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The Impact of Grief on Marriage

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The Impact of Grief on Marriage

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The reaction to the death of a baby is as individual as the person experiencing it. Spouses or partners often grieve in different ways, frequently misunderstanding each other's reactions or needs. You may be reluctant to express feelings of sadness when your partner has had a "good day" or vice versa. Some partners may not want to talk about the death but still feel comfortable when the other needs to do so.

Crying is another area where partners may differ. It is an acceptable and healthy expression of grief, but many fathers find it difficult to allow themselves to release built-up tension through crying. Fathers often feel the need and are encouraged by others to be strong, but crying is a normal and healthy reaction.

Grieving is emotionally, physically and mentally exhausting and does not leave much energy for anything else. Communication may be difficult, but it is essential so that misunderstandings and intense emotions do not lead to problems in the marriage. Grief, however, is stressful and couples need to be aware that grief does not always bring partners closer together.

It is helpful when spouses recognize these differences and do not blame each other or feel the other does not care or is not hurting. It is more likely a difference in the ability to express intense feelings rather than a deliberate attempt to hurt. Continue to share your feelings and keep in mind that outward expressions of grief may indicate only a portion of what a person is feeling or experiencing.

Husbands and wives may react differently to intimacy as well. While one partner may need and seek this closeness and the assurance that not everything has changed, the other partner may take the suggestion of intimacy as an affront, not understanding how anyone could think of intimacy when a baby has died. Recognize that these reactions are normal. With time and patience, most couples reestablish intimacy when both feel ready.

It is important for couples to understand that there are no simple solutions to these problems, no timetable, or recipe for recovery. Every effort should be made to share what you are feelings. Your relationship may be uncomfortable for awhile as you cope with these intense feelings and emotions.

From the brochure entitled *Stillbirth, Miscarriage, and Infant Death*
produced by:
The Compassionate Friends
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The Impact of Grief on Marriage (en Español)

The Impact of Grief on Marriage (en Español)

Translated by Yvette Grau

La reacción a la muerte de un bebé es tan individual como la persona experimentando lo. Esposos o parejas a menudo afligen en maneras diferentes, frecuentemente malentendiendo las reacciones o necesidades de uno al otro. Puede ser renuente expresar sentimientos de tristeza cuando su compañero ha tenido un día bueno o viceversa. Unas parejas no tiene deseos de hablar acerca de la muerte si no embargo se sienten cómodos cuando aun el otro si tiene deseos de hablar acerca de la muerte.

Llorar es otra área donde las parejas diferirían. Es una expresión aceptable y saludable de pesar, pero muchos padres no pueden desahogarse en lagrimas abundantes porque se les hace muy deficit. Padres a menudo sienten la necesidad de mantenerse fuerte, pero llorar es reaccion muy normal y saludable.

Afliccion es emocionalmente, fisicamente, y mentalmente agotado y no sobra energia para nada mas. Comunicación es difícil, pero es esencial para que equivocaciones y emociones intensas no terminen con problemas en el matrimonio. Afliccion, de cualquier manera, viene acompañado con tension y parejas deben estar consciente que el pesar no siempre resulta en que las parejas se unan mas.

Es útil cuando parejas reconocen estas diferencias y no se culpen uno al otro o que no sientan que no estan afectados por la muerte. Es más probable una diferencia en la habilidad de expresar sentimientos intensos en lugar de un intento deliberado de herir al compañero.

Continúe a compartir sus sentimientos y tenganlo entendido que expresiones exteriores de pesar indica sólo una porción de lo que una persona realmente esta sintiendo o experimentando.

Esposos y esposas tambien reaccionan diferentemente a intimidad. Mientras un compañero requiere y busca intimidad y aseguransa que no todo ha cambiado, el otro compañero tomaría la sugerencia de intimidad como una afrenta, no comprendiendo cómo alguien podría pensar en intimidad cuando un bebé ha muerto. Reconozca que estas reacciones son normal. Con tiempo y paciencia, la mayoría de intimidad regresara cuando los companeros estan de acuerdo.

