

# It's Time.

I've made a commitment to be honest through Kramer's cancer treatment. I think people need to know some of the behind the scenes stuff. I think the more people know and understand the more helpful people can be when they or their loved ones go through similar situations. So...here's an honesty post:

Last week on Thursday night I had a little meltdown. Those of you who have lost a spouse might be able to relate...but might not be able to too. Grief is at an "at your own space and time" thing.

For me...it was time.

The kids had been here. They have been so supporting and understanding. They've been truly amazing...but I was ready to be on my own a bit. I'm NEVER going to get through this if I don't put one foot in front of the other and try...but I can't try unless I'm given space to try.

I could already see that the kids were lining things up...  
-one would call me on Mondays...one Tuesdays and so on.  
-Kalissa or Craig would be charged with stopping in.  
-Karl was home so he was supposed to make sure I eat.

It started to make me feel suffocated.

At the same time, I think the kids were clinging to me because I'm all they have left...and after all. I think each of the feels it's their duty to their Dad to take care of me. What an awkward place to find a balance at!

I ended up sitting a couple of them down and letting them know how I felt...and it's a little like this... Up until January when the first diagnosis came in...I did things on my own all the time. Kramer would work late. He wouldn't be home until 9pm in the spring and fall and I managed things here. I didn't

see a lot of him and although I missed him, that was our normal.

I spent hours in the house by myself working or putzing around. I was so used to empty quiet time. I love it. (I'm afraid I'll have too much of it now, but I do love it.)

Once Kramer had his surgery in February, he only went back to work a handful of times. He was in the house 24/7. I didn't mind a bit...but as he got sicker, it got so that I couldn't go unless I had someone to check in on him. Groceries got harder to get. I couldn't leave for a long period of time. Then with all of our trips to Lacrosse it got so I would grab three things at WalMart when we got a new medicine. I lost the freedom to browse. I lost the freedom to just do and be without any restrictions. Don't get me wrong. I would do it over and over and over again...but I'd be lying if I didn't say I missed the freedom. (Those of you who are caregivers I'm sure understand.)

My house became filled with oxygen concentrators, medicine, hoses, feeding tube supplies. I was always rearranging to make room for the newest walker or wheelchair or oxygen tanks. It was okay...but I felt like my small world was getting even smaller.

With the kids all here after the funeral and with their plans to stay on for several days, I was feeling a little closed in. I needed space.

By this time it had been over a week that ALL the kids were here with spouses, grand babies and all of their stuff. My laundry was everywhere...we were eating again before the last food was cleaned up as someone was constantly eating. AHH.

I felt like they were all watching me...did I cry enough? Did I not cry enough? Was getting all the medical equipment packed up and sent away something I did too quick? I felt like I couldn't really grieve on my own terms with everyone here.

I was so thankful they were here through everything. SO THANKFUL. but...

I needed space. I missed Kramer and there was nothing I could do about that...but I also missed my house. I missed my freedom. I missed time to putz and browse. That, I could do something about. So...I asked the kids to quit babysitting me. I did it with a promise that I'd call and ask when I needed help. I asked them to not set up days to call me. I asked them to treat me as normal as possible.

The talk didn't go fabulously. But it went okay. It turns out some were harboring their own fears of going back out into the real world and to not be cocooned by the house and grief. As hard as it was, I gave them the little push. I can't let anyone get stuck here in grief. We might only be taking the tiniest of baby steps, but forward motion is crucial.

So...we're trying this, and it's going okay. I'm crying when I need to...I'm happy and smiling when I need to. I'm calling the kids when I want to chat. I'm rotting in front of the TV when I want. Karl's here but he's an in and out sort of guy so we make fabulous housemates. I'm doing okay...and I think the kids are too. It's a slow and steady process but for me, it was time to feel a little more normal.