

The Compassionate Friends Victoria, Australia

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Magazine Excerpts - Feb ~ Mar 2009

When You Lose a Grandchild



When you lose a grandchild, the grandparent is twice bereaved: once for the grandchild in whom you can no longer take delight, be proud of and love, whose future you will never be able to watch unfold; the second is for your grown children, the parents, who cannot imagine a future at all without their child, but who are attempting to go on in excruciating pain and who you are powerless to console.

One loss leaves a constant and gnawing void in your life.

The other brings a constant challenge to your heart – which aches for all of them

Lorell Thompson
Grandmom to David Samson (1982 – 1988)
TCP Phoenix, AZ USA

WHAT DID YOUR CHILD LEAVE YOU?

I recently attended a workshop called 'Living with Loss'.
One exercise was to write an 'ethical will'.
That is, an accounting of the intangibles a loved one has left behind.

I'd like to share what I believe my infant son left me.

- He proved to me that life is truly fragile, and I will handle it now more carefully.
- My children yet to come will benefit from my having had and lost Michael.
- He taught me that not all problems in life are monumental, and that I must remember to put things in perspective.
- He allowed me to reassess my spiritual beliefs. I need to do this from time to time in my life, and that is all right because there is a loving, caring God, and He is with me no matter what.
- He showed me that each individual, in some way, leaves a mark in this world, or moves someone just so, regardless of how long life is, or how short.
- He gave me a reason and a need to help other people.
- He reminded me to show – and – tell the people I love how I feel about them as often and as openly as I can!

Linda Worth
Michael's Mum
TCF Vic Au.

Calling In

I'm not with you anymore and I'm sorry that I can't tell you where I am or how I got here. That's for you to find out when we meet again. I suppose I should say when you 'die' too but that's not the right word, if you know what I mean.

I know you'd love to know more but the only message I seem able to get through is that everything's OK. I try to tell Mum and Dad more. I try to let them see me and hear me. Mum sometimes feels me nearby and all her senses light up. She concentrates hard, waiting and wondering. Dad is inclined to try and think about something else. He usually disappears out to his shed. I understand that.

The other day I looked in on them. Glad to say dad looked well and pretty cool in my Ripcurl cap. Greyer though and he doesn't go to the footy anymore. I wish he would. Mum was at the kitchen table sorting through her photos for another of her famous albums. Her eyes were wet. She cries a lot.

Anyway she cheered up when her old tennis friends called in. They had coffee and looked at the photos as though I'd hardly gone anywhere.

There I was, a pretty cute toddler, my first day at school, me with my cousin Eloise, the under 15's and mum's favourites – me making faces and looking a real kook at Dad's birthday party three years ago. They were all talking about me. Mum was quite chuffed, she even laughed a bit. It was great.

"Tell me about this one" said her friend holding up the one of me on a horse.

"What about the time he bottled paddyjoe halfway to Williamstown."

"He looks just like his Dad in this one."

"Remember the chocolate cake he made for us."

"Look at him here, wasn't he gorgeous."

"He IS gorgeous."

They had a big group hug and a few sort of happy tears. Mum loved them for that. Best thing is, Mum's going back to tennis next week. I'm really stoked about that.

Judy Dowling
Mother of Patrick
TCFVic, Au.



Patrick Dowling