

From Us to You

Welcome to Newsletter No. 20
October ~ November ~ December 2019

Grief in Autumn Alone and Missing you

Grief us often reawakened as the year nears its end.

This article was written by Jane as she reflected upon the death of her father.

Brown grass and dried gardens with remnants of vegetable vines and a lonely shrivelled tomato hanging on a broken stem remind us the summer has gone. It is a difficult time for people prone to depression, or those, grieving the death of a loved one.

Days are colder and the early evening darkness brings too much quiet time causing us to notice the absence of the one we have loved. Short days tell us the winter will come and the days of holiday cheer. This realisation brings a feeling of dread and panic. What will I do? How will it be? How will I be? Can I survive?

Change and holidays are catalysts that propel the roller coaster of grief, turning calm days into sleepless nights and reopening wounds that have just begun to heal.

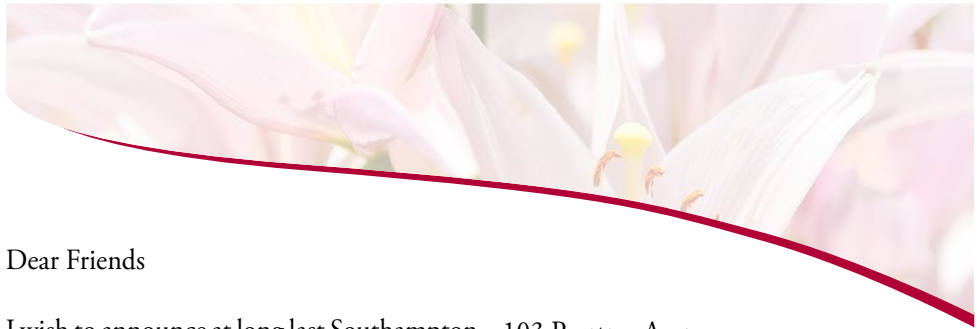
Emotional triggers include Halloween with its festive and fun spirit evoking memories of early childhood,

wide-eyed and innocent, exploring and participating in a world of make believe. I can be a pirate, or a princess or Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz. Now I know the world includes grief and all that comes with it. I know about suicide, and disease, and being scared.

Painful memories abound, reflections not of our loved one but on how we coped, what we did instead, how we held it together. Questions everywhere, should I have done more? Did I care enough? I am alone and I am missing you.

At times, it seems new memories will never happen, at least authentic peaceful ones.

I watch the happiness of others, quietly resenting the healthy intact families finding joy at their holiday table. A tinge of jealousy sneaks its way to the surface. The holidays present another level of grief.



Dear Friends

I wish to announce at long last Southampton City Council Planning have now issued our planning consent for 103 Peartree Avenue. It has been a long wait and we hope to begin our building work and renovation in October this year.

The works will take up to four/five months to complete. We are joining the two buildings together, we will have a new mortuary facility, a larger reception area and a new lounge where we will hold our bereavement support groups. We will also have private rooms for one to one counselling.

I believe our care continues after the funeral service and we will be pleased to offer these bereavement services

to all who need them. Mrs Margaret Francis will

be the director of the bereavement services and we are calling

103 Peartree Avenue,
"The White Lily Centre".

I will keep you all updated on our progress.

We are looking forward to our charity night on September 27th. I hope all will enjoy the evening of entertainment from Mr Lea Martin with songs and hits from the West End and Countess Mountbatten Hospice will benefit from your generous support.

Our Christmas services are now being planned for December and we will provide details of these at our October and November coffee mornings and November afternoon tea.

You may now follow us on Facebook and twitter and updates will be given here of our activities and news.

I wish to thank everyone at Jonathan Terry's for their dedication and support to the families we are called to serve.

Kind Regards

Jonathan





Autumn

Things often are
most beautiful
before they leave us -----
As Autumn ends,
She spends her final glory
on us, who hurt
when we remember Spring.

Sacha Wagner

When Autumn lingers in the
gleaming trees
with painful beauty, golden
melancholy –
when we recall
the wealthy bygone harvest
and wait the haunting
of lifeless winter –
hope is so far away,
Spring is so far away.
But – Spring will come.

Sacha Wagner

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The season of dying is also the season of preparation.

