Stepping Stones™
NEWSLETTER

Leave a Legacy

You may be wondering what to do with your loved one's possessions. This also begs the question...what about the things you own? There are many things you probably have that are valuable for sentimental reasons. You can take this opportunity to leave special notes to your loved ones and keep them in your emergency file at the funeral home. Let each family member know what you want them to have and why. Your loved ones will cherish the legacy you leave behind!

Sincerely,

Lunn Funeral Home

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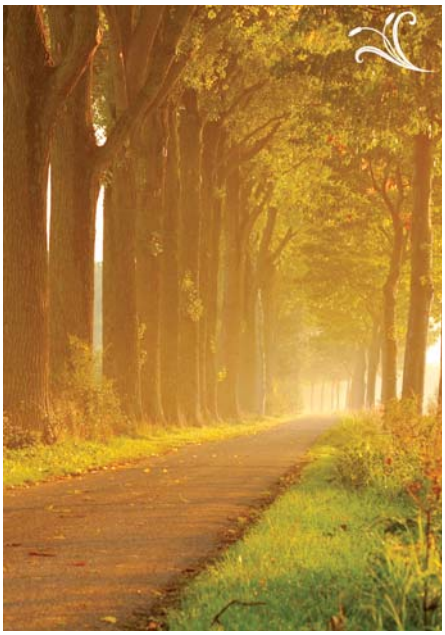
DEALING WITH GRIEF, GUILT, AND GRATUITY



Adapted from an article by Barbara Gould

The position of care giver is not always rewarding or even bearable. You are aware ahead of time that a family member is nearing the end of "this life," but when the final hour passes you find yourself in shock.

Compassion tells you that this person's pain and suffering is now over with. At the same time, you feel loss and you detect the culprit of guilt creeping into your mind. You realize you are feeling relieved and guilty that it's finally over. If this is a member of your immediate family -- spouse, parent or child -- you also have the task of "handling" things, a task of decision and management.

Loss of a child can bury a large part of yourself in a void that can never be filled. That is not the natural way of things; never do you expect to lose a child.

A parent or spouse usually leaves you in the position of administrator of services, business and/or legal matters, as well as the disposing of personal property. For a while you may not have time for the real grief. There is too much to be done. If you have a service or memorial, this confirms a closing -- superficially at least.

Everyone handles grief in a different way. There are those who hold it inside, take it out at times in private but show virtually no emotion. Others who grieve openly, release it and let it go. It is normal to grieve, and there are no rules or guidelines.

If you have been the deceased person's personal care giver or are a relative, you will always feel guilty and chastise yourself for not doing more. This is after you

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did all you could do physically and emotionally. "If only" are two words that you need to avoid. For years you will catch yourself saying, "If only I had done this or that or more." It's a moot point. It is over with and you did the best you could!

Disposing of the deceased's personal possessions can be torture; or you can ban the bad feelings and concentrate on positive placement of these items. This should be addressed well ahead of time and put on paper, but so often this is neglected or just an unbearable task that no one cares to undertake.

My mother felt that the things given to her should be returned to the giver. Her wishes were carried out to the best of my ability. I have sort of fallen into the same mode of thinking, especially where my kids are concerned. Right at this very moment I have some things on my mind and have not a clue what to do with them, such as, things of value that you hate to think of just selling. Some of the valuable things have already been put into the hands of the younger generation.

There are, however, so many things that are just that -- things, stuff. Special books, mementos, little things that bring back pleasant memories are to be treasured. I am yet in the long process of reading the old novels that belonged to my mother, then passing them on to either family or friends to be further enjoyed.

Photos and snapshots should be labeled, otherwise it is highly likely that no one will even know who they are. I have a few of these beautiful, old, professional photographs, and I have no clue who they might be.

Clothes -- do not hang on to them if you don't need them. There are so many people in the world who go without for one reason or another that would be very grateful to have a nice coat or pair of shoes. Hanging onto these things just encourages you to brood and nurse your guilt feelings along. Give these things to a local charity unit or to someone you know that would be glad to have them.

Grief is normal, as is guilt…we do the best we can at any given time with what we have to deal with. Let go of the past and hold on only to the pleasant memories.

