

Rita's Butterfly

Rita died on March 20, 2008. She had Stage 4 breast cancer.

The following is part of an announcement her family sent out to let everyone know about the passing -

Spring signifies a renewal of life. But in Rita's case her renewal is different.

We physically can't see her renewal but her body has been made whole. She is no longer bound by her physical limitations. She is free to flutter gently as a beautiful butterfly that has just been released, no longer wrapped in a cocoon of pain that the world tries so desperately to escape.

One of the saddest lessons we have to learn when someone we love dies is that life goes on. It doesn't stop. It doesn't even slow down for us to catch our breath.

According to grief counselors there are seven stages people go through when they grieve. They are shock or disbelief, denial, bargaining, guilt, anger, depression, acceptance and hope.

Sometimes when someone comes to see me as a Psychic Medium they're hoping to do a "Tarzan Swing" through the process. They're hoping that by hearing from their loved one who passed, they can go from shock to acceptance and hope in one fell swoop! I always try to get people to see that this just isn't the case. I also try to help them understand that going through these stages are what's needed for a "renewal" of their own lives.

Recently a woman came to me telling me that when her children died she received a lot of comfort from the "signs" she was getting from them. They appeared to her in her dreams, she would smell them, and every once in a while she even heard them.

As time went on, the signs stopped coming and for her it was as if the grief started all over again. She started "bargaining" with God so she could hear from her kids again. Then she wondered what she was doing wrong when the signs didn't come, and became angry with God for not letting them "communicate" with her. In her depression she thought, "What the hell?" and decided to book an appointment with me in the hopes of hearing from her children that way.

Her grief didn't "start all over again," I told her. It simply picked up where it left off when she started getting the signs from her children. During her session with me her kids told her that they hadn't forgotten her, nor did they stop loving her. They simply had work to do, and had to move on with their lives on the Other Side.

She wrote to tell me that after her session with me she was able to move with her life - from depression to acceptance and hope. She is now helping other parents who have lost children, and that she feels renewed by her new purpose in life.

If you're grieving...

The journey of grief is not a straight line, but circular in nature. That's why you may find yourself sad, then happy, then sad, then happy..., again and again. It may not feel as though your making progress, but you are. It just doesn't feel that way.

Which is why when we lose someone we love, we have to take to time to build a protective layer around ourselves while we go through the changes that death forces upon us. Just a caterpillar wraps itself in a cocoon, we can wrap ourselves in the love of our surviving family and friends, as well as our tears. Let yourself feel grief. Don't keep your emotions inside. The healing comes when you let them out.

Don't just take care of everyone else, take care of yourself. Go to church and speak to a minister. If you don't belong to a church, join one. If you don't like organized religion seek spiritual support of some sort.

Go out with friends to the movies, and other social events. Listen to music, read books, poetry, and exercise. Your body is vulnerable during times like this so eat nourishing foods, along with comfort food.

Talk to family or friends, but remember, other people can only be there for you for so long. They have their own lives to live, so please try not to be angry at them for this. If you need someone to talk to and they don't seem to be willing to listen, that's what grief counselors are for. Join a bereavement group, talk about your loss. Be there for others in theirs.

Most of all, remember that a caterpillar builds its shelter with the intent of coming back out of it a new creature. Grief is the price we pay for love. You can come out of the isolating journey of grief a much more beautiful creature than you were when you started.

If someone you know is grieving...

People who are grieving often feel isolated or lonely in their grief. After the loss, social activities and support from others may decrease. As the shock of their loss fades, there is a tendency on the part of the griever to feel more pain and sadness.

As a Medium, oftentimes when the session is over, people want to tell me about their loved one(s) who reconnected with them. This is often because well-meaning friends may avoid discussing the subject due to their own discomfort with grief or their fear of "making the person feel bad." They may "not know what to say."

I never know what to say either to be honest, which is why I usually just listen. What usually comes of this is a card or e-mail thanking me, and calling me "friend."

The truth is that there really is nothing you can say to take the pain away. You can help them by just sitting with them and listening. It may help to keep in mind that if you take the letters in the word “listen” and rearrange them, they spell, “silent.”

I’m not suggesting that you sit there like a bump on a log either. Ask about their feelings. Ask them to share memories about their loved one. If they laugh as they share, laugh with them. If they cry, cry with them.

If they don’t feel like talking, let them feel sad. Don’t minimize their grief, but acknowledge their pain. Talk about your own losses, share your feelings.

People who are grieving are likely to fluctuate between wanting some time to themselves and wanting to be close with others. Showing concern and thoughtfulness about a friend shows that you care. It's better to feel nervous and awkward sitting with a grieving friend than to not sit there at all.

To One In Sorrow



Let me come in where you are weeping, friend,
And let me take your hand.
I, who have known a sorrow such as yours, can understand.
Let me come in--I would be very still beside you in your grief;
I would not bid you cease your weeping, friend,
Tears bring relief. Let me come in--and hold your hand,
For I have known a sorrow such as yours, And understand.

-Grace Noll Crowell