

## THE WORST DAY OF MY LIFE

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January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1994 was the worst day of my life. I was sound asleep and at 10:30 in the morning the door bell rang. Two Missouri State Troopers stood at the door. My parents had already left for work, so I was concerned that they were in an accident. The troopers came in, used the phone to call my parents' bosses, then they handed me a wallet. The wallet belonged to my brother, Sean Anderson. I then asked the hardest question I have ever asked in my life, "Is Sean dead?" At that point, I felt like I was standing outside of myself, almost dreamlike. The older trooper then said "Yes, he is." I felt like then and still do now that the whole scene was in slow motion. The troopers quickly left. I can't remember much about the rest of that day or the days that followed. I only remember bits and pieces about the funeral. I just know that the day Sean died, was the worst day of my life.

The days that followed were full of activity and planning. My mom wanted the family to be involved, if we wanted to be. We wanted Sean to be remembered for his music and his zest for life. His friends became involved and did Sean's music for the service and many were pallbearers. That's a lot for a group of 19 year old young men to give. I wish there was some way that I could thank them for all that they did for us. Almost immediately after the funeral, my sister returned to her home about 4 ½ hours away. One important lesson I have learned throughout this whole ordeal is that everyone grieves differently. My sister's way of dealing with Sean's death was to leave. I envied her in a way because she didn't have to deal with the sadness every day. Now I realize that she dealt with Sean's death, she just had to do it alone.

I am nowhere near over this. I probably never will be. The only thing I can do is to not take life for granted and understand what a precious gift life is. Each day is a new adventure on this roller coaster of grief. The only thing that we can do is to continue to get up each day and maybe try to share a smile. When people ask me how I am, I can honestly say I am okay. I don't feel that I will ever be able to say that I am great again, but who knows. I never thought I could say I was okay. Sure, I have good days and bad days. Sometimes the bad ones outnumber the good ones, but I just have to believe that there is a good day out there with my name on it. We are surviving siblings and we must try to survive the best way we can. I wish for you a smile and a happy memory.