

HOSPICE *of the* VALLEY  
*Bereavement Literature*

SOME THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW WHEN YOUR CHILD HAS DIED

- Grief Waits. If you put it away and try to ignore it, it will simply wait until you have no choice but to experience it.
- We grieve as intensely as we love.
- There is no "normal" in grieving.
- You will never be the same person you were before your loss.
- You must make a conscious decision to "get better."
- There are no set-in-concrete stages or timelines in grief.
- It is typical to feel almost numb for the first few months. When that "fog" lifts, it can be very frightening. Think of it as a wave and ride it out.
- Losing a child is "out of order". Talking to and being with other bereaved parents is extremely helpful.
- Other people will not understand your grief unless you share it.
- It is okay to talk about your child as long as you want.
- It is okay to keep their belongings as long as you want.
- It is okay to include them in celebrations and special occasions for as long as you want.
- "Finding closure" is not a requirement of healing. For parents, it is not even an option.
- Even in death . . . love remains.

I am so sorry your child has died. I vividly remember the gut wrenching pain of grief. My son was 18 when he was killed in 1996 in an electrical accident. My life changed forever.

A year after Jason died; we attended a conference in Philadelphia put on by The Compassionate Friends (TCF). We were not members of their organization, but were welcomed with open arms. For the first time in our grieving, we were able to say what we felt without seeing a look of terror in the eyes of the listener. As you will learn, it is very difficult for anyone to understand the pain of a bereaved parent. It is an unthinkable loss. Had I known about TCF and the other resources herein, immediately following Jason's death, I would have ran to them before taking another breath.

Please use this information. Grieving the loss of a child is an incredible amount of work, but there is an incredible amount of support available to you. Reach out, take a hand, and hold on tight.

THEN  
by Sandy Goodman

If I had seen what I see now  
when I was blinded by sorrow,  
I would have surely not believed  
and would have turned the other way  
and so you hid it from my view,  
and waited for the moment when  
I would feel another's sadness  
before I felt my own.

-Sandy Goodman, in <http://www.loveneverdies.net/downloads.html>