Age and a travelled path help me to appreciate the paradox of Autumn. Nature is both cruel in its presentation of emotional triggers and yet loving and supportive in its message to prepare and to have gratitude. I feel forewarned and I know what to expect. Awareness reduces the number of surprises and adds predictability. Like a squirrel I gather good books and movies to occupy and nurture the wanderings of my mind. My Diary lies ready at the side of my bed. Maybe I will change holiday rituals and side step the pain of the old ones.

Brisk walks and crisp air help to awaken the lethargy. The cold which chills me to the bone encourages comfort food and rich soup, lovely soft flannels and colourful throws. I can fill my empty home with smells of freshly baked bread, cinnamon and raisins. The lonely early night, although dark, reveals diamonds in the sky and the silence for reflecting on what was once was. Warm memories unfold and I am at peace. I know where to find you, grief has quieted its roar. The quiet safe place is inside the house, where I can care for myself, where my heart can be still, where I can experience connection to those I miss, and where I can remember who I am.

Autumn has forewarned me and I have a suspicion of what to expect. I will nurture myself. I will say “yes” to the friends who understand and “no” to those who don’t. I will get up and keep going and I will cry when I cry.

I am alone, missing you.

Share your story . . .

your thoughts, stories and experiences

In Memory of

Maureen Totman

10th January 1932 – 22nd June 2019

Written by

Jacky – Maureen's daughter

A sister for Jean now joined together – the Smith's girls were here forever and ever.

Sadness arrived when you were only seven, when your dear Mum May went to heaven.

So now it was just you, Jean and your Dad, who made you feel special and stopped feeling sad.

The war broke out and you were sent away. Evacuees to Stevenage where it was safe to stay.

You both grew up and fell in love, Jean married Wal and you married Dad.

Lyndy Lou arrived, then Jacqueline May, we all moved to Park Street what a big day.

We had no car so it was bus or walk to Brownies and Cubs and write Toadstall Talk.

Then we moved South to start our lives, daughters grew up and became mothers and wives.

Jacky married Rich and Lynda married Glenn, we all gave you and Dad ten out of ten.

Next Warren, Russell and Rea came along, then life changed and went suddenly wrong.

Dad you were gone, we all felt the pain and knew that life would never be the same.

Then Howie arrived, he never knew Dad, such a loss, it made us all sad.

Life moved on and your grandchildren grew older, making their future and becoming bolder.

Holidays with Jean started being fun, as you travelled together off to the sun,

You left Auto-Play after many years, happy to retire the future held no fears.

Ploy dog came and sat on your lap, walks in the woods and afternoon naps.

Reg and Audrey moved to Spain with holidays to come, you and Jean reminiscing in the sun.

Mum you were special and always so strong. Russ married Heather and Kate came along,

She called you Nana Mummy and thought you were clever
wanting you to live forever and ever.

Rae met Mark and planned their life, a future together as husband and wife.

Warren made you so proud, a gold at Chelsea, he gave you a rose for your garden for all to see.

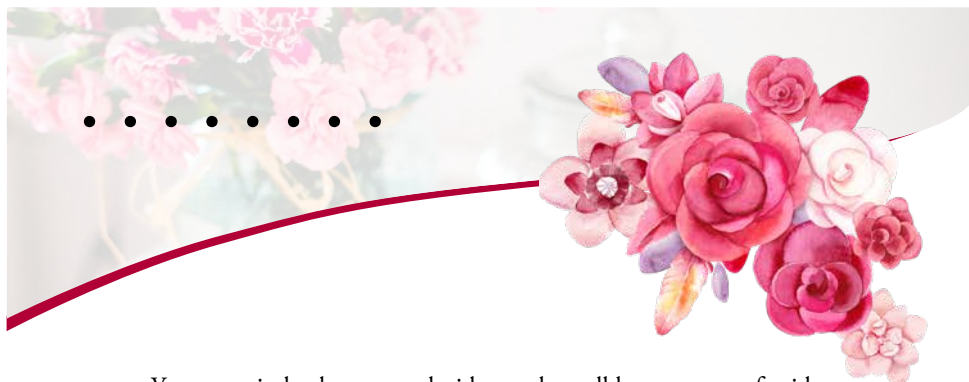
Russell met Isabel, Howie met Annie, Dante and Lauro added to the family.

We all went to Torquay and not being rude, out popped little Sienna May Jude.

