



H.O.P.E. - HELPING OVERCOME & PROVIDE ENCOURAGEMENT

JANUARY 2009

Dear friends,

Here are some grief recovery resolutions and intentions to help the healing process as a new year begins:

Each day, I will

- Remember to live in the present. The past is gone; the future is uncertain. All I have is today and I will make the most of it.
- I will open my heart asking God (or the Universe or a Higher Power) to help me heal.
- Remind myself that every day is a healing day.
- Do the best I can for my own good.
- Do the best I can for the good of others.
- Count my blessings, remembering that my cup is always half full and never half empty.
- Avoid setting unreasonable, perfectionist goals for myself.
- Nurture my spirit through prayer, meditation, worship, inspirational readings.
- Take care of my physical self by eating nutritious, balanced meals and by engaging in physical exercise.
- Believe that “help” is not a four-letter word; that asking for assistance with various issues is both mature and wise.
- Choose to respond positively and creatively to problems which come my way.

- Seek out all resources to find relief for my sorrow.
- Not indulge in guilt and regrets because they don't change anything.
- Maintain hope believing that the light always dispels the deepest darkness.
- Trust that the pain will pass and peace will come.
- Get the support I need.
- Forgive myself for being human and fallible.
- Forgive others for being human and fallible.
- Find role models to inspire me on my journey through bereavement.
- Be kind, compassionate and generous toward others.
- Practice patience with myself because healing and recovery take time.
- Grow from this experience.
- Allow myself to feel good again.

LESSONS FROM AN INSIRING WIDOW

For 77 years Marge Jetton was happily married to her physician husband. She was proud to be identified as “the doctor’s wife” and found meaning supporting his work. It all ended when he died suddenly. Mrs. Jetton grieved for several months, then regrouped and returned to the business of living. She began by volunteering at her church. Then she worked as a fundraiser for a religious radio program. In her spare time, she delivered used magazines to



H.O.P.E. - HELPING OVERCOME & PROVIDE ENCOURAGEMENT

elderly hospital patients.

“I realized the world wasn’t going to come to me, so I went back out into the world,” she says. “I reconnected with old friends and felt satisfaction from helping the community. I guess you could say that I recharged my purpose batteries.”

At the time she made those statements, Mrs. Jetton was ninety-six years of age. At 104 she was actively involved in her community believing fervently that as long as she’s around, she could find creative ways to make a difference.

“HOW CAN I BEST HEAL AFTER A LOSS?”

One of the most common questions asked in grief workshops is: “How can I best heal after a loss?” or similarly, “What steps can I take to facilitate recovery?” Here are some guidelines to help you heal a little more quickly and more completely.

- ✓ Hold fast to this truth: *no matter how much pain you may feel, you will survive your loss.*
- ✓ Expect emotional confusion. Grief brings a variety of confusing and even conflicting emotions - anger, frustration, sadness, depression, loneliness, fear, vulnerability, etc. Emotional swings are normal during a time of grief.

✓ Don’t speed through grief. It’s unhealthy to speed up or avoid the grief process. Doing so only results in an incomplete bereavement with residue left over which may linger over your life. There is a paradox in grief: in order to get through the pain, we must first feel and experience the pain.

✓ Avoid major changes. This is not the time to sell your home, move, take a new job, make new investments. Unless absolutely essential, the best course of action is to take no major actions during the first twelve months of grieving.

✓ Don’t do this all alone. Surround yourself with a few kind, compassionate people who will be available when you need to talk or when you just need some company. You don’t have to face this alone so be sure to invite some people into your grieving process.

✓ Be gentle, kind, patient with yourself.

It takes time to fully absorb the impact of a major loss. You may never stop missing your loved one, but the pain eases after time and you will go on with your life.

WORTH THINKING ABOUT ...

Contemplate the workings of this world, listen to the words of the wise, and take all that is good as your own. With this as your base, open your own door to truth. Do not overlook the truth that is right before you. Study how water flows in a valley stream, smoothly and freely between the rocks. Also learn from the holy books and wise people. Everything--even mountains, rivers, plants, and trees--should be your teacher. - Morihei Ueshiba