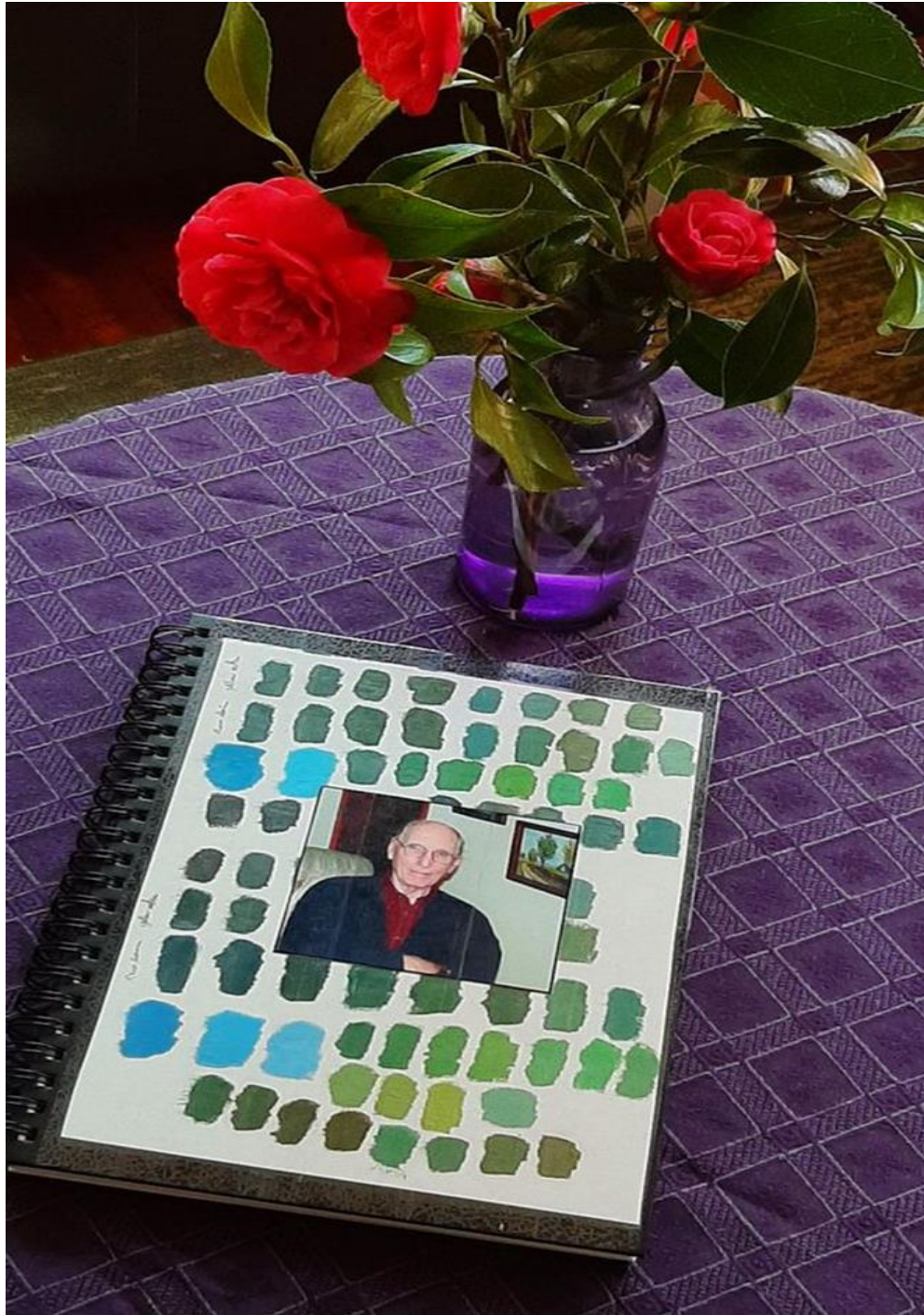


To begin.

