



HOSPICE MESSAGES OF HOPE

*The First Anniversary of the Death of
Your Loved One*

The one-year anniversary of the death of a loved one can be emotional. You can become absorbed in the details of one year ago. The memories of each day – one year ago – can become more vivid. You may replay phone conversations with family members as your loved one became weaker and hope waned. You may remember thinking about the day that you talked to them for the last time or the last day you took care of them.

The sorrow you experience can be as painful as what you experienced when they died. You need to be aware that these feelings are normal and have a plan for helping yourself get through this time.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE GRIEF

Honor your loved one's anniversary date and mark them in some way. It can help lessen your sorrow. Instead of pushing the sorrow away, try to embrace the pain by choosing a specific activity in which to remember your loved one.

When anniversary dates approach, one of the best things you can do is to make a plan. Many times the plan may not seem clear to you until the day is upon you. Your plan may be to busy yourself so you have a diversion. You are unique and only you can give yourself permission to do what feels right for you. The life you shared with your loved one was filled with many emotions and these may be triggered on the anniversary.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

When planning a celebration of their life, think about the essence of your loved one. The energy and creativity used to plan a celebration not only honors our loved ones but aids in healing.

- Release balloons at their grave.
- Hold a Mass in honor of your loved one.
- Take out all the cards your loved one has ever given you and read each one.
- Call your loved one's friends and gather them for lunch to share stories.

It is perfectly fine to mix some laughter with the tears you may shed that day.

Do not let this time be one of fear that you are backsliding in your grief. Our bodies are attuned to anniversary grief and so many times acts automatically. Remember, often times the anticipation is worse than the actual day. The physical symptoms and emotions you may experience on the anniversary are normal for your body, mind and heart.

Honor, remember and celebrate. When we intentionally remember and make plans, we experience a bit of healing. Grief expressed is healing in action. We honor our loved ones when we are engaged in the healing process.

OSF Home Care Services is here to support you and wants to meet you wherever you are in your grief journey.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call (800) 673-5288 or visit our website at www.osfhomecare.org.



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