

Bearing the Unbearable

Source: [Oriah Mountain Dreamer](#)

by [Oriah](#)

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My dear friend, Peter, who recently lost his wife, Diana (also a friend,) sent me this quote. It takes my breath away with its honesty about the hardest moments in a human life: "To have finally dealt with suffering is to consume it into yourself. Which means you have to, with eyes open, be able to keep your heart open in hell. You have to look at what is, and say 'Yeah, Right.' And what it involves is bearing the unbearable. And in a way, who you **think** you are can't do it. Who you **really** are, can do it. So that who you think you are has to die in the process.~ Ram Dass

For myself, in the worst moments my only hope of doing this comes when I can be very still and drop into a sense of being held by a Sacred Presence that is larger than and yet within all that is. My willingness to even try is encouraged by the incredible resilience I have seen in others who have borne the loss of children and partners, and severe pain in body and mind. My prayers in those moments are simple- are, for myself and others, "Help," and, "Thank you." ~Oriah

About **Oriah Mountain Dreamer**

Oriah's life has focused on inquiry into the nature of the sacred and the mystery of how we co-create meaning for our lives. Raised in Northern Ontario, she was at home in the wilderness ceremonies and earth-based teachings of the First People's, eventually teaching and sharing what she learned. A

mystic by nature and training, in the shamanic tradition she is seen as a dreamer, one who works to help create a story of the people that will contribute to peace and a passion for life. Her daily practice includes ceremonial prayer, yoga and meditation. A graduate of Ryerson University's social work program and a student of Philosophy at the University of Toronto she has facilitated groups and counselled individuals for over thirty-five years. Oriah has written seven books, including the bestseller *The Invitation* (HarperONE, San Francisco, 1999) based on the much-loved poem of the same name. She has two grown sons and lives in Toronto, Canada.