

TRANSITIONS

A HOSPICE BEREAVEMENT NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends of Hospice:

Nearly a year has passed since the death of your loved one. As the anniversary of the death approaches, many survivors find themselves going over the details of the weeks leading up to that fateful day. At times, it probably seems like forever since you saw your loved one, talked to or touched that special person. On the other hand, it seems like only yesterday.

You may be dreading the first anniversary or you may be anxious for it to arrive and know that you have been able to make it this far. Whatever your anticipation, the day will certainly be one with a flood of memories. It is important to be aware that many of your friends and family will NOT acknowledge this date. Some may think if they don't bring the date up (by sending a card or flowers, or just in conversation), you won't remember it. For those who do remember, give them your thanks and show your appreciation.

Although the end of the first year does not mean that your grief is over, it is our wish that hope can glimmer through the days ahead and brighten your pathway.

Sincerely,

The Bereavement Team

Tabitha Hospice, A Collaboration with Immanuel

THE ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

In the past year, you have faced many changes in your life.

Perhaps your loss has caused you to look at yourself and your life differently. You may have new hopes and goals for your future. This is a good time to look over the past year and see how far you have come, where you are now and where you would like to go from here.

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Words of *Wisdom*

**“You alone can do it,
but you cannot do it
alone.”**

O. Hobart Mowre

**“Let the joy of your loved
one’s life begin to take
the place of the hurt and
anger of death.”**

Dacie D. Sims



**Though we need to weep your loss,
You dwell in that safe place in our hearts,
Where no storm or night or pain can reach you
Let us not look for you only in memory,
Where we would grow lonely without you.
You would want us to find you in presence,
Beside us when beauty brightens,
When kindness glows
And music echoes eternal tones.”**
John O’Donohue

OTHER RESOURCES

For additional support, please contact our Hospice Bereavement Team at 402.819.4949.

For additional reading materials, please contact The Centering Corporation at 866.218.0101 or www.centering.org



TABITHA
Hospice

A COLLABORATION
WITH
 Immanuel

Perhaps you, and others around you, expected life to be “back to normal” after the first year. You may be discouraged because you are not “over it.” Sometimes these expectations are even expressed openly by people around you or implied by their attitude. Remind yourself that grief is a *process* with no particular timetable. Each person goes through this process at his or her own pace. Think back over the past year. You have come a long way.

Perhaps your circle of friends is changing. Some of the old friends may not be as supportive as they once were. But there may be new friends who have come along, or who you will meet. These new friends learn about you and accept you the way you are now.

Perhaps the road ahead looks frightening and lonely. But as you look around, you can now see others who are on the same road. Truly, you are not alone. Is it time to reach out to others? They may need a hand to hold on to.

Perhaps you have learned to receive and accept the love and support of those around you.

Perhaps you have learned that your tears and memories are healing.

Perhaps you have learned that although your life is changed, there is still a joy in living.

Perhaps you have learned that the memories which hurt so much can become a healing bridge from the past to the future.

Perhaps you have learned that the pain of loss is diminishing and the purpose and meaning in your life is growing stronger.

Perhaps you have learned to treasure each day and to show love to others.

Perhaps you have learned to never, ever take for granted the gift of life.

Even though grief does not end with the first anniversary, hopefully you can say that you have learned many lessons this past year. The first anniversary is an important milestone. Look backward at your progress. Look at today and congratulate yourself for the major achievement of coming this far. Look ahead to the opportunities that are yet to come.



People in mourning have to come to grips with death before they can live again. Mourning can go on for years and years. It doesn't end after a year; that's a false fantasy. It usually ends when people realize that they can live again, that they can concentrate their energies on their lives as a whole, and not on their hurt, and guilt and pain.”

Elizabeth Kubler Ross

IDEAS FOR COMMEMORATING THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY

- ▶ Maybe the death anniversary is a time for some special care and activities. Some people choose to set aside the day as a time to honor the life and memory of their loved one. You might choose to:
 - › Visit the cemetery. Take along a flower, a note or a balloon bouquet.
 - › Light a memorial candle and extinguish it at bedtime.
 - › Plant a tree or flowers and watch them grow year after year.
 - › Make a donation to your church, temple or favorite charity in memory of your loved one.
 - › Spend some time with family or friends talking about the good things you remember, the funny things, the jokes played, the special moments.
 - › Do something you enjoy—a walk along the river, a visit to a museum or art gallery, a drive in the country.
 - › Write a letter to your loved one, sharing the year's happenings, the accomplishments you've made, what you have missed about him or her.
 - › Go through old photo albums or videos and recall the special memories.
 - › Bake your loved one's favorite cake or other dessert and share it with others.
 - › Make a quilt from some of your loved one's clothing, such as jeans, neckties, etc.

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM



There's an elephant in the room. It is large and squatting, so it is hard to get around it. Yet we squeeze by with, “How are you?” and, “I'm fine,” and a thousand other forms of trivial chatter.

We talk about the weather; we talk about work; we talk about everything else—except for the elephant in the room.

There's an elephant in the room. We all know it is there. We are thinking about the elephant as we talk together.

It is constantly on our minds. For, you see, it is a very big elephant. It has hurt us all, but we do not talk about the elephant in the room.

Oh, please, say her name. Oh, please, say “Barbara” again. Oh, please, let's talk about the elephant in the room.

For if we talk about her death, perhaps we can talk about her life. Can I say, “Barbara” to you and not have you look away?

For if I cannot, then you are leaving me alone in a room—with an elephant.

Terry Kettering