



Bereavement Café Newsletter

A safe space to talk and listen

Written and compiled by
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JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF: COPING WITH THE LOSS OF A PARENT

Sometimes when I
say "I'm okay", I want
someone to look me
in the eyes, hug me
tight, and say, "I know
you're not"

Sometimes you just
have to stay silent
because no words can
explain what is going
on in your mind
and heart.

*Blessed are
those who
mourn, for
they will be
comforted.*

Matthew 5:4 NIV

Kingdom Bloggers

"No one is ever prepared to deal with the loss of a parent. Even when the loss is expected, it still takes a long time to deal with the grief. The most important thing to remember when dealing with the loss of a parent is that there is no "normal" progression. There isn't a standard template for grief, and everyone copes with this loss in a different way".

**Losing a
parent is
devastating;
no one will
ever love you
like that
again.**

ForeverMissed.com

Hugs won't ease your
Pain.
Words can't wipe away your
Tears.
But, hold on to your Memories.

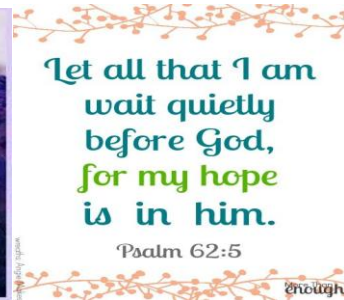
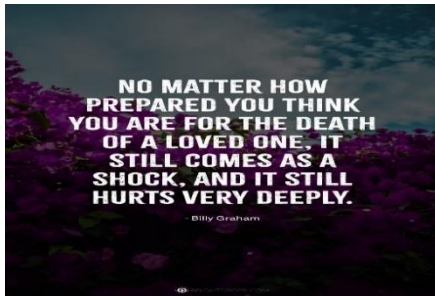
**You are my hiding place
and my shield;
I hope in your word.**

Psalms 119:114

brendawalsh.com

We tend to believe that our mother and father will never die. Even if a long-term illness gives us time to prepare ourselves; we can never be fully ready for their death and its aftermath, which means saying goodbye to the people who gave us life apart from everything else. No matter what our age, the death of a parent is devastating; nothing else leaves us feeling so abandoned (Fiona Marshall).

Another writer said, no matter what age you are, you are always your parent's child. Whether or not your relationship was close or difficult, parents are a reference point – one of the ways in which we define our sense of self and our place in the world.



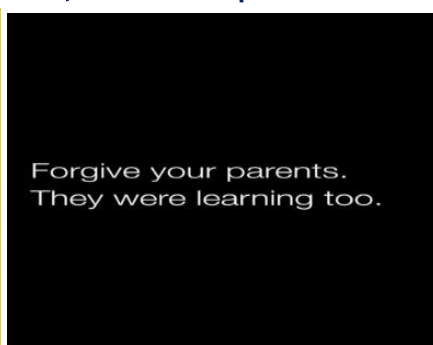
Losing a Parent is Always a Major Loss

- It is always a major loss and difficult to cope with, whether the relationship was good or bad. The parent-child relationship is strong.
- As well as the loss of their physical presence, there is also the loss of their advice, support, help, knowledge and counselling in times of life's stresses.

(<https://www.griefandsympathy.com/losingaparent.html>).

Losing a Parent with Whom you had a Difficult Relationship

- The shock, numbness and pain of the loss are no less, even if the relationship was not as good as you would have liked it to be. Losing a parent with whom you had a difficult relationship can be complicated, with feelings of guilt, blame and regret to contend with.
- If for whatever the reason, the relationship was a difficult one, forgive yourself. Remember, that you were only one part of that relationship and can't take total responsibility, especially "since you were the child, not the responsible adult".



- Many close relationships have a love-hate balance in them. If you were indifferent, you would not be grieving or worried about what you did or didn't do. What you said or didn't say.

- The pathways of bereavement are difficult enough so don't burden yourself with more imaginary wrongs; your parent probably knew you and understood you better than you did yourself.

