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bright When eve is quiet and still
When in a flowered meadow or by a
sparkling stream

Remember me with first flowers promising
spring When the air is fresh and new
When birds are building nests and singing in
the trees

Remember me when summer comes
When the world is sultry and hot
When a welcome breeze ruffles your hair and
cools your skin

Remember me when the leaves fall crimson
and gold When the air is crisp and clean
When pumpkins and mums burst forth on
porch and stand

Remember me when snowflakes fly
When the trees are bare and rattling in the
wind When holding a cup of cocoa by a warm
crackling fire

Remember me for I will be in your heart
forever
When you least expect it
With a flutter of butterfly wings

Remember me...

If you or your children are VPHP members, you will be contacted by a Case Manager within one month to see how you are doing, assess your needs, and assist you with needed services.

In addition to this brochure, you have received a sympathy card, a bereavement booklet and a Living With loss magazine to help you during your time of loss.

VPHP CONTACTS

Richmond office:
1-800-727-7536, ext. 5712

Roanoke office:
1-888-338-4579, ext. 1263

Tidewater office:
1-800-828-7989, ext. 2162



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Richmond, Virginia 23220-0307
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Bereavement Program





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grieve and cope in our own different ways. There are no easy instructions or timeframes for grieving. The sadness and sense of loss may never go away completely, but eventually periods of intense grief become shorter and less painful. Gradually, we are able to face life with renewed hope and enjoy life more as time goes by. We will always remember and hold memories close to our heart forever.



Peace and Comfort in this
time of sorrow.

GRIEF AND LOSS

Feeling grief is universal, but we all grieve in our own way. We may experience some or all of the following:

Loneliness Abandoned, yearn for the one who is gone

Anger "It's not fair, why me or him/her?"

Guilt "If I had only...", "I should have..."

Hopelessness Life will never be good again.

Fear Unsure of the future

Loss of Control Powerless to cope with changes

Sadness Natural response to grief

Depression Life isn't worthwhile.

PROFESSIONAL HELP

Bereavement is normal, however, counseling is available when it seems like the grief is more than you can bear.

If you develop major depression following the death of a loved one, you may benefit from professional treatment. If you are experiencing one or more of the following, please seek professional assistance:

- Intense feelings of guilt
- Thoughts of suicide or preoccupation with death
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Slow speech and body movements
- Inability to function at work, home and/or school
- Finds no pleasure in previously enjoyed activities
- Hallucinations of the deceased

Please contact your physician or behavioral health professional if you experience any of the above.

HELPING YOURSELF COPE

- Do not grieve alone — Accept help and support wherever it comes from. Find friends, relatives who can understand your feelings or join a support group.
- Express your feelings — Tell others how you are feeling. More tangible examples may be to write about, or to your loved one, create a scrapbook or plant a tree in memory.
- Take care of your health — Keep in touch with your physician, eat well, get regular exercise and plenty of rest. Avoid using alcohol or drugs to numb the pain. Masking the pain with drugs or alcohol may be less productive than working through the sadness.

- Postpone major life changes— Avoid moving, changing jobs or having another child. Give yourself time to adjust to your loss.
- Don't let other people tell you how to feel— Don't tell yourself how to feel either. It's okay to be angry with the one who died. It's okay to cry every day. Strong emotion is normal. Your grief is your own.
- Be patient— Give your self time to absorb and accept your changed life. With time, you will hurt less.
- Seek outside help when necessary— If your grief is more than you can handle, seek professional help to work through your grief. Asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

GRIEF IS LIKE A RIVER

By Cinthia G. Kelley

My grief is like a river,
I have to let it flow,
but I myself determine
just where the banks will go.

Some days the current takes me
in waves of guilt and pain,
but there are always quiet pools
where I can rest again.

I crash on rocks of anger;
my faith seems faint indeed,
but there are other swimmers
who know that what I need

Are loving hands to hold me
when the waters are too swift,
and someone kind to listen
when I just seem to drift.

Grief's river is a process
of relinquishing the past.
By swimming in hope's channels,
I'll reach the shore at last.