

THE HARVEST OF YOUR GRIEF WORK

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“It isn’t right! I go a month sometimes and don’t cry. I actually get involved in something and don’t think about my daughter for hours. I had fun at the company picnic last week.”

“I feel so guilty. Am I forgetting my daughter?”

This mother was two years into her grief. She was doing good grief work-leaning into the pain, talking out feelings, expressing emotions and attending *Bereaved Parent’s* meetings regularly.

But she was hurting less.

When parents begin to reap the harvest of their grief work well done, they fear they are losing their children.

The truth is they are just reaping the harvest of their grief work done well.

In the first couple of years, pain ties us to our children. During that time we equate pain with love. By the time we are beginning to resolve our grief (and that is what is happening), pain has been our companion for so long we feel lost without it.

This is one of the few places in grief where our mind needs to take over for awhile. We need to look at the illogic of prolonged grieving. We need to see that we are beginning to reach the goal we hoped some day to reach.

Self talk can help us rid ourselves of this illogical emotion. Ask yourself:

- If you believe to keep your child in your heart for the rest of your life, you must hang onto the pain.
- Will your prolonged misery make your child less dead?
- Does the fact that your child is dead mean that you must die also?
- Does your prolonged misery accomplish anything? What purpose does it serve?
- Will hanging onto your pain make you grow and change, or will it make you unhappy and bitter?

- What effect will your prolonged grief have on your marriage and/or surviving children?
- Do you really want to stay in the pit indefinitely?
- Will your continuing grief honor your child?

These questions can help you see that beginning grief resolution is as healthy and normal after a couple of years, as allowing yourself to enter fully into your grief in the early months after your child has died.

Rethink your reactions. Let yourself get to the other side of your grief.

Let yourself appreciate the peace and comfort that is beginning to be yours.

Most importantly, let yourself feel the joy of remembering your child without the deep searing pain you have felt for so long.