full of life, our lives. And whatever a day brings can be real, authentic, fully experienced, and respected for just what it is. Every day is sacred and full of possibility, even the darkest.

Bring your loved one to your mind and to your broken heart in this day. Bring yourself fully to this day. Remember this day, remember yourself in this day, live in this day, and, with both hands, ***SEIZE THE DAY.***

By Vicki Scalzitti, Rainbow Hospice and Palliative Care