



Memories
are the
key not
to the
past, but
to the
future.

Responding to life seems, at times, akin to searching through that drawer that collects all the things with no other place to go. We don't always know what tools we need but we trust there's something we already have that will turn out to be useful.

Memories are a tool of the present of use to the future.

Memories remind us of what stirs us. They persist when infused with feelings. Memories don't judge the emotions we have, they simply catalogue them. In our mind's eye we see past events and feel present responses. We put these reactions into order and give them meaning. As we do, we may discern the things we care most deeply about. Our future can be oriented toward these cherished values.

Memories recall for us what we wish was different. We hold some memories that, for the sake of our future, we must mourn. We replay when we had no control and sense our powerlessness with fear or anger or hurt. We review when we did have power and used it poorly and feel sadness or rage or regret. These experiences from our past offer us present options, but not usually easy choices. We can, sometimes with support, create a more free future by finding the ways to grieve and begin to heal.

Memories retain for us detail about our goodness. Memories hold moments of us at our best. They capture us being kind, courageous, curious, and compassionate. They record enduring love and loyal faithfulness. Our memories prefer to be specific even when symbolic. By doing so, they preserve rich and distinct examples of who we are.

In whole, memory invites us towards who we might be.

What is a memory I need to grieve? What is a consistent theme in my most joyous recollections?

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