

To the Newly Bereaved

We know there is just no way to put into words the swirling emotions, the suffocating darkness and the crushing pain that comes from the recent loss of your child from this earth.

Our guess is that people were so wonderfully supportive for the first few days and even a few weeks. But at some point, everyone else's life has gone back to normal, and you just want to scream at them, because your life is still at a screeching halt.

We get it. Those of us here at GPS Hope are on the same path that you now find yourself on. And we are so very glad that you have found us!

If you have faced a deep loss before, grieving the death of your child may seem *so much worse*, and you think you are going crazy.

If you have never lost someone close before, you probably realize you have no grid for your grief, but you must be going crazy.

Either way, you may have times where you find you are literally forgetting to breathe, and have to remind yourself to take a breath. Your body is out of whack; your mind is full and empty at the same time. Your sleep is off. Often times you can't stop crying, and it might even seem like everything around you looks gray and colorless. You can forget things, even as simple as how to peel an orange or find yourself panicking because you suddenly forgot how to get home from the store you have shopped at for ten years. You don't know how you can go on living, and probably don't want to, which makes no sense to your mind if you are happily married or have other children still here. You are barely in survival mode, and don't think it is possible to get out of the darkness, much less to a place of wanting to live without your child, and impossible to have a life with purpose and meaning ever again.

Let me assure you, *all* of this is normal. Once again, those of us here at GPS Hope get it because we have been there, and we are so very glad you are here!

People who have not faced the loss of a child may tell you that you need to move on, that you need to get past it, or that you need to find a way to have closure. These are all people who don't want to see you in so much pain, and they mean well, but to say it bluntly, they don't know what they're talking about.

- Your child will always be a part of you, so you won't be "moving on."
- Only having the precious memories of your child *instead* of your child makes it impossible to "get past it."
- Having your future taken from you in the love and legacy of your child means there will not be "closure."

HOWEVER....

It *is* possible to have hope in the midst of your intense pain.

It *is* possible to have light break through the darkness.

It *is* possible to laugh and have joy in your life in a new way.

It *is* possible to live a life of meaning and purpose again.

Not only is it possible, but it is probable, if you stay connected with bereaved parents who are living in that place, including those who are here at Grieving Parents Sharing Hope.

You will find this is a safe place for all of your emotions, all of your questions, your anger, and everything else that comes with grieving the death of your child. **We are not just here for you, but we are here to walk *with* you, for as long as it takes for you to come out the other side with all of those things listed above that we ourselves have found.**

And this will not be in spite of the loss of your child, but in honor of the *life* of your child.

It will probably take longer than you want it to. That's okay. You have had an amputation. A part of your very being has been cut off. Give yourself lots and lots of grace and allow yourself lots and lots of time (even if those around you don't). You can eventually learn to live with that piece of you missing, but there will be constant reminders and new situations causing you to stumble for the rest of your life. (Some of us call them grief attacks.)

Sometimes you will be forced to give in to your limitations of grief. Sometimes you will learn how to work around it. And yes, there will be times you will be able to soar above it. There is no right or wrong way. It is whatever way works for you at that moment in time.

But for now, just rest, knowing that you are surrounded by bereaved parents who have been right where you are, and that you have our hearts, our love and our prayers.

We also want you to know:

- You must go through this; there is no way around it.
- There is no timetable.
- There are no "grief stages" you have to work your way through.
- Moving forward does not mean you are leaving your child behind.
- Anything under five years for the death of one's child is considered fresh grief.
- The death of one's child is considered a trauma, and what you are feeling and thinking is normal.
- You will survive.
- You are not alone!

We understand, and will hold you up until you gain the needed healing and strength to move forward. In other words, until you know how to deal with the realization that your child is no longer here in a way that allows you live again with hope, light and purpose.

We really are so very glad you are here!

Reaching Out with HOPE

People crying. Children dying. You don't know.

You don't know what is about to happen.

The loss is huge. It is dark. You will be thrown into the abyss.

Darkness, suffocation, never getting out.

Until...

Until someone brings hope.

Until someone brings a flicker of light.

Until someone yells out, "Hello! I have been down there! Take my hand...no, let me come down and be with you. I will cry with you. I will hurt with you. I will stay with you."

And while I am there, I will infuse HOPE in you.

Hope that you can get out.

Hope that helps you see the light.

Hope that you can live again beyond the death of your child.

There you go.

Here I come.

But it isn't me.

It is God in me, reaching out to you, with HOPE.

By Laura Diehl

Be sure to visit our [Wall of Remembrance](#), and have your child added!

