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Riding With Marie

I ride alone. I prefer it that way. My name is Marie. My daughter said I was too old to take up bike riding and I would certainly break something if I fell off. Maybe, but at 54, I'm not too old, that's nonsense.

'Why would you want to even think of such a thing?' my sister Lyn asked, rolling her eyes. 'What if you have an accident? What if you meet a, a, you know, serial rapist on the bike track? What if your bike breaks down, whaddya gonna do then, call the RACV? I'm 2 years younger than you and I feel virtuous walking from the carpark to the supermarket!'

No-one really understands, and I no longer insist that they even try. I'm riding the trail alone, just me, nobody else. This is the tenth anniversary of my son's death and at times, I don't know who I am or why I'm still breathing.

I've been riding the bike trail for 6 weeks. I wasn't fit at first, so I was kind to my body, just riding a little bit every day, so I wouldn't lose interest. The slow pace of walking, when I would get off my bike for even the slightest incline, caused me to notice the trees, hear the birds, smell the plants and feel my heartbeat. People would pass and I would smile at them and they at me. I liked that.

Water, mobile phone, and a \$5.00 note - I prepared for each short trip along the trail; like my favourite 'sticker saying': Trust in Mohammed, but tie your camel first! I have no idea who or what I will meet along the way, do I?

Now, 6 weeks later, I rarely get off the bike to walk up an incline. In fact, I'm taking the hills! Short trips are a thing of the past; I want to go further and further along the trail. I still ride alone and I'm my own best friend, really. But sometimes, I do need company. The other day, my best friend rode with me. She's an experienced rider and I kept up, didn't hold her back. We rode together. We talked. She'd remembered it was my son's anniversary. She asked if I believed in God. I needed that.

As I take longer trips, I will carry more, but of course, by then, my shoulders will be broader, my legs stronger, my breath softer, while my heart steadies its beat.

My grief journey is like a bike ride along the Warburton Trail.

Mariette
TCF Vic. Au.



Together we shall join hearts and hands across the earth and decorate the world with hope and healing and remembered laughter.

We shall remain forever linked through the love of our absent children, parents, husbands and wives, siblings, grandparents, friends - all of our loved ones who dance across the rainbows ahead of us.

We are a family circle - broken by death, mended by love.

May this day, and every day, be days for us to laugh and sing, dance and learn and dream. May this day, and every day, be days of celebration and the chance to give one more hug, to say once more 'I love you'.

May love be what you remember most!

by
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and internationally recognized public speaker
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The pattern of your grief is unique, shaped by your particular relationship, specific circumstances and distinctive temperament. Ignore others' attempts to tell you how to feel or how long to feel it.

Grief Therapy,
Karen Katafiasz (ed)