

To Whom It May Concern

I have been a part of hospice for over a decade, working the last three years as a chaplain and bereavement coordinator for a local hospice company. Having worked with hundreds of people grieving the loss of their loved one, I can say without any hesitation that our society currently doesn't give people the support needed for their grief. There is an initial supportive response in the days and perhaps week following a death, often followed by a "get on with life" and "go back to work" mentality. But most people can't just move on... because things will never be the same.

This is one of the biggest events in life a person will face- dealing with the sorrow and pain of loss- adjusting to the change in the fabric of their daily life, the change in their roles and identity. It takes time to begin the critical first steps (the weeks after the death) of gathering the resources, both inner and outer, to face these changes. These steps will determine the course of the grief journey that lies ahead.

This journey doesn't end, because you don't "get over" grief. That would dishonor the memory and relationship of the one who passed.

While their physical presence is gone, the relationship, the love continues on. To honor this we learn to live with the loss, stay open to the love we feel, eventually reclaiming a changed relationship with those gone from this world.

This is something we all go through. I call upon the common humanity in each person who is making the decision whether to pass the bill:

reflect on your relationships to those you love, their place in your life, and what you would need if they were gone. Decide based upon what you find within your hearts.

let love lead,
David

David Jacob
Chaplain
Hospice Care of the NW