Es importante que las parejas entiendan que no hay ninguna solucion simples a estos problemas,

ningún itinerario, o receta por recuperación. Se debe hacer esfuerzo de compartir los sentimientos. Su relación quizá sera incómodo por una temporada mientras se enfrentan con estos sentimientos y emociones intensos.

Esta informacion esta tomado de el folleto nombrado *Stillbirth, Miscarriage and Infant Death* y producido por

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Understanding Grief...When a Child Dies

Understanding Grief...When A Child Dies

Grief, with its many ups and downs, lasts far longer than society in general recognizes. Be patient with yourself.

Each person's grief is individual. You and your spouse will experience it and cope with it differently.

Crying is an acceptable and healthy expression of grief and releases built-up tension for mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters. Cry freely as you feel the need.

Physical reactions to the death of a child may include loss of appetite or overeating, sleeplessness, and sexual difficulties. Parents may find that they have very little energy and cannot concentrate. A balanced diet, rest and moderate exercise are especially important for the whole family at this time.

Avoid the use of drugs and alcohol. Medication should be taken sparingly and only under the supervision of your physician. Many substances are addictive and can lead to a chemical dependence. In addition, they may stop or delay the necessary grieving process.

Friends and relatives may be uncomfortable around you. They want to ease your pain but do not know how. Take the initiative and help them learn how to be supportive to you. Talk about your child so they know this is appropriate.

Whenever possible, put off major decisions (changing residence, changing job, etc.) for at least a year.

Avoid making hasty decisions about your child's belongings. Do not allow others to take over or to rush you. You can do it little by little whenever you feel ready.

Parents may feel they have nothing to live for and may think about a release from this intense pain. Be assured that many parents feel this way but that a sense of purpose and meaning does

return. The pain does lessen.

Guilt, real or imagined, is a normal part of grief. It surfaces in thoughts and feelings of “if only.” In order to resolve this guilt, learn to express and share these feelings, and learn to forgive yourself.

Anger is another common reaction to loss. Anger, like guilt, needs expression and sharing in a healthy and acceptable manner.

Children are often the forgotten grievers within a family. They are experiencing many of the same emotions you are, so share thoughts and tears with them. Though it is a painful time, be sure they feel loved and included.

Holidays and the anniversaries of your child’s birth and death can be stressful times. Consider the feelings of the entire family in planning how to spend the day. Allow time and space for your own emotional needs.

A child’s death often causes a parent to challenge and examine his faith or philosophy of life. Don’t be disturbed if you are questioning old beliefs. Talk about it. For many, faith offers help to accept the unacceptable.

It helps to become involved with a group of parents having similar experiences; sharing eases loneliness and promotes the expression of your grief in an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding.

Bereaved parents and their families can find healing and hope for the future as they reorganize their lives in a positive way.

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📌 **Understanding Grief...When a Child Dies (en Español)**

Understanding Grief...When A Child Dies (en Español)

Pesar, con sus muchos altos y plumones, dura mas tiempo que la sociedad en general reconoce. Sea paciente con si mismo. El pesar de cada persona es individual. Usted y su esposo lo experimentará diferentemente.

Llorar es una expresión aceptable y saludable de pesar y se descarga uno de tension por las madres, los padres, hermanos, y hermanas.

Lamente libremente cuando sienta la necesidad. Reacciones físicas a la muerte de un niño

incluirían pérdida de apetito, comer en exceso, insomnio, y dificultades sexuales. Padres hallaran que tienen poca energía y no pueden concentrarse. Una dieta balanceada, descanso y ejercicio moderado es especialmente importante para la familia durante este tiempo.

Evite el uso de drogas y alcohol. Medicamento se debe tomar sólo bajo vigilancia de su médico. Muchas sustancias son aditivos y pueden llegar a dependencia del químico. Además, detendrán o retrasarán el proceso de duelo.