- 1) Choose your journal. Keep in mind that it needs to be physically big, and expansive enough to hold either printed or glued images of art, your journaling, as well as printouts from this site.



- 2) Consider embellishing the cover of your journal. I found it important to include a photo of my Dad; underneath the photo is one of his color studies. I used packing tape for a laminate effect.



- 3) As the photo below suggests, it can be helpful to put the reproduction of the artwork on the left page, then use the facing right-hand page for journal writing. If you are using a 3-ring binder for your journal, you can also print out the text of this site and file it as additional guidance.



- 4) Consider naming your journal. “Mourning Journal” stuck with me. Listen to what your heart whispers.
- 5) Gather your favorite pens. And plan your quiet space. Know that this will be your safe place to open. It might be a good idea to have tissues handy.



6) Print out the ****First Question First**** guide sheet to keep in your journal for easy access. Remember to review it before you look at the art image. It might be helpful to have the “Emotions” list at hand as well (also located under the “Resources” tab).

Note -- To create your own supply of art images for your Mourning Journal beyond what is offered here, you can:

- Purchase (on Amazon or in bookstores) new or old desk art calendars, art postcard collections, old art appreciation textbooks that you dedicate to being cut up for this purpose (see used bookstores), and art magazines. New hardcover books often use art on their protective covers as well.
- Browse “Google” then “Images” for specific artworks, artists, or periods in art history. Click on each image until you find one enlarged enough for your satisfaction. *Notice* your immediate first response to the work and write about it. Print out the image for your journal.
- When printing an image, regular computer paper works fine. Use glossy paper for a richer image if so desired.



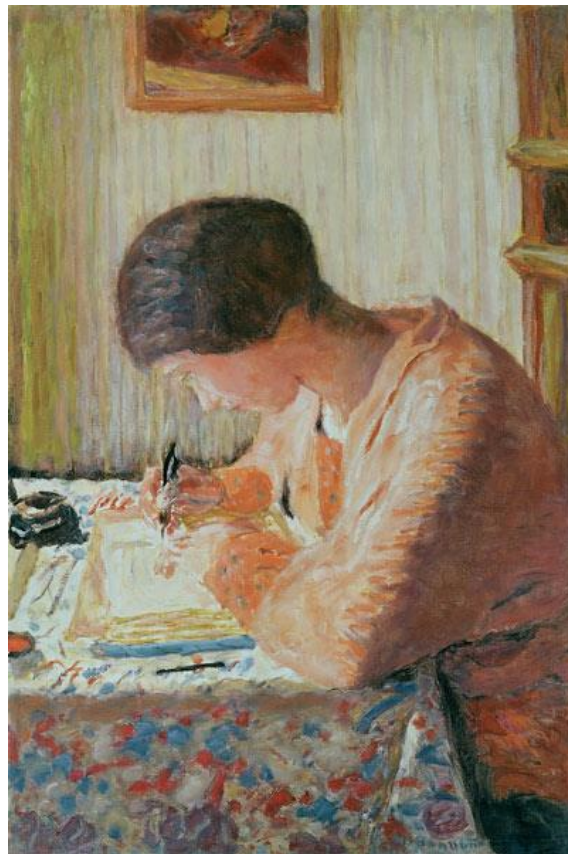
When you're ready.

Do you have your tea or coffee?

Choose an artwork. Either print it out or look at it on the computer.

And begin writing. Be gentle with yourself. Let your thoughts and feelings flow into your pen, released onto the page. Maneuver around any self-critical voice that might surface. This is your precious time to grieve your aching loss. This is the moment to let in the beauty of art, to allow color, line, and form to soothe your wounded heart. This is your time to tenderly approach your sorrow, to welcome grief into your presence having faith in its unfolding, its naturalness, its wisdom.

And as you rest in this pain born from love, know that you are not alone.



Pierre Bonnard, *Writing Woman*, 1900