



# Bereavement Newsletter

May 2016

& Prairie Home Health

200 Fourth Circle • Dodge City, KS

Tel: (620) 227-7209 • Fax: (620) 227-7429

## *The Grief of Mother's Day*

By **Rose DesRochers**

How do we face a day set aside for mothers when the woman who brought us into this world has been taken from this world?

If you ask those who have already been down this road, they will tell you that it is a very lonely time. For each of you that will be glowing with smiles, shopping for your mother, and taking her out to your favorite restaurant, there will be those of us whose heart is aching as we remember the last moments spent with our mothers.

If you are missing your mother this Mother's Day, don't keep these emotions bottled up inside you. Write a special essay or poem and dedicate it to the memory of your mother. Share the memories of your special times spent with your mother with family and friends. Pull out old photographs, or look at a videotape of your mother. Every year during the holidays, I light a candle in memory of my mom. Go out and buy yourself a rose bush and plant it in your flower bed. Each year as summer brings back the birth of roses; your mother's memory will re-bloom in the beauty of those roses.

My mother always loved roses. She and my father would grow them in the garden and all our neighbors would remark on the beauty of those roses. During my mother's illness, I often took her roses clipped from the rose bush in my yard to the nursing home. When winter rolls around I am saddened that my mother is now gone, but just as winter took her, the first spring bloom of those roses brings her home.

So this Mother's Day, I will delight in the beauty of roses.

This Mother's Day, allow yourself to feel the love and joy of your children. You are not betraying your mother by the feeling of happiness. Your mother would want you to be happy on this day. Remember her laughter. Grief is normal, and there is no easy way to deal with it. Close your eyes and remember your childhood and the happy times that you spent with your mother. Remember the talks and the wisdom she shared, and even remember the fights that you both had when you didn't quite see eye to eye.

Your mother is forever with you. Though there is an empty chair where she used to sit, in your heart she will forever be seated. This Mother's Day, rejoice and smile. Your Mother gave you life, and with that life she taught you

many things. The one thing she may not have taught you is how to say goodbye when her time on earth was over. Death is just the passage through a door. It is from one room to the next and from this life to eternal life. Right through the clouds is where your mother is. She is in the beauty of roses that bloom.

Remember your mother this Mother's Day. Mourn in her death, but rejoice in her rebirth.

I will never be able to write anything that matches the love my mother had for me, but may my love for her be found within the wisdom of the words that I share with all of you this Mother's Day.

1-800, I'm calling Heaven's operator. Please patch through a call to our mothers and wish them a Happy Mother's Day from their children here on earth.

Hospice of the Prairie invites you and your family to a

### *Remembrance Ceremony*

**Tuesday, May 31 at 7:00 pm**

**Hospice of the Prairie meeting room  
(note change of location)**

**This service is a non-denominational, faith-based celebration of the lives of those special people who have died and is open to everyone in the community.**

*A reception will follow the ceremony*

*Please RSVP by Friday, May 27*

*By calling 227-7209 or 1-800-466-7209*

## *And You Always Will*

I opened the dishtowel drawer for about the sixth time, hoping the towels had somehow magically appeared.

The brand new towels still weren't there, of course.

"What did Mom DO with them?" I wondered aloud.

I knew they had to be around somewhere because I had given them to her for Christmas only a few months ago. Not that the towels were so terribly important. It's just that when you're expecting guests, you'd kind of like everything to look nice.

Okay, so maybe I wasn't going to find them. Then again, the guests wouldn't arrive until tomorrow. Plenty of time to worry about dishtowels later.

On second thought, maybe I ought to forget about the towels all together. My father's niece and her husband didn't seem like the kind of people who would leave in a huff because their host hadn't put out new dishtowels.

What next?

Perhaps I'd better see if I could lay my hands on Mom's best tablecloth. A tablecloth had always been one of the things my mother insisted upon when we had company.

I went to the drawer where Mom kept her tablecloths, and sure enough, there it was.

But when I pulled out the hand-embroidered tablecloth, the one that it had taken her months to complete, I gasped in dismay. Right in the middle was a big stain. Now how in the world did Mom's best tablecloth end up with a stain?

Oh yes, that's right. We'd all been here for Christmas, and one of the kids had accidentally knocked over a glass of soda pop. The sight of her grandchild sobbing with remorse had been more important than the tablecloth, and Mom had said she was sure the pop would come out when she washed it.

All right, so it looked like I'd have to

forget the tablecloth, too. Maybe I'd be better off attending to the big things right now, anyway, like vacuuming.

Satisfied that I was finally going to make some progress, I got out the vacuum cleaner.

Except. . .why did it sound so funny? And why wasn't it picking up those bits of paper on the living room carpeting?

I pulled out the attachments hose and flipped the switch again. Ah-ha. That's why. No suction. The hose was plugged.

Well, of COURSE the hose was plugged. I couldn't find the new dishtowels. Mom's best tablecloth had a big stain. Why wouldn't the vacuum cleaner hose be plugged?

And right then and there, I started to cry. Now what was I going to do? Would a wire hanger work? Thirty minutes later, however, the vacuum cleaner was still plugged.

Where was Dad? I knew he'd gone outside and was probably puttering around in his garden, seeing as it was the middle of April, but why wasn't he in here when I needed him? After being a farmer for 50 years, he could fix absolutely anything.

Just at that moment, my father came into the house.

"What's wrong?" he asked, noticing that I had been crying.

