



December 4, 2014



Wanting to see us happy and fulfilled again, friends and family members often encourage us to "let go and get on with life." Letting go and moving on is much easier said than done. We interpret "letting go" to mean that we need to "let go" of the person who has died, when, in reality, we may need to find a way to "let go" of some of our grief. We may be holding onto our grief believing that it is our only remaining connection to the person who has died. We may be afraid that if we give up the pain in order to "move on,"-we will lose them completely.

To overcome this fear, it is important to realize that we will never lose our connection to the person who was, and continues to be, an integral part of our life. Reflecting on her own grief, Helen Keller wrote:

*"What we have once enjoyed we can never lose.
All that we love deeply becomes a part of us."*

Our loved ones are a part of us; they taught us important lessons, shared our joys and sorrows, and influenced our lives in many ways. We take them with us as we move into the future. As Morrie Schwartz tells us in Tuesdays with Morrie: "Death ends a life, not a relationship." We hope that the attached article, written by a father who lost a son, will help you affirm your ongoing relationship with your loved one and to see your grief in a new way.

Individual counseling and support group services continue to be available to you. If you are interested in further support, please call us at (919)719-7199.

Warmly,
Your Bereavement Counselors

To discontinue letters, please call (919)719-7199 or email amccall@transitionslifecare.org.





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MY OLD FRIEND, GRIEF
Adolfo Quezada
From the Tucson, Arizona *Daily Star*

MY OLD FRIEND, GRIEF, is back. He comes to visit me once in a while just to remind me that I am still a broken person. Surely there has been much healing since my son died six years ago, and surely I have adjusted to a world without him by now. But the truth is, we never completely heal, we never totally adjust to the loss of a major love. We will be all right, but we will never be the same.

And so my old friend Grief drops in to say hello. Sometimes he enters through the door of my memory. Sometimes he sneaks up on me. I'll hear a certain song, smell a certain fragrance, or look at a certain picture, and I'll remember how it used to be. Sometimes it brings a smile to my face, sometimes a tear.

Some may say that such remembering is not healthy, that we ought not to dwell on thoughts that make us sad. Yet, the opposite is true. Grief revisited is grief acknowledged, and grief confronted is grief resolved.

But if grief is resolved, why do we still feel a deep sense of loss at anniversaries and holidays, and even when we least expect it? Why do we feel a lump in the throat, even six years after the loss? It is because healing does not mean forgetting, and because moving on with life does not mean that we don't take part of the deceased with us.

My old friend Grief doesn't get in the way of my living. He just wants to drop by and chat sometimes. In fact, Grief has taught me, over the years, that if I try to deny the reality of a major loss in my life, I end up having to deny life altogether. He has taught me that although the pain of loss is great, I must confront it and experience it fully or else risk emotional paralysis.

Old Grief has also taught me that I can survive even great losses and that although my world is very different after a major loss, it is still my world and life is worth living. He has taught me that when I am willing to be pruned by the losses that come, I can flourish again in season, not in spite of loss, but because of it.

My old friend, Grief, has taught me that the loss of a loved one does not mean the loss of love, for love is stronger than separation and longer than the permanence of death.