

I THINK I MISS MY GRANDMOTHER

I think I miss my grandmother. I mean, I think it is finally beginning to land on me that she is never coming back. I don't know how it all goes on the other side, but what I do suspect is that I will never see her in the way(s) that I am accustomed to seeing her; I will never have that experience of her again. And that warrants grieving.

Since my grandma passed, I have had a couple of occasions in which people, well meaning ones for sure, have said upon learning that my grandmother was 89 when she passed, that I was lucky to have had my grandmother as long as I did. They then comparatively noted that their grandparents died before they were born or while they were still small children. This sentiment is a tough one to respond to while amidst my own grief process for several reasons.

One, if your commenting to me about my loss still centers your experience, then you've sort of lost the essence of condolences. Two, I believe it is fine and acceptable for our experiences of grandparents and their losses to be mutually exclusive. And three, I think it wholly healthful that I can have my grandmother for 46 years of living and still grieve and miss her for every second she is no longer here, even while yet being grateful for all 1,466,424,000 seconds that I inhabited the earth with her here and alive in it with me. I can actually feel the grief and gratitude at the same time, and my grief owes my gratitude nothing; nor does my gratitude owe a thing to my grief.

But this is the risk we run when we are not practiced in discerning when to de-center ourselves in the narrative. When we center ourselves in the narrative, we are more prone to comparative analyses over curiosity, a wonderment about what true support even entails. And so we quite unintentionally miss the mark.

My grandmother wore many hats. She also literally made them for others to wear. Here is a picture of a slew of Dope Black Women wearing the many hats she made and gave away. The ones she wore were nothing like the ones she gave away. She wore hats she liked. She made hats other people liked. She knew how to remove herself from the center long enough to honor the heads and hearts of others. Might we be so lucky. ~Selah.