

# Neurology & Pain Management

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Tumbleweed

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A tumbleweed (*Salsola tragus*)

“Any of various densely branched annual plants, such as amaranth and Russian thistle, that break off from the roots at the end of the growing season and are rolled about by the wind.”

"Like vanishing dew,  
a passing apparition  
or the sudden flash  
of lightning -- already gone --  
thus should one regard one's self."

— [Ikkyu](#)

"I spur my horse past the ruined city;  
the ruined city, that wakes the traveler's thoughts:  
ancient battlements, high and low;  
old grave mounds, great and small.

Where the shadow of a single tumbleweed trembles  
and the voice of the great trees clings forever,  
I sigh over all these common bones --  
No roll of the immortals bears their names. "

— [Han-shan](#)

She tells me children and grandchildren will grow  
parents will die  
and we are left alone.  
Steel yourself, ahead of time  
cut the emotional bonds to prevent worse pain.  
I say, I want bot the heaven and the hell rather than no feeling at all.

She says in the aloneness is the redemption  
there is no one to rely on in this world but the self  
such resilience and fortitude  
I am in awe.  
I was always the weaker twin, from birth  
losing weight the very first year of life  
until Nana's arrival and that divine potion known as chicken soup as substitute for the nauseating  
warm milk.

I feel like a tumbleweed, washed up on the shore, in someone else's home, alone, she says.  
Tumbleweed, swept ashore by the wind, disconnected from its roots.

But I prefer the Eskimo who says goodbye to his family and leaves the warm igloo never to be  
seen again or the wealthy Indian who gives up all and along with his begging bowl leaves village  
to join a band of wandering beggars.

We are so numb, after so many years of abuse, incredulous how she survived.  
She does so need the time to heal and organize and move on. so long without the basic human  
need for intimacy.

I am not alone. In my darkest hour I never felt alone. There is a Higher Power in my life call it  
what you might, and I am in continuous gratitude for life itself.  
I ask her about grandchildren, thinking this will turn her around, for I could not imagine living  
without them, now that I have been granted this ultimate gift of these three beautiful creatures. I  
cannot imagine life without the joy of them running into my arms and tumbling with them on the  
carpet. But she has a response. They too will grow and it is important to detach early.

I too am a tumbleweed of sorts. We are twins after all!

My journey has been detaching from those objects and items and addictions out there in the world that gave me comfort during the years of abuse as a child and isolation as an adult.

The goal now is also to become as detached as a tumbleweed, allowing the Lord to blow me daily wherever He wishes. and to receive and be grateful for each day I am alive and merit to see my children and grandchildren, my parents and friends, my patients and colleagues, my teachers and students and above all my life partner who has had to suffer my transformation.

My roots must also be mobile however I am connected to others in deep ways that mostly go unacknowledged.

I pray she heals soon to make such connections of intimacy.

“ Lord, let me see You in all...

even in my loneliness and desolation, in my isolation and despair,  
in my rigid iron-clad armor, cut off even from myself”

“Grant me the vision to see You even in my sickness and despair, to see Your hand omnipresent as much as in the delights and the love of my kids

“To see the suffering around me and yet believe in You  
to see the inability for me to change significantly with all my character defects ever present and bearing down on me each day and unable to correct, even You in that obstinancy.

“To see that all this is still Your desire at that moment prior to creation when You had the desire and foresaw it all.

“I remain inadequate and fall short of ever carrying You suffering.

“That this struggle too is Your desire”