

Wayne Thiebaud, *Ripley Ridge*, 1977



****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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Loss is rarely an isolated occurrence. Most of us do not experience grieving our loved one's death without another loss hitting us along the way. And that's what it may feel like, being walloped by life. We may have had to move out of our home when our spouse died. Or to our widowed parent's town to care for them, thereby losing our home and community. Our parent may now live with us, our independence feeling like it's slipping away.

And then there's life. We may have lost our job. Or we retired; although welcomed, this time in life can also be deeply sad. Our health may be changing, setting us on the path of mortality. Friends have moved away or moved along. And deaths begin to feel like they are piling up. Family, friends, our animals, acquaintances. A looped tape can start chattering in our brains, like a rolodex flipping onto the next card, the next card. All now gone.

Loss can feel like a steep hill to climb.

Q.) Write out this looped tape. Make a list of all that you are going through. Don't leave out anything, even if it feels silly or inconsequential. This is your heart trying to hold all your sadnesses. Acknowledging to ourselves the magnitude of "hard times" can be an opening. Mourning may then follow.