Amigos y parientes estarán incómodos en su presencia. Quieren aliviar su dolor pero no saben cómo. Tome la iniciativa y ayúdenles aprenden cómo ser soportivos. Hable acerca de su niño para que sepan que es apropiado. Cuando posible, diferir decisiones mayores (cambio residencia, cambio de trabajo, etc..) por lo menos un año.

Evite decisiones apresuradas acerca de las pertenencias de su niño. No permitan que otros se apoderen o le apresuren. Puede hacer lo poco a poco cuando usted quiera. Padres sentirán que no tienen nada por que vivir y pensarán de un descargo de este dolor intenso. Sea asegurado que muchos padres se sienten igual pero un sentido de seguir adelante y significancia eventualmente regresará. El dolor se disminuye.

Culpa, real o imaginada, es una parte normal de pesar. Aparece en pensamientos y sentimientos sobre la pregunta de "si sólo." Para resolver esta culpa, aprenda a expresar y compartir estos sentimientos, y aprenda perdonarse.

Enojo es otra reacción común a pérdida. Enojo, como culpa, requiere expresión y compartimiento en una manera saludable y aceptable. Niños, a menudo, son los afligidos olvidados entre una familia. Niños experimentan muchas de las mismas emociones que uno así es que comparta sus pensamientos y lágrimas con ellos. Aunque es un tiempo doloroso, asegúrese que ellos se sientan amados y incluidos. Días festivos y los aniversarios del nacimiento y muerte de su niño pueden ser tiempos de mucha tensión.

Considere los sentimientos de la familia entera en la planificación de como pasar el día. Permita tiempo y espacio por sus propias necesidades emocionales. La muerte de un niño, a menudo, causa desafío y examen del su fe y su filosofía de vida. No se perturbe si tiene preguntas sobre creencias viejas. Hable acerca de ellos. Por muchos, se ofrece ayuda para aceptar lo inaceptable.

Ayuda ser envuelto con un grupo de padres con experiencias similares; compartir disminuye el sentimiento de soledad y promueve la expresión de su pesar en una atmósfera de aceptación y comprensión.

Padres desconsolados y sus familias pueden hallar curación y esperanza por el futuro mientras reorganizan sus vidas en una manera positiva.

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In God's Trust

He knows how much I loved her
And how much I feel the pain,
So He wrapped me in His arms
And made His love so very plain.

I felt the peace and understanding
That this world just cannot know,
And I found in Him great strength and joy
In me His spirit He bestowed.

He's carried me upon a cloud
Above this earthly land,
But now and then He sets me down
To see if I can stand.

My legs still somewhat wobbly
On many of those days,
I struggle with my feelings
And try to understand His ways.

And it's true I cannot comprehend
Perhaps He wishes so.
For all that happens in our lives
Is not meant for us to know.

But He gives us guidance through His word
And salvation through His son,
And He'll always be there to call upon
until the battles have all been won!

by Sharon Fuqua
From Christian Voices of Longing, Voices of Hope,
a publication of
Precious Children Remembered

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Think Before You Speak

Dear Friend, today you broke my heart,
In a place that was unbroken.
You did it with your thoughtless words
That should not have been spoken.

You know that I am grieving;
That my pain is deep and real.
Your hurtful words pierced like a knife.
How do you think I feel?

You may not suffer from my loss
Or share this lonely grief;
But I'm mourning my baby,
Who's life was much too brief.

I'm sure you don't know how I feel,
I don't expect you to.
Don't ask me to get over it...
That's something I can't do.

Without grief, there's no healing.
It's a journey I must make.
It's not the path that I would choose,
But one I'm forced to take.

