

## **Yizkor**

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### **Rabbi Allison Vann**

R. O. Kwon is a journalist for the New York Times. This spring he wrote:

“Coronavirus grief is already a vast, monstrous grief, its reach and breadth expanding daily. It’s also a collective grief, a worldwide loss that — physically isolated though many of us have to be — a lot of other people are, in one way or another, also mourning...This is hard. I hurt. If you’re hurting, too, you’re not alone.”

My friends, here we are. It’s yizkor. We are remembering spouses; parents; siblings; our partners... and so many more who are missing from the fabric of our lives.

This is hard.

How I wish we could hug each other. How I wish I could hand you a tissue for the tears.

Know this: wherever you are sitting--in your kitchen; on your sofa; on your patio: you are not alone.

We all know the paths of loss. We understand the depths of the valley of heartache. We have felt the heart wrenching pangs of loss. We endured the restless nights of loneliness.

We are bound together.

Our walk through the valley of shadows is our own. Yet we speak a similar language: when we've grieved; when we're grieving—it's the language of tears.

It is the language of: you are not alone.

Marge Piercy wrote in this stanza in the magnificent poem *Kaddish*:

Look around us, search above us, below, behind.

We stand in a great web of being joined together.

Although we have spent the past six months in isolation because of this global pandemic, we are connected by the experience of having lived and continuing to live through it. The same is true for grief. The experience of loss is personal, but we are connected to all those who have walked the road of grief before us. Today, as we think about all those we have loved and lost,

may we remember we are not alone in our grief. May this bring us some  
measure of comfort. Amen.