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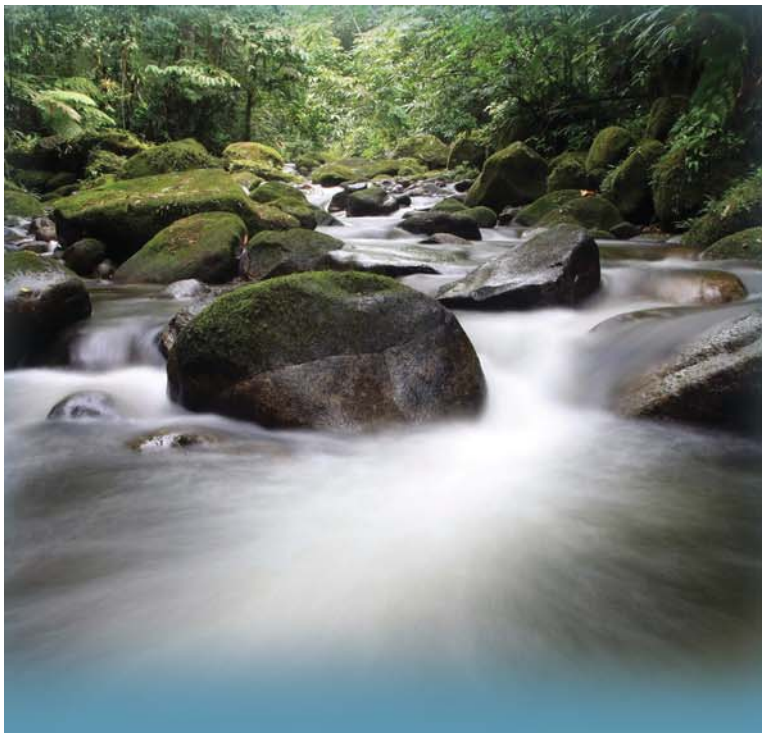

All is Well

Death is nothing at all
I have only slipped away into the next room
I am I and you are you
Whatever we were to each other
That we are still
Call me by my old familiar name
Speak to me in the easy way you always used
Put no difference into your tone
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow
Laugh as we always laughed
At the little jokes we enjoyed together
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me
Let my name be ever the household word that it always was
Let it be spoken without effort
Without the ghost of a shadow in it
Life means all that it ever meant
It is the same as it ever was
There is absolute unbroken continuity
What is death but a negligible accident?
Why should I be out of mind
Because I am out of sight?
I am waiting for you, for an interval
Somewhere very near
Just around the corner
All is well.
Nothing is past; nothing is lost
One brief moment and all will be as it was before
How we shall laugh at the trouble of parting when we meet again!

CANON HENRY SCOTT-HOLLAND
1847-1918
Canon of St Paul's Cathedral

Stop to Salute ON MEMORIAL DAY

BY ARMY CAPTAIN JOHN RASMUSSEN

It was raining "cats and dogs" and I was late for physical training. Traffic was backed up at Fort Campbell, KY, and was moving way too slowly. I was probably going to be late and I was growing more and more impatient.

The pace slowed almost to a standstill as I passed Memorial Grove, the site built to honor the soldiers who died in the Gander airplane crash, the worst redeployment accident in the history of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Because it was close to Memorial Day, a small American flag had been placed in the ground next to each soldier's memorial plaque.

My concern at the time, however, was getting past the bottleneck, getting out of the rain and getting to PT on time.

All of a sudden, infuriatingly, just as the traffic was getting started again, the car in front of me stopped. A soldier, a private of course, jumped out in the pouring rain and ran over toward the grove.

I couldn't believe it! This knucklehead was holding up everyone for who knows what kind of prank. Horns were honking. I couldn't wait to see the butt-chewing that he was going to get for making me late.

He was getting soaked to the skin. His BDUs were plastered to his frame. I watched as he ran up to one of the memorial plaques, picked up the small American flag that had fallen to the ground in the wind and the rain, and set it upright again.

Then, slowly, he came to attention, saluted, ran back to his car, and drove off. I'll never forget that incident. That soldier, whose name I will never know, taught me more about duty, honor, and respect than a hundred books or a thousand lectures.

That simple salute -- that single act of honoring his fallen brother and his flag -- encapsulated all the Army values in one gesture for me. It said, "I will never forget. I will keep the faith. I will finish the mission. I am an American soldier."

I thank God for examples like that. And on this Memorial Day, I will remember all those who paid the ultimate price for my freedom, and one private, soaked to the skin, who honored them.

(Editor's note: The president has called for a "National Moment of Remembrance" at 3 p.m. on Memorial Day with a one-minute pause to remember those fallen in service to the country. Capt. John Rasmussen is now a chaplain with Multinational Division North in Bosnia.)

Courtesy of Army News Service, 2002

Turn Again to Life

If I should die and leave you here a while,
Be not like others, sore undone, who keep
Long vigils by the silent dust, and weep.
For my sake -- turn again to life and smile,
Nerving thy heart and trembling hand to do
Something to comfort other hearts than thine.
Complete those unfinished tasks of mine
And I, perchance, may therein comfort you.

Mary Lee Hall

We are pleased to continue our tradition of caring through these complimentary issues of *Stepping Stones Newsletter* and our professional staff.

Seymour Memorial
FUNERAL HOME

200 South Cedar Street | Seymour, TX 76380 | (940) 888-3124

If you have enjoyed this reading, please let us know! We'd love to provide you with additional grief materials and resources to help you cope during this difficult time. If you would like more information, or if you would like to speak to someone who can assist you with filing for veterans' benefits, Social Security and insurance benefits, or who can help you prepare your own or a loved one's funeral plans in advance, please reply to this email, and a funeral home representative will contact you shortly. We sincerely hope that we have been able to brighten your day with this edition of *Stepping Stones*. Please don't hesitate to let us know if there is anything we can do to assist you.

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