

# Batter Up!

by Margaret Bownley, Simi Valley, California

*When baseball season lacks your wild enthusiasm  
it strikes out for me....*

Grief hits in waves. At certain times of the year, it can become unbearable, especially during the holidays. A widow friend is hit the hardest during the opening day of baseball. Every April, she is assailed by memories of her husband donning his baseball cap and taking off for the nearest ball park to coach a Little League team.

"I never could understand the appeal of baseball," she admits. "So I seldom went to his games. About a year follow-

ing my husband's death my grandson begged me to go to his game. I went, and that's when I realized that baseball wasn't just a game to my husband, it was a philosophy of life."

She went to explain that her husband lived his life like a coach, encouraging everyone he met. "Way to go," he'd say, clapping his hands when a toddler took his first step. "Keep your eye on the ball," he'd counsel a teen having difficulty in school. According to his widow, nothing gave him more pleasure than rewarding even the smallest accomplishment with a high-five.

Sometimes it takes us many months to realize the full extent of our loss. A year passed before my friend realized hers. Not only had she lost her business partner, lover, best friend, and father of her children, she'd also lost her coach.

Wouldn't it be great if we each had a coach-a grieving coach? Someone to cheer us on through the difficult days and tell us to keep our eye on the ball? What we need is a coach to give us a "high-five" for each stride forward to tell us. "way to go" when we rise above depression, to "get a move-on" when circling the bases of life seems impossible.

If you don't have a grieving coach, be your own. Reward yourself for every accomplishment, no matter how small. If you got through the day, even an hour; without crying, treat yourself to something new. If you clean out your loved one's closet or make it through an anniversary, invite a friend to lunch or a movie. If you smile and laugh without feeling guilty, look in the mirror and give yourself a high-five.

Be kind to yourself, be patient. If you strike out, plan to do better your next time at bat.

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| July 8  | Adult Grief Support Group, 6:30 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie Meeting Room; Jerry Hodges, facilitator  |
| July 12 | Compassionate Friends Support Group-for families who have experienced the death of a child, 7 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie; Nancy Renner, facilitator |
| July 21 | Bereavement Luncheon, 12 noon, Inn Pancake House, 1610 W. Wyatt Earp, Dodge City; Dick Robbins, host  |
| July 22 | Adult Grief Support Group, 6:30 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie Meeting Room; Jerry Hodges, facilitator  |



# Bereavement Newsletter

July 2010

200 Fourth Circle • Dodge City, KS

Tel: (620) 227-7209 • Fax: (620) 227-7429

## Unanswered Questions

*David Ensz, an accountant in the Cimarron area, has very generously allowed Hospice of the Prairie to print some of his writings about his wife, Mary Ann's illness and his life since her death. In the next few months, some of his writings will appear in this newsletter in hopes of reaching out to others like David and his family, who are walking that hard road of grief. Hospice of the Prairie would like to express sincere appreciation to David Ensz for sharing his deeply personal and honest writings. This series is dedicated in Memory of Mary Ann Ensz.*

noticed that it isn't quite as frequent, but the pain is no less when it comes. Maybe it's healing, maybe it's our Wonderful Creator's way of making us so we can cope with loss, but experience has taught me that after a time the pain will lessen again. And that knowledge makes it just a little easier to handle it. The mind is a wonderful thing, and I marvel at how it is able to shut out unpleasantness or pain to a degree in order to protect itself. I guess when that defense mechanism fails to work is when people have a nervous breakdown. Whatever that is. As if I know something about it.

Is there a difference between healing and getting used to pain? I always thought that one of the signs of healing was a lessening of the pain. I'm not sure of that anymore. I think I have

Why is it that the more beautiful the sunset, the fresher the morning, the greater the enjoyment of being with friends, the funnier the story, the sadder the tale, the more heartwarming the news, or in other words, the better,

the finer, the nicer, or the more unusual the thing is, the more likely it will end in tears now? I guess because she loved and enjoyed those things so much, they are more likely to remind us of her. And the old saying that in love our joys will be multiplied and our sorrows shared is more true than I had ever realized. There is something very deflating about remembering suddenly that she isn't there to share the news with. I still start making a mental note to be sure and tell her about something that impresses me and then get jolted back to the reality that I will never share a laugh or a tear with her again.

Is it true that there are people who think there is too much fuss made over losing a loved one? That it isn't necessary to cry so much? I think I can answer this one. There would be two kinds of people that would think that. Those who have never lost someone close to them and those who have not really loved. But the next question is harder and I don't have an answer. When does normal grieving stop and the pity party start? All I know to do about that question is pray that God will show me if and when this pain is selfishness instead of grief. If you have an idea on this one, I would like to hear it.

## Hospice of the Prairie Memory Bears

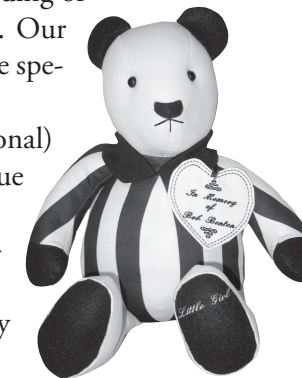
Deciding what to do with a loved one's clothing can be an emotional and confusing task for those who are grieving. That favorite shirt Mom used to wear is special, but what do you do with it now that she is gone?

Allow Hospice of the Prairie to transform that beloved shirt or robe into an adorable teddy bear. The bear then becomes a huggable memorial of your loved one and a family treasure to be cherished by generations. You may also wish to order a "Memory Heart" which has the wording of your choice embroidered with coordinating colors. Our seamstresses are skilled and experienced and will take special care the fabric you provide.

18 inch bears are \$60. The Memory Heart (optional) is \$10. Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery. Payment is due on delivery.

Come in and look at our Memory Bear Photo Album to get ideas for your bear!

For more information, please contact Nancy Renner at 620-227-7209.



BEREAVEMENT NEWSLETTER is a publication of Hospice of the Prairie, Inc., 200 Fourth Circle., Dodge City, KS 67801, (620) 227-7209, www.hospiceoftheprairie.com. Please help us keep our printing and mailing costs down by notifying us if your address has changed or you no longer wish to be on our newsletter list.

NONPROFIT  
ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
DODGE CITY, KS  
PERMIT NO. 424

Hospice of the Prairie, Inc.  
200 Fourth Circle  
P.O. Box 1298  
Dodge City, KS 67801