No matter how you choose to see
What I am going through,
I need compassion and support...
I'd do the same for you.

written by Gwen Flowers
for her angels Hannah, Skylar and Jordan



Then Entered Grief

I remember well
The day you knocked upon my door.
I did not want to let you in,
But I did not have a choice;
For on that day my baby died.
You soon became so ever-present,

As if you knew me like an old familiar friend.
I felt trapped in your darkness,
Yearning for a glimpse of the light I once knew.
Never before had I known you so intimately;
Yet I longed for you to go away-
Taking my pain with you.
Physically, my body ached.
My arms longed to hold the child I could not know.
At times I thought my heart could burst forth from my chest.
So often I struggled to catch my breath;
And I questioned how much longer you would remain in my life.
Would I ever want to rise and greet the day?
Would I ever wake to find you absent?
Why had God allowed your intrusion in my life?
Days, months, even a year passed;
And you lingered.
But time eventually became a blessing,
a certain gift from God.
And I learned that your intent for me was of His purpose:
that I must walk with you to know true healing.
I could not run from you or hurry you out of my life,
Because my love for her was so deep.
You allowed me to realize her importance to my life,
and that I could face tomorrow without her.
You pressed me to walk with greater strength into my future.
Now, you are no longer my constant shadow.
Peace has become my companion, and somehow the sun shines
even brighter than before;
Although the scars from my wounds remain.
How I would like to say that we will never meet again;
But even still you appear to me-
In those moments when the reality of losing her catches me unaware;
Never letting me forget the path I've traveled.

Written by Jana Spigener
In Loving Memory of
Mercedes Ruth,
Stillborn September 21, 1995
and Twin Blossoms,
Miscarried July 1996 & August 1996



• Subsequent Births After Loss

Subsequent Births After Loss

Rae & Bill Scrivner

of Grand Prairie, Texas
lovingly remember Rianne Ellisa,
March 4 - 7, 1997,
whom they lost due to
Sever Hydrocephaly
(more consistent with Anencephaly).
They proudly welcome their daughter,
Chaney Nicole.
She was born
January 6, 1999.
She weighed 6 lbs. 12 oz.
and measured 19 inches in length.

Kirstin & Mark Jenkins
and son, David Allen,
of Arlington, Texas
lovingly welcome
Rebekah Ann,
born December 23, 1998
at 4:25 p.m.
She weighed in at
7 lbs. 11 ounces and
was 21 inches long.
They remember with love
their twin daughters Hannah Joy and
Sarah Grace,
stillborn April 4, 1997
due to
Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome.

Dana & Tracy Davis
and their daughter, Ashley
of Dallas, Texas
proudly welcome their daughter,
Arren.
She was born January 19, 1999,
weighing 7 lbs., 11 oz., and
measured 21 inches long.
They lovingly remember their son,
Austin Jeremiah,
stillborn September 16, 1997,
due to an unknown cause.

Madeline & Scott Henry
and daughter, Linna
of Flossmoor, Illinois
celebrate the birth of a new daughter,
Isabel April,
born on November 5, 1998.
She weighed 7 lbs., 8 oz.,
and measured 19 1/2 inches long.

They remember with love
their daughter, Laurel,
full term stillborn April 7, 1997.



I'll Meet You In The Morning

I'll Meet You In The Morning

"I have found that heartache shared is healing begun. Thus began the focus of my music and the recent release of my first recording project...on the 10th anniversary of the loss of our stillborn son, Kyle.

I have had the unique privilege of sharing in the private pain of many families who have lost loved ones. I have dedicated my music to bringing comfort, hope and peace to those who know the sadness and confusion of loss.

It is my desire to reach as many people as possible through my music as they pass through the valley of grief, hoping I can make a difference...remembering how I longed for comfort as I journeyed through my own valley alone.

This collection of inspirational music is a compilation of my own road to peace."

Karen Ritchey

To hear sound clips from Karen's
I'll Meet You In The Morning C.D.,
visit her website at
<http://www.members.cnx.net/kritchey/>

To order a C.D., visit her website or
e-mail Karen at kritchey@cnx.net



Untitled

Untitled

The baby bed's dismantled.
Bassinette stripped down.
Stored are blankets, socks, tee shirts, dresses, and gowns.

We cleaned out the dresser,
Cleared off the top.
Placed all your toys, rattles,

and bottles in a box.

It's all folded neatly,
and we have it put away.
And it breaks our heart to know you will never use it,
not even one day.

by Lisa Davenport

In loving memory of
Gabrielle Renee,
born and died on March 29, 1993
due to Encephalocele,
Ring 13 Chromosome
and Faith Levell,
born and died on March 27, 1994
due to Two True Knots in her cord.