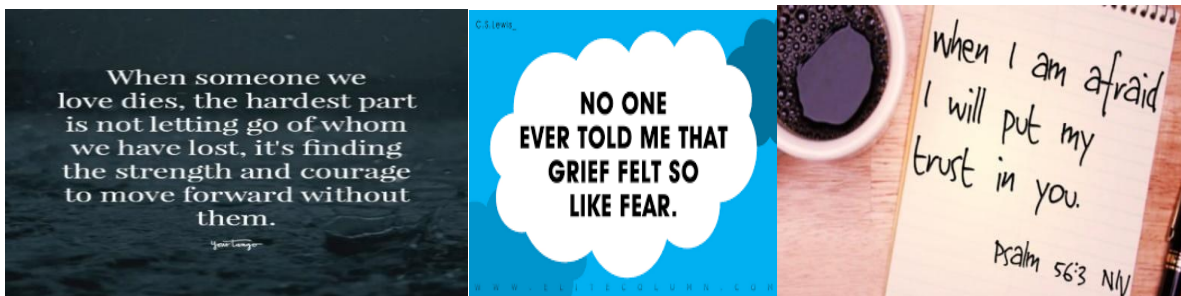
(<https://www.griefandsympathy.com/losingaparent.html>).

What you Might Feel After Losing a Parent

When you lose a loved one, especially a parent, you will experience all kind of feelings, for example:

Loss of a Foundational Relationship—Parents often provide a sense of security, love, and guidance. Their death can feel like a fundamental shift in your world, leaving you feeling vulnerable and uncertain about the future.

Feeling of Regret— Things you could have said and done! If you had a difficult or estranged relationship, you might regret what you didn't have, and for a relationship it's not now possible to heal.



Loss of connection to the past—: Losing a parent, or both parents, means you've lost a connection to your own childhood. Parents can talk to us about our own early years, and share memories in a way no-one else can (Cruse Bereavement Support).

- One of the secrets of grief is relief. Few bereaved individuals would admit to this. It's an "I shouldn't be experiencing this kind of feelings". One of the struggles when in grief is wondering if it's all right to feel and think what we are feeling and thinking. We know what we're experiencing but we wonder if it's okay and hope that it is also okay with those around us. (Norman Wright).

Is There a Time– Limit to Grief

- There is no right or wrong way to grieve; your grief is unique to you, and everyone experiences and processes grief differently.
- There is no timeline as to how long grief lasts, or how you should feel.
- Your feelings are valid–don't dismiss or invalidate your emotions.



Effect on Other Relationships

Tension –According to Cruse Bereavement Support, a death in the family can bring people together, but it can also create tension. It can wake up old arguments and rivalries between brothers and sisters. Some families are able to support one another, but there may also be individual members who don't want to (or can't) share their feelings, and prefer to be left alone. You will need to respect this.

Grief – A Natural Response to Loss

- Grief is the powerful, often painful and confusing response to the loss of an important person in your life. It can change how you feel physically and emotionally, how you think about things, and how you behave.



It's important to remember that, 'normal' grieving does not mean 'easy'.

- Grief is a difficult experience. Understanding the many feelings and sensations involved will not take away the pain, but it can help to make it more manageable.

- It's easy to imagine you're 'cracking up', that there is something physically and mentally wrong with you during this time of grief. Loss of appetite, sleeplessness, absent-minded behaviour, unexpected emotions – these are just some of the signs and symptoms of grief.

