

# The Compassionate Friends Victoria, Australia

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## Magazine Excerpts - Dec ~ Jan 2009

### A Mother's Christmas Journal



#### An extract from a bereaved Mum's journal on Christmas day..

The girls were in our room at 6.30 and had the four Christmas stockings with them. Each are decorated with the girls names embroidered on the top. All but one stocking was bulging and full of surprises.

What do you place in a child's stocking that is no longer here to excitedly open and empty the contents onto the bed.

In the eight Christmases that we have had to endure without Georgia I have never been able to deal with the dreaded stocking. It would be easier if I did not hang it up but I can't do that because seeing Georgia's stocking hang along side her sisters, confirms Georgia's existence, yet when Christmas Eve arrives all I have are a few token gifts for the cemetery or mantle piece. To not hang any of the stockings is not an option either as our three girls love all the tree decorating and Christmas cheer.

I am yet to find a solution that does not hurt so much.

As soon as the girls are occupied with their presents I just want to wallow in misery and cry for what should have been but Steve and I know we need to think of our beautiful girls that are with us and do the best we can to create treasured memories for them to hold.

The first Christmas was so difficult and sad I could not even pretend to be ok. Now I think back and don't know how we survived.

At least Georgia's anniversary is about her and we have permission from the world to be sad but at Christmas time it is about everyone else but Georgia and society says we have to be ok after a few years!!!!

When I hit the bottom I now find that it helps if I start to think of all that I am grateful for, so here goes....

I am grateful that this Christmas is not our first and I feel for all the newly bereaved that must face this day for the first time.

I am grateful that I am not in that painful and distressing place.

I am grateful for the love from Steve and the girls and how we know how precious and fragile life is.

I am grateful for the Christmases we did have with Georgia and for the time she was here on Earth.

I am grateful for all the special souls that have helped and supported us.

I am grateful for the things that have come into my life to help me heal and adjust to a different life.

I am grateful for my life and realising that my life is the most precious gift I will ever possess because our children are on loan and there is no contract that states we possess them.

One thing special about Christmas is that we have a mystery person come every year to the cemetery to leave a little ornament like an angel and a laminated card with a special message just for Georgia.

All my detective work has not found this beautiful soul and I have accepted that we are not meant to find out. It is wonderful to think that every Christmas there is somebody that we don't know who thinks of our precious daughter and leaves a message like the following:

"To dear Georgia, thinking of you and missing you everyday but especially at Christmas. A beautiful angel watching over us. Love always xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx"

This little act of love touches us deeply and all who I tell the story to. It is a reminder that in amongst the grief and despair there can be treasured gifts if we choose to look.

Margot

Mother to 4 gorgeous girls including Georgia in spirit.



Grieving parents are more alike than most people think. They have at least one thing in common; they have to make Herculean efforts to hold a normal, banal, bouncy conversation. They can think only of one thing, the moment they might introduce a sentence about their child. Thirteen years have passed and I still cannot last half a day without evoking my daughter

Genevieve Jurgensen  
"The Disappearance"



# GRIEF MAKES A PROMISE

Written by  
Leigh MCLG, bereaved mum. Sourced from website  
<http://www.mychildlossgrief.org/>.  
Used with permission.

I feel like I'm going crazy.

[Grief speaks] **Come and sit down, let's talk.**

Not you! Leave me alone! You have moved into my life and you won't leave.  
Everywhere I look; there you are, staring me in the face, filling my life with pain.

[Grief responds] **I know. But just hear me out, okay?**

I'm tired of listening to you. Tired of feeling so many things; confused, sad, hopeless, angry, anxious, guilty, helpless, isolated, empty, alone, exhausted, lost and fearful.

[Grief firmly] **You're supposed to have feelings. You're human.**

Look you don't understand. Someone I care for very much has died and it HURTS—  
It hurts so badly I can't stand it. Sometimes I don't even want to be here anymore.

[Grief comforting] **I hear you. But if you never loved, you'd never grieve. What you feel is normal.**

No, it's not. Everyone says I'm – well – they say that I'm grieving too much. They are worried about me. They say that it's time to move on. They said to me: "It's time to put closure on this". "It's time to heal, accept, recover and get over it".

[Grief softly] **And you can't.**

Well, no. Not like they want me to. I can't put closure on my love. My love did not die. I can't wake up one day and suddenly exclaim, "I'm healed".  
I'll never completely heal. I certainly will not "accept" or "recover" from her death. And, I will never "get over" it, as if my grief is a problem that can be fixed.

[Grief whispers] **You don't have to.**

What do you mean?

[Grief takes a seat] **Everyone grieves differently. And you have the right to grieve however you're going to grieve. You had a unique relationship with your loved one—a relationship that no one can ever fully understand.**

So what am I supposed to do?

[Grief moving closer] **Five things.**

**First; grieve; feel your grief. That's why I am in your life. So you can begin to feel again. Even though you don't like what you feel.**

**Second; talk it out with people who are willing to listen and not judge you. Find a way to get all those bottled up feelings out so they don't go round and round with no place to go. Find those people whom will really listen. They are out there. DO IT.**

**Third; realise that everyone grieves differently. Respect this.**

**Fourth; Live. Even though at times you don't feel like putting one foot in front of the other. Your job is to live your life, despite all the changes you've gone through, despite all the pain.**

**And fifth; talk about your loved one. Say his or her name. Tell your loved one's life story. This person lived a life. Find people who will listen to the stories and who in turn tell you their stories of your loved one. Your love for this person will never go away. You will always carry it in your heart.**

[Grief offering a handshake] **And, finally, I make you a promise.**

[Shaking hands] You? Grief? Are making me a promise?

[Grief speaks] **Yes, my promise to you is: As terrible as you feel now, you will not feel this way forever. There will be times you will laugh. Times where your confusion, your sadness, hopelessness, your anger, anxiety, guilt, helplessness, isolation, emptiness, loneliness, exhaustion and fear will not feel so intense. Don't get me wrong. You will never forget your loved one. And feeling less grief does not mean that you are forgetting this person. Now, I want you to say your loved one's name. Go ahead, say it. ("Elizabeth")**

**It's a precious name. Take the memories. Put them in your heart, feel them. And know that your loved one will always safely be in your heart.**

Always?

**[I PROMISE.]**