Kate has grown into a special young lady, then arrived two doggie babies,

Jasper and Jimmy full of life and fun, playmates for Lunar, walks in the sun,

Mum, you were the best we've ever known and thank you for all the love you have shown,



You never judged us, or took sides, and we all have a sense of pride,
That knowing you has made us stronger and we wish you peace that is longer and longer.
You embraced your family and all that have cared, we are proud of you and what we all shared.
So dear Mum, Nan, and Nana Mummy, we wanted to say,
we miss you already on your journey today.
We will all think of you and try not to be sad as you are now with your sister Jean and our Dad.
We will remember you fondly and our memories will fly,
as we proudly look up to you in the sky.

*Thank you Jacky, what a lovely way to remember your Mum
and all the memories that this has brought.*

In Memory of Richard

Today, I'm feeling a little lighter. I'd shut my feelings down so deep that when I decided to start dealing with grieving, I didn't even know what to say, I didn't know exactly how I was feeling. I just started describing exactly what had happened. I felt it wasn't completely satisfactory, but it was a start.

I found the right people to start sharing this with, people who have become friends, that I met at the Jonathan Terry Coffee Morning. I didn't want, and didn't get, any probing, any platitude nor any attempt to fix me.

I know this is hard because I do it myself, but there is always a sort of need to answer something when someone confines in you. But I just needed someone who would simply listen, and that is what I got.

What I said didn't matter as long as I was starting to be comfortable, to acknowledging to the people around me, that I am hurting. It's uncomfortable, it's odd, but the lump in my throat is starting to fade away.

Thank you all for your understanding, support and friendship.

Anon

Share your story . . .

your thoughts, stories and experiences

My dear son, Andy, has written this piece about his feelings now, 3 years on, about the loss of his father. His dad, my husband, died suddenly and it has taken time for all of us to come to terms with the loss. Loss of your dad is something that everyone will have to face sooner or later, and I hope that my son's wise words will be of comfort to everyone who reads them.

There is in a lifetime, simply countless days, moments, minutes, seconds, simple glances, smiles and even silences that all add up to become a catalogue of memories in our relationship with our fathers.

Some are lucky enough to say that when it's time to say goodbye to their dad, that every moment, minute, every second and glance between them counted towards something richly rewarding, nurturing, loving and importantly unique between the two of you. Countless moments in life shared between father and son, from which each unique and very special relationship is built.

I have a great respect for my father developed over nearly 46 years of my life, and an even greater love. I am very fortunate that I had 46 years – many will have much less time.

I can say that.

Yes, indeed I am very, very fortunate. Very fortunate and proud to say that my relationship with my dad was always a happy one. He was consistent, fair but firm, a great mentor, teacher, very practical but also educated and

meticulous. A generous kind-hearted man who always gave me every assistance and encouragement to take all opportunities and to experience everything life has to offer as fully as possible.

I have happy childhood memories growing up and particularly happy memories of my school years. I learnt a great deal from Dad in this period of my life and as I became a teenager, finished school and subsequently had a taste of independence moving into my first home in London. During the following couple of decades I found myself living and working in Switzerland, then Austria and subsequently, Sydney, Australia. However, the distance only strengthened the relationship.

Upon reflection I can now share my thoughts about how I have learned to cope with this profound loss. Initially I don't think I coped very well at all with my loss but given a little time, it's now been three years, I can see how one can benefit from coming to terms with loss from a healthy, positive perspective whenever possible.



By building up your unique catalogue of memories and strengthening them each day. By adding to them each day little by little, until by reflecting, you do not dwell in the sadness of the loss but rejoice in the details and happiness of everything you shared together and everything you learned and became as a result of his influence in your life.

Me and my Dad, a massive catalogue of memories now gathered and more easily recalled and fondly remembered.

We are the products of our parents and they live on in us.

After all, I am a complex product of my life experience coupled with my wonderful parents who installed their goals, hopes, dreams, standards, morals, worries and traits in me.

Traits . . . we all have many. We can thank our parents for these initially but later we hopefully learn that with maturity and experience it's how we develop them and carry them forward that becomes important. Pass on, use and appreciate, never waste the talents developed from what you are as a result of being your Father's son.

Out of the Mouths of Babes . . .

Oliver, my three-year-old grandson, was in the car with his daddy, on the way to the shops. "Where are we going?" he asked. "We are going to B & Q," his dad replied. "Well, I don't want to be in a queue, so I will stay in the car," said Oliver.

Gary, aged three, had annoyed his Grandma, and had been soundly told off.

"Oh, dear," said Grandma, as a subdued youngster left the room, he's taken the huff."

"Gary," shouted to his five-year-old brother. "Bring back Grandma's huff at once!"

I am so truly thankful that I am who I am, that my traits, morals and values were distilled from my mum's and my dad's.

For everyone who feels this loss of a father as much as I do, I hope that by understanding and reflecting on positive emotions and memories, you will begin to rejoice in all that you value.

Remember and hold dear from that relationship and pass on the best of what you learnt from that relationship to another.

Andy

Share your story . . .

your thoughts, stories and experiences

Seasons Of Grief

*Shall I wither and fall like an autumn leaf,
From this deep sorrow - from this painful grief?
How can I go on or find a way to be strong?
Will I ever again enjoy life's sweet song?*

*Sometimes a warm memory sheds light in the dark
And eases the pain like the song of a Meadow Lark.
Then it flits away on silent wings and I'm alone;
Hungering for more of the light it had shone.*

*Shall grief's bitter cold sadness consume me,
Like a winter storm on the vast angry sea?
How can I fill the void and deep desperate need
To replant my heart with hope's lovely seed?*

*Then I look at a photo of your playful smiling face
And for a moment I escape to a serene happy place;
Remembering the laughter and all you would do,
Cherishing the honest, caring, loving spirit of you.*

*Shall spring's cheerful flowers bring life anew
And allow me to forget the agony of missing you?
Will spring's burst of new life bring fresh hope
And teach my grieving soul how to cope?*

*Sometimes I'll read a treasured card you had given me
And each word's special meaning makes me see,
The precious gift of love I was fortunate to receive,
And I realize you'd never want to see me grieve.*

*Shall summer's warm brilliant sun bring new light,
And free my anguished mind of its terrible plight?
Will its gentle breezes chase grief's dark clouds away,
And show me a clear path towards a better day?*

*When I visit the grave where you lie in eternal peace,
I know that death and heaven brought you release;
I try to envision your joy on that shore across the sea,
And, until I join you, that'll have to be enough for me.*

*For all the remaining seasons of my life on earth,
There'll be days I'll miss your merriment and mirth,
And sometimes I'll sadly long for all the yesterdays;
Missing our chats and your gentle understanding ways.*

*Yet, the lessons of kindness and love you taught me,
And the good things in life you've helped me to see;
Linger as lasting gifts that comfort and will sustain,
Until I journey to that peaceful shore and see you again.*

Belinda Stotler



The Starfish Philosophy

a Volunteer's Perspective - *from Gail*

As volunteers, many of us have had lives full of responsibilities, whether it be with jobs or families. At times we may have taken on too much and felt overloaded. Somehow we learned to juggle and manage. Always busy, there were so many expectations and people to keep happy!

As I entered the realm of volunteerism in a Hospice, I saw the whirlwind begin and end for many people. Caregivers and families are very involved in crisis mode. Employees run and work and strive to provide comfort and peace.

But as a volunteer, my experience has been one of wait and see. What can I do? There is a shift of the frenzied business at hand, to stepping aside, yet still making oneself available.

Patience, and unhurried thoughtfulness are new priorities and new qualities to consider.

The frustration that comes from not knowing if you are doing enough, remind me of the Starfish story.

An older man walking at the beach was observing a young boy along the shore, stooping over and throwing something into the sea. It seemed that hundreds of starfish had been washed up out of the sea. The older man knew they would not survive long and he felt saddened by the desperate state of affairs. When he reached the boy, he asks him what he is doing and the boy tells him that all these starfish have been washed ashore and he knows they will die so he is throwing them back in. The older man sees the monumental task and knows they can't all be saved. He asks the boy, "How can you make a difference with a problem as huge as this?" As the young boy determinedly tossed one of the starfish back into the water, he replied, "Well, I made a difference to that one."

Obviously, we can't help everyone, but if we made positive contact with even one person, we can make a difference. It's not the quantity when it comes to kindness shown but the quality, and the heart intent.

Remember the Starfish Philosophy
— one fish, one day at a time!

Thank you Gail - The mission of a Hospice is not only to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of their patients, but to also provide support, comfort and hope to the patient's families and loved ones. This compassion and care is provided by all their staff and a dedicated team of volunteers.