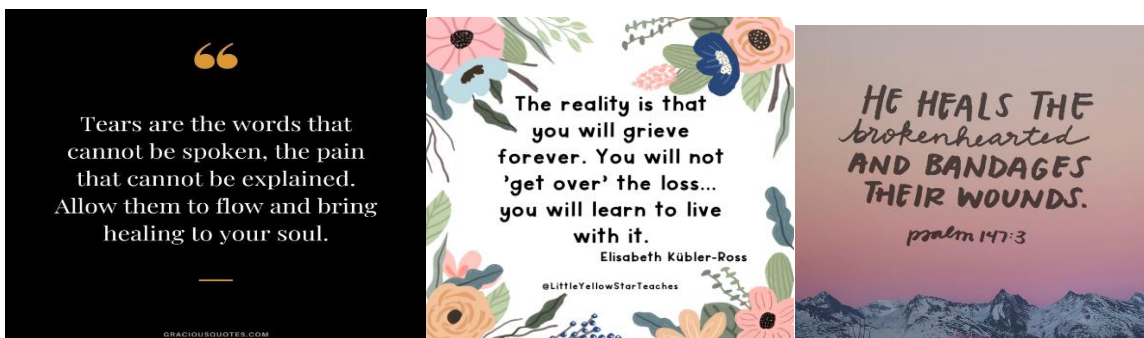


How to Cope with the Loss of a Parent

According to one writer, grieving the loss of a parent is personal. There's no "normal" path or timeline. Everyone deals with it in their own way. But taking steps to understand your emotions and find support can make the process a little easier.

- Allow Yourself to Search for Meaning.
- Give yourself permission to grieve.
- Recognise the death's impact on your entire family.
- Find ways to remember your parent (s).

Remember that you don't have to put on a brave face for anyone when your heart is overwhelmed with grief, let your tears flow freely. "When our heart is shattered and our life is upended, we don't have a God who stays far off. He is close to the broken-hearted and walks with us in grief".

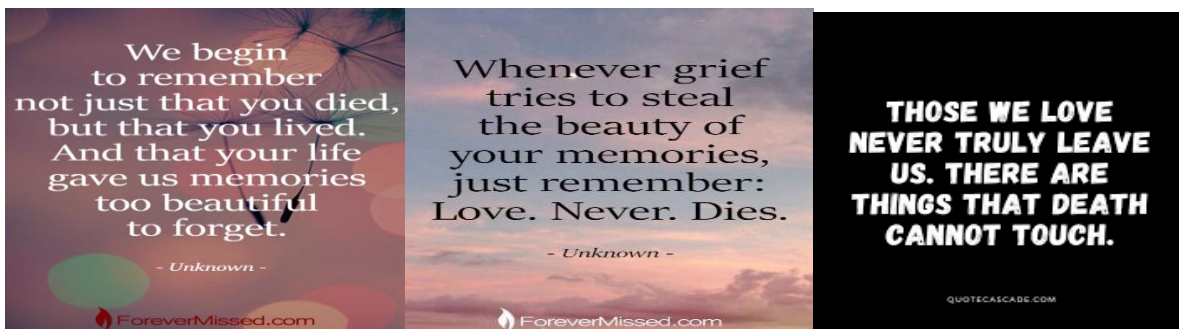


Recognise the Scope of your Loss.

- Coping with the loss of a parent means learning to live without a person you have known for all your whole life who may have played a formative role in your growth and development. Parents have shared in important moments in your life and have invested in your well-being.

Plan for Special Days when you May Need More Support

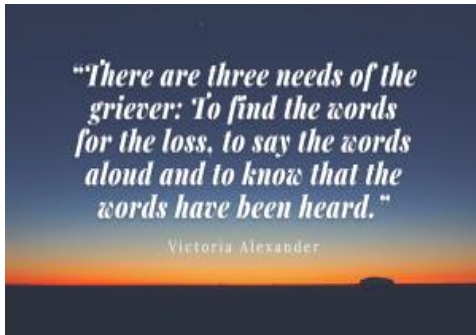
- Feelings may be magnified on birthdays, anniversaries, Mother's Day, Father's Day and other holidays. Think about how you want to honour your parent on these days. Plan and prepare in advance and get friends and family to support you if necessary.



How to Cope with Losing a Parent with Whom you Had a Difficult Relationship!