 **His Spirit**

His Spirit

Just when I thought I was doing ok
It comes crashing down on me once more.
The sorrow, the tears are flowing again.
The fears and frustrations come up from my core.

They flood into my mind, overtake all thought.
It scares me to think they will never go away.
Please God, help me through this time right now,
Never leave my side, I need help day by day.

I feel His Spirit enter into my heart,
The fears ease up, frustrations they leave.
He is here with me now, right by my side,
He will help me as my heart continues to grieve.

by Cyndy Estep

From Voices of Longing, Voices of Hope,
a publication of
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 **In Loving Memory**

In Loving Memory

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
Stillborn June 24, 1995
Cord Accident
Parents, Rebekah & Byron Mitchell, Sr.
and big brother, Byron, Jr.
Given by his grandparents,
Sue & Dennis Brewer

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
Stillborn June 24, 1995
Cord Accident
Given by parents,
Rebekah & Byron Mitchell, Sr.
and big brother, Byron, Jr.

Michael Joseph Böer
Stillborn July 17, 1996
Trisomy 18
Given by parents, Lynne & Paul Böer
and siblings, Paul, Jr., and Maggie

Christina Fasolo
Stillborn February 5, 1991
Given by parents, Gayle & Philip Fasolo

Timothy "Schuyler" Morren II
September 28 - December 23, 1997
SIDS
Given by parents, Pam & Tim Morren
and little sister, Ashton

Amanda Morgan Galleger
Stillborn January 7, 1996
Trisomy 18
Given by parents, Diane & Steve Galleger
and little sister, Sydney

Tyler James and Troy Clayton Houk
Born and Died August 10, 1998
Short Rib Polydactyly
Parents, Kathleen & Lowell Houk
Given by grandmother, Dana Owens

Tyler Branden Lotz
Stillborn January 11, 1996
Given by parents, Kim & Theo Lotz

Grateful Acknowledgement

M.E.N.D. gratefully acknowledges gifts of love given in memory of a baby, relative, friend or given by someone just wanting to help. These donations help us to continue M.E.N.D.'s mission by providing our newsletter, web-site, and other services to bereaved parents free of charge. Please refer to the page entitled [Contributions](#) for more information on where to send your donations and what information to include. Thank you so much!

Reagan Emily Van Slooten
Stillborn August 5, 1995
Given by Kim & Theo Lotz

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
Stillborn June 24, 1995
Cord Accident
Parents, Rebekah & Byron Mitchell
Given by grandparents,
Marnie & Lyle Mitchell

Baby Basner
Miscarried January 1997
Jonathan Andrew Basner
Miscarried May 1998
Given by parents, Amy & Tim Basner and
sister, Rebecca

Julie Ann Green
December 22, 1997 - January 7, 1998
Severe Prematurity
Given by parents, Sherri & Bill Green

Jared Mathew Slough
February 14 - March 20, 1998
Heart Defect & Failure
Given by parents, Jo Ellen & Scott Slough
and identical twin, Hunter

Evan Clark Corn
December 2, 1997 - January 23, 1998
Cardiac Arrest Due to Complications from
Pulmonary Stenosis
Given by parents, Donna & Clark Corn
and siblings, Kayla, Brandon and Austin

Jackson David Crowe
August 22 - September 8, 1998
Heart Failure
Given by parents, Marie & David Crowe
and sister, Hannah

Cherie George
Miscarried January 8, 1997
Meghan Elizabeth George
Stillborn January 29, 1998
Given by mom, Dawn George

Laurel Henry
Stillborn April 7, 1997
Given by parents,



Resources

Resources published in the printed version of this newsletter can be accessed online directly from M.E.N.D.'s resource pages. To access the resource pages (at any time), navigate to the following URL:

URL: http://www.mend.org/resources_internet.asp

In the M.E.N.D. resource listing, you will find resources which include internet web sites, national organizations, and family bereavement pages.



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