Thoughts . . .

for the month



September

the unofficial end of Summer!

October

Have you ever climbed a steep hill?

The worst of it is that as you toil and labour from rock to rock you keep believing the summit is just in front of you. Then you realise that yet another bit of the hill was hidden and there still remains another section.

Sometimes you feel so frustrated and so tired that you think it's not worth going on, and you might as well turn and go back. However, it's only once you reach the summit at last that you see what you have achieved, and you can look behind and feel that the struggle was not in vain after all.

November

Monday 11th November is Remembrance Day.

Remembrance Day is a memorial day observed in Commonwealth states since the end of the First World War to remember the members of their armed forces who have died in the line of duty.



Besides the wearing of red poppies, white poppies are worn as a symbol of peace and the wish for an end to all wars and purple poppies are worn to remember the animal victims of the First World War.

"Lest we Forget"

December

Mary came across these lines one day as she was about to make a start to her long list of Christmas cards to be written, stamped and posted:

*I have a list of folk I know, all written in a book,
And every year at Christmas time I go and take a look.
And that is when I realise that these names are a part,
Not of the book they're written in, but of my very heart.*

*Every year when Christmas comes I realise anew,
The biggest gift life can give is knowing folk like you.
May the Spirit of Christmas that forever endures,
Leave its rich blessings in the heart of you and yours.*

Here are two thoughts for the New Year:

never lose a chance to tell someone you love them!

And ---- never accept a closed door in life; push it open, if you want to pass through and experience what lies on the other side.



CHRISTMAS MEMORIES


When snowflakes dance
on winter winds
And coloured lights shine
Christmas cheer,
When children's laughter fills the air
And family gathers from far and near,
I try to celebrate with them
And not let my hurting show,
But the empty spaces within my heart,
At this season, seems to grow
'Till often times it fills the days
And many night times too,
With aching thoughts and memories
Of Christmases I spent with you.
Yes, memories do hurt, it's true,
But I have this feeling too
I'm so glad I hold those memories,
For with them I hold part of you,
So for now I'll wipe away the tears
And join with loved ones dear
To celebrate this Christmas time.
For I know that, in my heart,
you're here.

Written by Sandy


Charity News

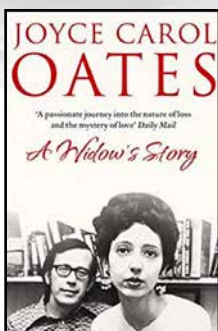


*Making a difference to the
lives of children.*



The aim of the Charity is to help and support children and their families, including bereaved families, who come under the care of the Piam Brown Ward Teenagers and Young Adults (TYA) wards at Southampton General Hospital. They offer financial and practical help as well as the opportunity to make lasting memories for the children and their families.





Book Corner

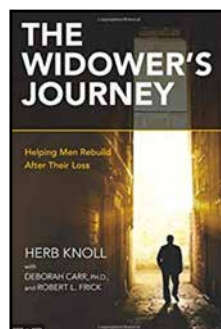
A Widow's Story The Widower's Journey:

by Joyce Oates *Helping Men Rebuild After Their Loss* by Herb Knoll

For anyone who has lost a life-long partner, Joyce Carroll Oates puts the tragic and extraordinary painful process into perspective in her memoir, *A Widow's Story*.

After losing her husband of 46 years, Joyce writes the rawness and vulnerability of what it's like to lose someone you love so deeply. Not only that, but she shows how grief can change you and make you act, for better or for worse. This is one of the most compelling books that has been read in a long time. One is with her every inch of the way, as if the story was one's own.

As a bank executive, Herb Knoll was known as a man who could get the job done. But when he lost his wife to cancer, after 16 years of marriage, he found few resources that could help him recover. And the more he learned about the plight of widowers, from high suicide rates to physical and emotional problems, the more he became motivated to write a book with fellow widowers, for fellow widowers.



Jonathan Terry Est. 1998

Independent Funeral Directors Ltd
Funeral Directors and Memorial Consultants

101 Peartree Avenue, Bitterne, Southampton SO19 7JJ

3 College Place, London Road, Southampton SO15 2FB

email: info@jonathanterry.co.uk

www.jonathanterry.co.uk



023 8043 4444
023 8023 4533



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