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Magazine Excerpts - Aug ~ Sep 2006

Geese and Grieving Lessons we can learn *by Jan TCF Cinn. Ohio, USA*

A Father Mourns Too



I just watched another TV commercial linked with the approach to Fathers Day. Like other fathers, I know the gift I'd like to get this Father's Day, just as I know there is no way that it will happen – my son's life, an opportunity not to hurt when I see boys who are his age, a chance to dream those dreams for that little boy again. But that's not going to happen. Instead I will get up on that day, having called my own father the night before to wish him a Happy Father's Day, and I will go to the cemetery to place flowers on my son's grave. I will stand alone and cry for a time and then return home to my wife and new infant son. This year we will have a greater measure of peace because of the birth of our son, but I shall always have a hole in my soul, a longing that I know I will have until I die.

Like many bereaved fathers, I have felt misunderstood about how a father should mourn and for how long. I do not understand how a society can have such a belief in the strength of maternal love and do such a good job ignoring the intensity of paternal love. From the people whose only question at my son's memorial service was how was my wife dealing with this tragedy, to the long-time friend who didn't understand my choking up after watching a Hallmark commercial, it seems many around us have difficulty understanding a father's grief.

So, support and love is needed and needed badly. Of course, we have Compassionate Friends, but something more personal and closer to home is needed. I hope that bereaved fathers will not be forgotten on Father's Day. It is often said that we don't talk of our emotional needs and are reluctant to show our pain, but we too need love when we hurt.

Please remember us on Father's Day and remember that the cute little commercials that hurt mothers in May take their toll on fathers in September.

Written by Doug Hughes,
TCF Las Vegas, NV.

Falling Apart

I seem to be falling apart.
My attention span can be measured in seconds,
My patience in minutes.
I cry at the drop of a hat.
I forget things constantly.
The morning toast burns daily.
I forget to sign the cheques.

Half of everything in the house is misplaced.
Anxiety and restlessness are my constant companions.
Rainy days seem extra dreary.
Sunny days seem an outrage.

Other people's pain and frustration
Seem insignificant.
Laughing, happy people seem out of place in my world.
It has become routine to feel half crazy.
I am normal, I am told.

I am a newly bereaved person.

Written by Eloise Cole,
TCF Pho

"The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of the depths.

These persons have an appreciation, a sensitivity, and an understanding of life, that fills them with compassion, gentleness, and a deep loving concern.

Beautiful people do not just happen."

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross.