

LAMENTATIONS

Issue 9

S.U.C.C.E.S.S

June 1993

Happy Father's Day!

Father is a title of honor given to men who establish anything important in human affairs. When Young Jim was a small boy I cross-stitched a saying for Taylor for Father's Day. It read:

Anyone can be a *Father*,
but it takes someone special to be a *Dad*

What a wonderful statement! We must understand that fathers grieve differently from mothers. Many times, because the father is not as demonstrative with his grief as the mother, the father is ignored, or at best, receives minimal attention and support. After all, isn't it the man's "job" to *protect* and *correct*? He has probably never been "allowed" to demonstrate his "true" feelings and emotions.

The father is supposed to be strong, composed, and emotionally controlled, even when there is a death; a "superman." Why does this "job" fall on his shoulders? Society has "done" this to him and we tend to reinforce it. By doing this, we prevent or inhibit a father from resolving his grief. When will this stereotype end? Only when we make an effort to understand what he is really feeling, will we be able to share one another's grief.

The greatest thing a man can do for himself during this time is to let go of the control he is trying to have. He must take care of himself and "deal" with his own feelings and grief before he can help anyone else. He cannot "fix" this loss and he has to experience his own pain, and not try to remove it or ignore it. Since men aren't "allowed" to cry, they usually release their grief



through anger. This is one of the stages of grief but don't permit yourself to stay in that stage, work through your anger. Don't be carrying a **TIME BOMB** that may go off at any time. **Defuse it!**



Women talk easily with others and we share our grief. Men, you seldom allow yourselves that luxury. You may be fearful of what others may think if they see you cry. There is nothing more loving than to see a man cry when talking about his loved ones. This is the truest sign that a man is a **MAN**. He permits others to see his emotions and his love and loss.

Catherine M. Sanders, in her book *How to Survive the Loss of a Child*, offers suggestions for the father:

Take some time for yourself. Go fishing, take walks, etc. This allows time to eliminate distractions momentarily. Don't take on any new responsibilities. Give up some. Allow yourself to cry. This is a most healthy response because it not only lets out stored-up tensions, but it releases toxins from your body.

Deal with your natural anger by venting on things, not people.

Talk with other bereaved fathers and focus on your feelings not how to help your wife. There is a good possibility that you need more help than she does.

Talk with your wife about your feelings. Listen to her. Accept the fact that men grieve differently from women, and talk to your wife about this. Let her know your needs.

Read about grief, the feelings and responses that you can expect to occur. Discuss what you read with other bereaved fathers.

Take one day at a time. It's the only way

Because men and women deal with grief so differently, the loss of a child places great stress on our marriage. You would think that this loss would bring us closer together, and it does in

some ways, but in others it separates us. Because the child we have lost means different things to each of us, we can't understand the other's reactions. You must also understand that the two of you will not go through the stages of grief in the same time span or in the same manner. Have you noticed that on the days you are really "down," your spouse may be "up"? I think that we sense each other's needs and do our best to meet these needs.

As Harriet Sarnoff Sniff stresses in her book *The Bereaved Parents*: "The most essential ingredient . . . in surviving well--besides facing reality--is to speak of the dead child unashamedly." Share your thoughts of your child, share your own thoughts and emotions (including anger, guilt, shame) but especially share your fears. You will find that we all have the same emotions and fears. We need to hear ourselves express our emotions, and by doing this, we are beginning to free ourselves from the **darkness** of grief.

Grief work is learning to let go. It is learning to express emotions freely. We can do this by writing about them, talking and crying. You must begin to make readjustments to your new life. We cannot change what happened to our loved one, but we can begin to find ways that others will remember them. You will find that you will probably need new friends, friends that understand what you are going through. That is where we can help each other. Find a balance between work and play, exercise and relaxation, and working on your grief and resting from your grief. A vacation is so good for each of us because it gives us a chance to rest from our grief. It is "time out" that you need from time to time. I hope you will consider taking a vacation this summer. You will come home with renewed strength and maybe new insights. I also hope you will be able to attend our picnic June 19 here in Williamsburg. This will be a time of being with others who understand and won't judge us for our thoughts and

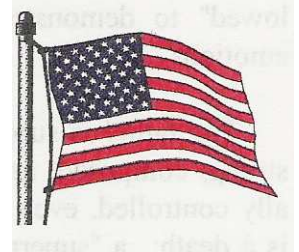


words-- what ever they may be. We gain strength and comfort from each other.

June comes from the Latin word meaning young men. I guess that is where we get the saying "when a young man's fancy turns to love," because June is **the** month for weddings. The special flower for June is the **rose**.

On June 1, 1792, Kentucky became the 15th state. I hope that we each will adopt the slogan of Kentucky, for truly it describes our group: **United we stand, divided we fall**. We are fellow travelers and we can unite in our journey.

Flag day is June 14th. On this date in 1777 the Continental Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as the flag of the United States, with the colors **Red**, White and **Blue**. The **Red** is for hardiness and courage, white for purity and innocence, and **blue** for vigilance, perseverance, and justice. This describes our lives. The **Red** represents our courage to grieve even though we may bleed. The white represents the purity and innocence of our loved one we have lost, and the **blue** represents our vigilance and perseverance as we work toward our **S.U.C.C.E.S.S**. I guess you noticed that I left out justice and hardiness. We do not understand the justice in our having to grieve, but maybe some day we will have the answer. We are hardy people or we would not have the perseverance to go on, but go on we must.



This year, Father's Day is the 20th and the first day of summer is the 21 st. I hope that you will look at these two days as being a "season" of celebration for being a father, and the beginning of a new season. A season without the one you have lost to death, but a new season of readjustment. And may it bring you a season of finding ways in which you can keep your loved one's memory alive, and in doing so, keep yourselves energized. May this be a summer of "commitment" to all those we love.

Grief Grafts

Thank you for your cards, letters and words of encouragement. As we faced the second anniversary of Young Jim's death, we were comforted by your outpouring of love and concern. It is true **United we stand**. Thank you for "standing" with us. I hope you are encouraged by knowing that this anniversary was easier than the first. There is **S.U.C.C.E.S.S.** in our grief work!



I was remiss in failing to include a writing of Steve Klapp's in last month's *Lamentations*, so I am sharing it with you now. This was written by Carol Mason's son Steve, who was killed in an automobile accident February 8, 1993, His symbol is an eagle.

UNSUNG HERO

My mother is my unsung hero. She is about 5 feet 8 inches all, and she weighs around 135 pounds. She has brownish, red hair, and she is very dark.

Whenever she sees someone she knows, she waves or speaks to them, She has a great personality. She gets up at 7:00 each morning and talks on the telephone to all her friend. She has had seven surgeries in the past two years. She goes to church all the time. She cares about young people sometimes when we rim low on money she gives me money anyway. She is always a nice mother. Whenever I'm side and the medicine does not help, she makes me feel better by talking to me. Sometimes when she feels ill, she still Roes around the house to dean it up. She cooks the best supper; she also cooks my favorite dish whenever I ask her to. Sometimes I get into trouble with my step farther, and she talks him out of grounding me. When I am bored she will play the Nintendo with me and that is always a thrill. She thinks she's better than me, but she is not, She even watches football, which most ladies would not even think of doing She is my mom, and I love her.

Steve L Klapp

Dave and Kathy Griffin's son Todd died May 23, 1992. They plan a small and informal "memorial" service at his graveside with a few of their closest and dearest friends. Kathy writes that spring time has been a blessing this year. She says that it has "revived and renewed" the hope she has that that the Creator has provided them with eternal life. She tries to always remember that the best is yet to come. What a positive attitude!

Jim and Judy Rose's son Scott was killed in an automobile accident July 4, 1983. Their symbols are a rose and clowns. Judy wrote these poems:

February 19th, Your Birthday! Your wonderful birthday! Does it cease because you are no longer here with us of course not, that was one of the happiest days of our lives. Our first horn, we couldn't begin to express how much we loved you. . .

July 4th, Independence Day! Your death day... while others remember and celebrate Independence Day, our hearts grieve and ache on your death day, will we ever heal? I don't know, maybe, if we give our love and your love to those in need, then it will he what God loves and we will be better indeed!

Why do I want to be alone when I am not a loner? It is because people are uncomfortable when I mention Scott. They tell me to forget his death that life is for the living How absurd! What is life? Fun, parties, laughter &- no pain? Yes, but there is so very much more that you don't understand. I forgive your ignorance as God must surely forgive us when we talk and we should be listening. . .

The dam cracked and broke the day you died, my tears flooded everything day and night, Slowly, Oh! So slowly, over the years I have somehow managed to contain most of the tears, but, occasionally with birthdays, anniversaries and New Years, the tears flow again when I want you to be so near.

I just realized today that next year you will be gone ten years. . . We only had you with us twenty years. Ten years pills twenty years equal - I love you and I miss you very much.

When the sun shines bright, it reminds me of you. Your beautiful smile would dazzle any heart. But, when the sun shines bright, there is always a chance of rain, because I can't always predict when the tears will fall.

Judy Rose
3-3-92

Janet Brashear's daughter Denise, was killed in an automobile accident August 23, 1991. Denise was a student at Cumberland College. Janet has selected a teddy bear and a mask to represent Denise (Snuggles).



Luther and Rosemary Smith have established the **Drew and Jeremiah Smith Scholarship**

Fund at The McCallie School in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Both of their sons were students there. They have also placed a bronze sculpture entitled "*The Athlete*" in the spectator Gallery of the Sports and Activities Center on McCallie's campus to memorialize Drew and Jeremiah. May 20, 1993, the first Drew and Jeremiah Smith Scholarships were given to the Valedictorian and Salutatorian at Lee County High School. These scholarships will be annual awards, as will the Scholarship at McCallie. The Smith's symbol is a yellow butterfly. Drew and Jeremiah were killed in an automobile accident July 23, 1992, They will be remembered.



Sally Arias is very active in the Leukemia Society since her son Ray died from complications of treatment for Leukemia, February 26, 1993. This past month she, personally raised \$2,000 for the Lexington Tennis Tournament. As a result, her picture will be on 10 billboards in the Lexington area. When you see them, be reminded of Ray. This parent is going to make a difference with Leukemia research.

May 31, my mother's birthday, the second Jim Taylor II Scholarship was presented to a graduating senior at Williamsburg High School who will be attending Cumberland College, This student was presented with a medallion which he then wore at the high school graduation and will also wear when he graduates from Cumberland College.



Frankie and Gail Noble's son Chad was killed in an automobile accident with his friend Tony, March 9, 1991. The Nobles have chosen "praying hands" as their symbol.



For the fathers who are reading this newsletter, I wish you a special Father's Day that will be balanced with many wonderful memories of the loved one you have lost. May you also take a portion of this day to make memories for the future, and they in turn will be added to your

special Father's Day next year. As you know, the memories are what we cling to during our grief.

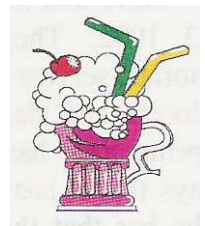
Nancy Hannon's 19 year old son Mike was killed in an automobile accident February 6, 1993, Her symbol for Mike is a smiley face. She wrote the following after several of us met in Lexington last month:

CHRIST'S CHOSEN CHILDREN

CATASTROPHE brought us together
CLAIMING our beautiful loved ones, the
CHILDREN who are the biggest part of our every thought
CHRIST'S most precious gift has been taken from us
CAUSING us excruciating pain
COMMUNICATION with each other will help with our grief
COMPASSION toward one another can be warmly felt
CORRESPONDENCE (by phone or mail) is greatly appreciated by each of us
CONVERSATION about our children with our group, was a wonderful way to share our feelings with one another
CONTINUOUSLY we can speak of our children, because we share a special bond
CONTROL of our emotions we will lose from time to time
COMING together we share our thoughts, pictures and feelings was a very special time
CHRIST chose our children—Why? We don't know!
CATASTROPHE brought us together but,
CHOOSING to be Friends was our own choice, and I think it is a very good choice
COMING to Lexington for our first meeting has caused many friendships to develop.

Thank You Dinah and Rosemary for making this possible.
 Love, Nancy Hannon
 Could we do it again soon?

Just as a meal is not complete until the dessert is eaten, a newsletter is not complete until you receive "*words of wisdom*" from The Whiz. (How was your life ever complete before these "jewels" of knowledge?)



GOD MUST HAVE LOVED CALORIES, HE MADE SO MANY OF THEM!!!