This the season for gifts and gatherings and spending time with loved ones. It is always the season for grief and sadness and hopelessness that might seem like a black hole. We must be aware of all feelings, especially now: the bright and the shadows, the light and the dark and the very tenuous gray that can go either way. Check on those you think are strong, resilient, and functioning. Check on those whom you haven’t connected with recently. Find a way to reach them, to balance them, to spend time with them. Here is a poem read recently authored by Leslé Honoré that might help someone.

It doesn’t always look like darkness

Disheveled

Discombobulated

Sometimes it looks like dance

Like joy

Like syncopated rhythms

Like grace

Like choreography channeling

Ancestor’s dreams

Powerful

Successful

Enviable

Sometimes we get so good

At the act

At the entertainment

At wearing the mask

That we can fool ourselves

A little bit

Long enough for the public

To believe

That we

Have it all together

That the airbrush portrait

Is real

The Instagram smile

Is permanent

The steps aren’t automatic

That happiness 24/7 isn’t toxic

But the truth is

Living is hard

Lonely is real

Grief is too heavy to hold

People don’t check

On the strong friends

The smiling friends

The dancing friends

The friends who look like

They are on top of the world

Looks are often liars

Hopelessness can grow

Like weeds in the most beautiful

Garden

It doesn’t always look like

Darkness

And it’s so hard to say the words

Out loud

“I need help

This is too much

I don’t want to try anymore”

Because we clap for stunning

Clap for the performance

And ignore those in pain

It doesn’t always look like darkness

Sometimes it just looks like

Our reflection

In the Mirror

Sometimes it’s just too hard

To stay in the light

If life feels like it is too much

to take one more step

let someone hold your hand while you walk

You aren’t alone

You aren’t the only one

I’ve had those thoughts too

You are not alone

I promise

National Suicide prevention life line 1-800-273-TALK

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fsuicidepreventionlifeline.org%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR1TTquFjcXPadx3-debJ2RWxMySLBOgD4_p6twFg0EHcXO0S_CRJa6ECzg&h=AT1PS_WGtoo0MuB36GPYpxsvMJWn93awglgnphP8GJHDqzzsIBodUCbdTW3HCMyw9Pyyh7lZjzgn9li9Aod9yBNVl1aGZE8tqbkM-fELLvU7lIioIlGfjRaGlNqu1TNtvQ&__tn__=-UK-y-R&c%5b0%5d=AT1jhWvXfoIYuY2fDxImsw_AwRjE1HxAjH8--RommYFpwl5Kixk-lmGzl55rGh8acrLGgqbmYMKE7GMnplMF3v-hz3v4BbxoL4IDlEE2ig24TlXlt3Cy1th0Sj-3_TUVVrxmrlRTnRBoL0fvtxxuBz7jDm4rMI5UE9y6ee8uJZ8bIgs0dZh82U4ZTi744zQBhoJnRI0N3Ij-euPmahA3TFPMnQZMLSy_hVGhj3Y)