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FUNERAL HOMES

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"Providing Comfort To Families"

www.familyfuneralhome.net



Chapters

turning the pages through grief



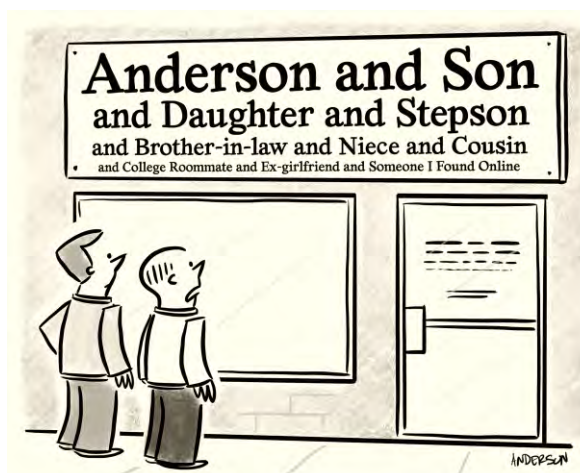
It's... COMPLICATED

by Lori Mathiowetz

How to manage complex relationships at funerals is an often-underdeveloped area of grief work. Break-ups, remarriages, sibling/step-sibling rivalries, co-workers and close friends—there are innumerable relationships to consider when someone dies. Knowing whether you should attend a funeral when your relationships within the complex network of community surrounding a loved one, can be tenuous to navigate. Especially when funeral arrangements are commonly left to the biological family, who, may or may not be the closest surviving loved ones to the deceased.

There is no “right” way to feel about this situation. Resentment, anger, sadness and jealousy toward the immediate family when they weren’t close to the deceased but nevertheless are the people who receive the most comfort is normal. We sometimes

feel ashamed for “making it about us,” or seemingly getting caught up in a competition over the “who was closest to _____” game. Rather than avoiding those thoughts, acknowledge that it’s just plain awkward. Naming the complex nature of the situation openly can free you from imprisoning yourself in even more pain than that which you are already in, grieving the loss of your loved one.



“OK, maybe it got away from me a little.”

Best case scenario: death can reconcile people who have been at odds, and can reconnect those who were previously estranged. There are many reasons that relationships are difficult or awkward, and sometimes those reasons seem meaningless in light of a death. Worst case scenario, death does nothing to repair the feud, or it can cause more conflict because of the heightened emotions surrounding death and the reasons for the rift become magnified. There is little we can do to predict the right course of action outside of simply following our gut. What will be, will be.

continued...

**MAY
2020**

Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated.

— Confucius

...continued from front

When it comes down to it, if you feel you want to attend the service then you should do so. If you feel you do not want to attend the service then don't "should" yourself into going. If your relationships to the "survived by" list are particularly explosive and you are concerned that your choice to attend might create issues, it is probably best to communicate to someone that you intend to be present. This helps to respect everyone's plans and expectations, and avoids creating unwanted surprises at the event itself.

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Regardless of what you decide, it is crucial that you mourn, celebrate, or ritualize the loss of your loved one in a way that is meaningful to you. If you can't attend the funeral, or you simply know that it will not be a place where you can appropriately grieve, think about ways in which you can create your own goodbye fitting to the relationship you had with your loved one. Choose a location, activity, food, and songs that are meaningful to celebrate your unique relationship with that special somebody you loved and lost.

Lori Mathiowetz, MA, CSD, is a spiritual director, freelance writer, and adjunct professor of theology, at Saint Catherine University in Saint Paul, Minnesota. She runs a private practice (riverbendspiritalcare.com) in the New Ulm Wellness Collective, which she co-founded. In addition to teaching mindfulness classes there, she helps to facilitate their grief groups, which offer a whole-person experience of the bereavement process incorporating mind, body, and spirit practices.

■ Online communities and resources can provide new and fresh perspectives on grieving, coping, wellness, and allow opportunities for interaction with like-minded people. Your chosen funeral home's website can also offer a variety of helpful information. You are encourage you to start there.



FACEBOOK:

- Grief Anonymous Founded to help members self-heal through grief in a nonjudgmental communal environment.
- Grief Speaks Out Share photos, quotes, feelings.

* footnotes

Mother's Day Grief

Mother's Day can be a pretty painful day for those grieving the death or absence of their mother. Mothers Day Grief can bring up feelings of longing, yearning, sadness, loneliness, depression, anger, bitterness, alienation, and despair. For many, the day becomes about just getting through. Obviously, there is no replacement for your mother this Mother's Day, but there are constructive ways to deal with the day that might make you feel closer to her memory and to the people in your life.

- Teach your children something your mother taught you
- Focus on your wife/sister/motherly friends (for the motherless guys)
- Focus on your children
- Say thank you to your dad or another role model in your life
- Send a card to another mother
- Band together with those who are grieving your mother
- Find gratitude
- Spend time in a place where you feel close to your mother's memory
- Write a letter to your mother and update her on all that's happened since her death
- Do something that would have made your mother smile

For more information on these suggestions, visit whatsyourgrief.com. Article used by permission.



STARRY NIGHT
by Vincent van Gogh

Thinking Outside Your Grief
Feeling Fine Art

The Starry Night is an oil on canvas by Dutch post-impressionist painter Vincent van Gogh. Painted in June 1889, it describes the view from the east-facing window of his asylum room at Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, just before sunrise, with the addition of an ideal village



CAN'T COOK?

If you find yourself in uncharted waters in the kitchen here are some helpful tips:

- YouTube: Practically anything you want to know you can find on youtube.com. Boil an egg, fry chicken, make pasta, you name it, you can make it with step-by-step videos.
- Ask a Friend: You friends are one of your best resources for how-to's, and they will be flattered you asked and will be happy to help you with lessons and recipes.





recipe card

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The purpose of this newsletter is to share thoughts and insights from a variety of sources on how to live richly and meaningfully through all of life's chapters.
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