



It's About You

and it's about Family Outreach

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"COMPASSION SPREADS LIKE WILDFIRE"

SUGGESTED READING

- **When Children Grieve**
- **Grief Recovery Handbook**
- **I'm Grieving As Fast As I Can**

Please call me if you would like additional reading suggestions or if you want to talk about something you have read or heard or thought about.

Sometimes, it helps to just talk about it!

I'm always available and I love to visit.

Hugs!

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"Compassion Spreads Like Wildfire"

A SPLINT OR A CRUTCH OR A SLING.....

Up until the age of 37, I had always been one of the first people to arrive at someone's doorstep or the hospital, when tragedy struck. My heart would be full of caring and genuine compassion for people whose lives had been suddenly changed forever. I would say what I perceived to be, the right things and most certainly, my actions were well intended. Then tragedy struck my world when my precious dad died suddenly of a heart attack. In fact, during a period of the next three years, seven people who were closer to me than the air I breathed, died. Friends, family and sometimes people who I didn't know, would come and share thoughts, do things and in general make themselves available and supportive. I heard them saying some of the old clichés' that I had spoken to others in the past and in my shrouded vision, I saw people doing some of the same things, that I had done for others. My perspective of caring, saying and doing unraveled and began to change. I wanted to go back to everyone I had ever comforted and apologize. I wanted to apologize for not caring enough, not doing enough and not hurting enough. I wanted to apologize for not saying the right things. I thought I had but I learned that I didn't. I learned that sometimes we say or do things that while meant to be helpful, can be taken wrong in our new and painful world.

When our hearts are broken, people who have not lost someone might understand our new lives just a little bit more easily if they could see a splint, crutch or sling attached to our shattered hearts.

Hopefully, they do not know our pain because that would mean that they too, had lost a loved one. It's hard sometimes, but it's important for our own healing to forgive what appears to be insensitivity. They just might not know. And we'll be glad for them that they don't.

Forgiveness is a difficult action to take when we are hurting. Sometimes, things are said or done to us in our vulnerable state, that would be in our own best interest to forgive. For our own well-being, we need to take that action and feel that feeling. We have enough to work through without adding more. Forgiving doesn't mean we agree or condone or what someone did or didn't do or say or didn't say, is right or wrong.

When the pain of loss attacks me, I sometimes wish that people could see that splint, crutch or sling that is choking my heart. I still arrive at someone's doorstep or the hospital when something happens. I say and I do and I care. I always will. I hope that you always do what works for you as well. Know that my sharing with you comes with genuine caring from my heart to yours with love.

THE HOLIDAYS ARE COMING.
LET'S TALK ABOUT IT.....



The holidays are coming. It's the time of year when family and friends get together for traditional festivities and celebrations. Only this year for some of us, there is someone missing and we would just as soon forget the entire season. That's easier said..... than actually done.

It goes without saying that the holidays have suddenly taken on a new dynamic in our lives. And not one that is easy to endure. While enduring or 'getting through it' is not the way we want to feel, it's a real emotion for some of us. Subsequently, the questions arise. How do we face the holidays without our loved ones and how do we get through them. Will we ever feel happy again

Communication becomes even more important and yet it has its risks. Bringing up a loss or having someone bring up your loss to you, may or may not be welcome.

Can you imagine how sad it would be, to miss an opportunity to share a happy memory about someone who has been such a vital person in your life? How sad would it be to risk discarding all of those happy and cherished memories.

It just does not make sense, not to talk about someone who is so important to us.

Making a decision to not talk about our loved ones or to not celebrate a special event, denies us the ability to claim the full memory of the person whom we are missing so deeply.

Not giving ourselves permission to feel how we feel and to stuff away our sad feelings will eventually put our ability to enjoy and share our treasure trove of happy memories into a deeply buried place that will eventually become more and more difficult to access.

So let's talk about them, give voice to how much we miss them and toast them. Invariably, one sentence.....'I miss them' or 'do you remember when' will open the door to many happy memories, smiles and stories and yes, even some tears. It's knee-buckling sad to know they are gone from our physical lives, but it would be far sadder, to not talk about them at all.

Consider this thought...when they were with us, they were not the center of attention or topic of conversation during the entire holiday. *They shared in it.* They don't need to be the full center of attention now. But we really do want to include stories and memories of them in our conversations, celebrations and sharing the very special place that they will always have in our every day, our holidays and in our hearts.

"I know for certain that we never lose the people we love, even to death. They continue to participate in every act, thought and decision we make. Their love leaves an indelible imprint in our memories. We find comfort in knowing that our lives have been enriched by having shared their love."-Leo Buscaglia