

Henri Matisse, *The Dessert: Harmony in Red*, 1908



****First Question First****

What is *your* immediate reaction to this artwork?

Trust it. Write about it. Use the guide sheet for help.

Continue reading for another perspective and journal questions.

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Grief can literally put us to work. Suddenly, we feel we *must* purge that closet, deep clean the kitchen, or wipe down every baseboard in the entire house. We might need to re-arrange the living room furniture or paint the bedroom red. Or even knock down a wall or two. We may not understand this home-improvement compulsion. And our loved ones may feel a tad concerned. But we plough ahead anyway, whenever the energy strikes.

Or we may begin to experience internal nudgings of a gentler sort, urging us to sew a quilt or weave a basket. Knit an afghan. A mental conversation may ensue:

“Sew a quilt!” “I don’t know how.” “Do it anyway!” “I don’t know what I’m doing.” “Keep going!” “This feels good.”

We may spontaneously incorporate clothing pieces or small objects of our loved one’s into our creation. We begin to understand that our hands are helping us to grieve with every soft fabric we touch, every comforting yarn we weave. We are piecing ourselves together through our loss. Sorrow does what it needs to, in its own way.

Q.) What project(s) is nudging you to begin? Are you doubting or resisting it? Consider how it may be one way to tend to yourself in this time of grief.