



Rest. Breathe. Remember.

In this past year, you have likely found that the journey of grief does not follow a straight path. Many experience sorrow, confusion, fear, and hopelessness mixed in with strength, healing and hope. We at St. Luke's Hospice have been honored to serve you and your family, and we hope this final letter finds you well.

Moving on, moving forward

Perhaps during this time, you have been encouraged to “move on.” While continuing with your life is good and healthy, the thought can feel as if you're leaving your loved one behind. However, there is a difference between moving on and moving forward. Over time, most people learn how to move forward again. This suggests carrying memories of your loved one with you into your future. Grief expert Therese Rando, Ph.D., gives insight into this process¹:

“And, in the end, this moving forward with that scar is the very best that we could hope for. You would not want to forget your loved one, as if (he or) she had never existed or not been an important part of your life. Those things that are important to you in your life are remembered and kept in the very special places of your heart and mind. This is no less true with regard to the loss of a beloved person. Keep this loss, treasure what you have learned from it, take the memories that you have from the person and the relationship and, in a healthy fashion, remember what should be remembered, hold on to what should be retained, and let go of that which must be relinquished. And then, as you continue on to invest emotionally in other people, goals, and pursuits, appropriately take your loved one with you, along with your new sense of self and new way of relating to the world, to enrich your present and future life without forgetting your important past.”

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Society often recognizes the first year following a loss to be particularly difficult. However, the second year can be hard as well. It is common for support from family and friends to naturally fade. You may become discouraged and wonder why you are not further in the grieving process. Remind yourself that this takes time, and that everyone who grieves does so at a different pace.

In the months ahead, continue to surround yourself with people, resources, and beliefs that can bring ongoing healing and hope. The human heart has an amazing capacity to heal. Don't forget to care for and support those who have gone through the loss with you. Continue to incorporate intentional rest, deep breathing, and remembering into your life.

“Death changes us, the living. In the presence of death, we become more aware of life...It can inspire us to decide what really matters in life – and then to seek it.”

— Candy Lightner

We still support you

Even now after a year, it may be helpful to speak with someone about where you're at on your grief journey. Our services are available to you through the 13th month after your loss. If needed, we can also make referrals for ongoing grief support.

Thank you for allowing us to support you and your family during this time. This will be the last in our series of letters. We hope that you have found them to be helpful. Any feedback you may have about our bereavement services would be greatly appreciated. We wish you health and wholeness as you continue to move forward.

If you or a loved one would like additional information or support, contact St. Luke's Hospice Duluth at **218.249.6100**.

Endnotes

1. *How to Go on Living When Someone You Love Dies*, by Therese A. Rando, Ph. D., Bantam Books, 1991, p.287

"May the sun bring you new energy by day; may the moon softly restore you by night; may the rain wash away your worries; may the breeze blow new strength into your being."

— Apache Blessing



St. Luke's Hillside Clinic
220 North 6th Avenue East, Duluth
218.249.6100

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