Although it had been years since I called him "Daddy," it just sort of slipped out, and along with it came more tears.

"Oh, Daddy - I can't find the new dishtowels. The tablecloth has a big stain. The vacuum cleaner is plugged. And"

I stopped and swallowed hard.

"I miss my mother."

There. I'd said it.

And in that instant, the whole world seemed to stop while Dad drew a deep breath and let it out slowly.

"I know you do," he said. "So do I."

You see, only three weeks earlier, my mother had been diagnosed with advanced gallbladder cancer. Mom died

Saturday night, and this was Monday. My father's niece and her husband were driving 275 miles to attend the funeral, and they would be staying at the house.

As Dad gazed at me, I noticed how much he seemed to have aged in the last few weeks. And his face was covered with silvery stubble. It was a rare morning when my father didn't shave, but then, the past couple of days had been far from ordinary.

"And you know what?" Dad continued. "You always WILL miss your mother. In fact, it won't ever go away completely. Not even when you're as old as me."

Dad was 70. I was 26. I never knew Dad's mother. She had died before I was born.

Mom had been stricken with polio in 1942 when she was 26 and paralyzed in both legs. At the time, the doctors had told her she would never have more children. I was born 16 years later.

After the funeral was over and my father's relatives had gone home, I found the dishtowels. Mom had put them in her dresser drawer. And with several washings, the stain finally came out of the tablecloth. Dad had been able to fix the vacuum cleaner too.

But nothing could fix the fact that my mother was gone.

Mom died in 1985, and all these years later, I realize that Dad was right - I AM always going to miss her.

But I've also figured out what else he was trying to tell me on that April day so long ago - that missing my mother keeps her alive in my heart.

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About The Author

LeAnn R. Ralph is the editor of the Wisconsin Regional Writer (the quarterly publication of the Wisconsin Regional Writers' Assoc.) and is the author of the book, Christmas in Dairyland (True Stories from a Wisconsin Farm). She is working on her next book, Give Me a Home Where the Dairy Cows Roam. See what readers are saying about Christmas in Dairyland - <http://ruralroute2.com>

# *The Season Of Spring And Grief*

By Lora Mercado

For those of us who are grieving, the season of Spring can bring about a lot of deep emotions. Spring is a sign of new things and growth. The flowers are emerging from the ground and the people around you are excited about the upcoming warm weather and enjoying fun with their families. The combination of these things can give the bereaved a strong sense of loss and loneliness.

In our hearts, we are wishing we could share the bright new days ahead with our loved ones. We know that we will miss them when those days finally arrive. It is the dread of what feelings will arise, compounded by the excitement of others, that can throw a person who is grieving into a reclusive state. Mother's Day & Father's Day can be especially difficult. If these holidays are weighing heavy on your mind, think of a new tradition you can include on those days to honor and remember your loved one, such as planting flowers in their memory.

If you find yourself feeling like you want to be alone and you are not leaving your house, you may be showing signs of depression. Many of us choose to be alone during grief, especially for ones who are in the beginning stages. When the sun is shining, at least take your self outside for a nice walk. You can even go to a park and walk on a trail or just sit on a bench and read or write in your journal. The sun will be good for you, as well as the fresh air.

We all need the time to process what he have lost and gone through. Be gentle on yourself during this season. Don't hesitate to reach out to others in local or online support groups that can relate to the feelings you are having. Grief counseling can also be of great help during these rough times when we are prone to feeling a stronger sense of loss.



## *The Elephant in the Room*

By Terry Kettering

There's an elephant in the room.  
It is large and squatting, so it is hard to get around it.  
Yet we squeeze by with, "How are you?" and "I'm fine" ...  
And a thousand other forms of trivial chatter.

We talk about the weather.  
We talk about work.  
We talk about everything else-  
Except the elephant in the room.

There's an elephant in the room.  
We all know it is there.  
We are thinking about the elephant as we talk together.  
It is constantly on our minds.

For, you see, it is a very big elephant.  
It has hurt us all.  
But we do not talk about the elephant in the room.  
Oh, please, say her name.  
Oh, please, say "Barbara" again.  
Oh, please, let's talk about the elephant in the room.  
For if we talk about her death, perhaps we can talk about her life?  
Can I say "Barbara" to you and not have you look away?  
For if I cannot, then you are leaving me  
Alone...  
In a room...  
With an elephant.

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

- May 9 Compassionate Friends Support Group, for parents who have lost a child of any age, 7 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie meeting room
- May 12 Grief Support Group (English), 6:30 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie Meeting Room; Jerry Hodges, facilitator
- May 17 Grief Support Group (Spanish), 6:30 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie meeting room, Yadira Deana, facilitator.
- May 18 Bereavement Luncheon, 12 noon, The Dodge House, 2408 W. Wyatt Earp, Dodge City; Nancy Renner, host
- May 26 Grief Support Group (English), 6:30 pm, Hospice of the Prairie Meeting Room; Jerry Hodges, facilitator
- May 31 Remembrance Service, 7 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie Meeting Room (note change of location)

Coming in July! Kids Camp for grieving children ages 6-12.  
More information in next month's newsletter!

## *Just So You Know...*

I can't stop grieving just because you believe it is time for me to move on.

I can't stop hurting just because you do not understand the piercing pain in my heart.

I cannot stop my tears from flowing just because they make you uncomfortable.

My heart is not suddenly mended just because you believe that I have grieved long enough.

I will grieve the loss of my loved one for the rest of my life...

Just so you know...

--unknown

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