According to one writer, upon hearing the news that an estranged parent has passed away, you might feel lost, numb, angry, or surprised by your grief. You might even feel cheated of the opportunity to address past trauma or unresolved hurt.

- Life doesn't always give us the answers we seek or the solutions we crave. Sometimes you just have to accept inadequate conclusions, however unfinished or painful they feel.
- Knowing you can no longer address the past might leave you feeling as if you're doomed to carry that hurt forever. Instead of clutching tight to any lingering bitterness, try viewing this as an opportunity to let go of the past and move forward — for your sake.

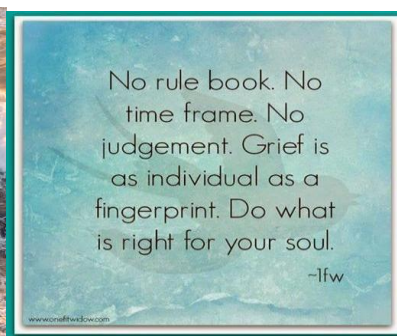


Understanding the Grieving Process

- Grief can be painful and exhausting but most people find that in time, things become easier (you may not believe this right now). Understanding the grief process and the common stages of the grief cycle can be really helpful – so it can be a good idea to familiarise yourself with these and keep them in mind during the periods when difficult feelings come up (Mind 2019).

How long does the Grieving process Last?

- Since each person grieves differently, the length and intensity of the emotions people go through varies from person to person. The closer the attachment, the more intensify the feelings of grief will be.
- There's no time limit on grief. It varies hugely from person to person. It may depend on the type of relationship you had with the person who died, how close you were and how they died. It could also be affected by previous experiences of loss or grief (Mind).



Grief Model –The Stages of Grief

Stages of Grief that you may go through

Everyone grieves differently. There is no right or wrong way to cope with a devastating loss. But for some, the five stages of grief are a useful way of understanding the storm of emotions that we all experience after a death [Beyond Life Help Centre].



DENIAL IS THE SHOCK ABSORBER FOR THE SOUL. IT PROTECTS US UNTIL WE ARE EQUIPPED TO COPE WITH REALITY.
- C.S. LEWIS

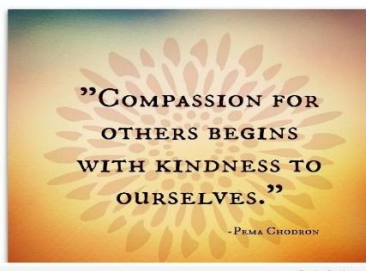


THE FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF ARE TOOLS TO HELP US FRAME AND IDENTIFY WHAT WE MAY BE FEELING. BUT THEY ARE NOT STOPS ON SOME LINEAR TIMELINE IN GRIEF. NOT EVERYONE GOES THROUGH ALL OF THEM OR IN A PRESCRIBED ORDER.

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross and David Kessler
From On Grief and Grieving
Grief.com

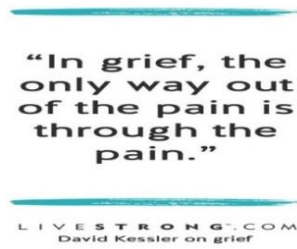
Practice Self-Compassion

- Remember that it takes times to heal on your grief journey. Healing is your primary job now! It is important to exercise self-compassion. This is simply the process of turning compassion inward.



The Bereavement Café Support Group

Our support group is here to help you on your grief journey. We provide a safe environment for those who are living with grief either through the loss of a loved one or any other significant loss you might be experiencing right now. We believe that sharing can help you feel connected with others who are going through a similar experience, and in turn, helps those who are new to the experience of grief to feel understood.



- ✚ As a Support Group, we thrive to cultivate an attitude of acceptance, empathy and listening in a non-judgemental manner.

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- ✚ Resources used in this Newsletter are taken from Books on "Grief" and various websites .

- ✚ Our prayer is that you will find this Newsletter helpful on your grief journey.

Blessings -The Bereavement Support Team

