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Chapters

turning the pages through grief

by Paulette LeBlanc



Grieving your Best Friend

Being resistant to change is almost exclusively characteristic to humans, and even we seem to roll with the punches no matter what's been altered. Though life may have drastically changed for us personally, traffic lights will continue turning red, yellow, and green, meetings will adjourn, radios will blare in cars around us, and the sun will set, as though nothing were any different. But everything is different for the dear soul who can no longer share his or her day with their best friend. The truth is that there is no quick fix, no serum, and no pill to make us forget them. Every day is a new normal, acting like a great river there is no getting around, and our only recourse is to go right through it.

Whether your best friend was your life partner, your business partner, your parent, or childhood chum, they likely knew you better than anyone else. I think that's the worst part

of it. The idea that no one else has quite as big a grasp on what makes you laugh, or annoys you. There are still days I can picture my mother's face in my mind's eye, whenever I see or hear something we would have responded to in a similar way. Though she died years ago, she knew better than anyone in the room what would make me laugh, cry, or shake my head. Though there was a season I had to go through where the idea

of not being able to pick up the phone and talk to her or drive to her house for a cup of coffee seemed horrific, now I find myself enjoying the memory of her in a way I never saw coming. It just took time as these things always do.

You may find it helpful to continue to share things, such as the day you've had at work, or a new movie with your best friend as though they are still around. There's nothing wrong with talking



"We used to finish each other's sentences, but lately—and maybe this is just a product of the times we live in—lately it's just feels like, I don't know, it reminds me of something Shirley, that's my friend from work, said, and I'm paraphrasing here..."

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I'll be OK ... just not today.

— Anonymous

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aloud through your grief if you find it comforting. I know I did. My father generally gave the best advice. I had no idea how valuable his wisdom had been in my life, until I no longer had access to it. There have been many times since his death that I have found myself still seeking his opinion just based on what I know he would say. I dare say, I have even been surprised when I assumed I'd be tackling an issue without him, and found myself conjuring a scene where I found his words.

Whomever you identified as your best friend is no longer easily accessible. The real work of this next season is in the recognition and acceptance of that. Remember that it takes time. It's okay to have days that

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you cannot imagine not sharing with him or her. It's also okay to tell them about your new promotion, or that raise you've been waiting for. Though they're gone, you are still here, and whatever you need to do to comfort yourself in their absence is no one's business but your own. After all, your best friend would likely laugh or cry with you better than anyone else, with no judgment.

My father would love that I still seek his counsel, and we'd likely have a good laugh over it together. It is possible and even understandable that we resist change by continuing to reach out to the people we feel closest to.

Please remember to be kind to yourself in this season of grieving your best friend.



Epilogue

Why It's Actually Amazing When Things Go Wrong

by Susie Moore, Life Coach
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What could actually be going right in our lives that we miss because we're so focused on what's going wrong?

Here are a few examples to consider in your life.

Your pet/child/spouse is sick.

I don't know about you, but my dog is always sick right before I go out of town. It's like she's psychic and wants to guilt me into staying home. The last time this happened I was en route to the vet and on the phone with a friend. I said, "I can't believe this is happening hours before I board a flight, again." She said, "Girl, Coco's not always sick. You're just always on a flight because your life is fun."

A dreary commute makes you late to work.

We all get that dreaded feeling when we see that delay sign on public transport or hit traffic on the road on the way to work. Before bemoaning your life, think: I'm lucky I have somewhere to be today. A meeting, an office, a conference. Some people would love to be in your shoes, you're in a fortunate place.



Your spouse burns the rice. Or the cookies. Or sets off the fire alarm.

I'm guilty of this. All. The. Time. When my husband complains about the smoky apartment and searing alarm I say, "Be grateful I'm doing something in this bloody kitchen!" It's a good thing to have someone to cook for you, no matter what. Right? Even if you are eating the crispiest (ahem) potatoes you've ever tasted, at least you're noshing on them with someone you care about. And that's what love largely is: sitting through dinners (good and bad) together.

Your phone/laptop crashes.

Technical glitches and failures (even just being out of WiFi range) make us wanna pull our hair out. But guess what? They're almost always fixed promptly and without harm. Only people who have a lot going for them (people and possessions they love, good health, a business, a job they adore, a partner who cooks...) can lose! It's actually a privilege because nothing bad can happen without there being something good in its place first.

Things I Wish I Knew Before My Mom Died: Coping with Loss Every Day

By Ty Alexander

bookmark

The grieving process: Ty Alexander is one of the top bloggers today. She has a tremendous personal connection with her readers. This is never more apparent than when she speaks about her mother. The pain of loss is universal. Yet, we all grieve differently. For Alexander, the grieving process is one that she lives with day-to-day.

Learning from her pain, Alexander connects with her readers on a deeply emotional level in her debut book, *Things I Wish I Knew before My Mom Died: Coping with Loss Every Day*. From grief counseling to sharing insightful true stories, Alexander offers comfort, reassurance, and hope in the face of sorrow.

Coping with loss: In her early 20s reality smacked Ty in the face. She was ill equipped to deal with the emotional and intellectual rollercoaster of dealing with her mom's illness. Through her own trial and error, she found a way to be a caregiver, patient advocate, researcher, and a grieving daughter. She wrote *Things I Wish I Knew before My Mom Died: Coping with Loss Every Day* to help others find the "best" way to cope and move on, however one personally decides what that means.

—Amazon Review



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