

What is Mourning?

By Anne Macaire

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<i>Dr. Tadepalli reflects on rituals</i>	5		When I am with someone who has lost a beloved and they begin a sentence with “I know this will sound stupid but...”
<i>Ways to Mourn</i>	6	Since ancient times humankind has mourned. For thousands of years we have found expression for our loss and grief through rituals, customs and traditions that support and enrich this experience of life passing.	I am prepared to hear something sweet, sincere and genuine about their relationship.
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Since time immemorial we have held funerals, but today there is a trend away from this tradition that brings families and community together at a time when it is most needed. More and more often the dying wish is a request for ‘no service’ because it is seen as a burden on the family. And yet often the ones left behind who want to honour those final wishes feel bereft of the sense of closure or simple sharing that a memorial service can provide.

It is heartening that many Yukon First Nations have brought back the potlatch tradition that supports remembering, mourning, and connecting with community, for all of this makes up the healing journey.

When we are hurting, whether it is physical or emotional, we heal more quickly when we are comforted. Finding ways to feel comfort and take care of ourselves can help with our grieving. Embracing our mourning is one of the surest ways to bring tenderness and compassion to ourselves and those around us.



The Wind Telephone

By Clea Roberts



Whether our grief is expressed as publicly as a giant flag waved in the sky or as privately as a quiet stroll in a forest, we know that the expression of grief is the key to our healing. Self-expression can help us to, among other things, define ourselves in the new landscape of loss, to be angry at what was taken from us, and to provide a way to inventory our blessings. The reason why self-expression is so important is because it externalizes our complicated emotions around loss. Externalizing emotions lets us see grief for what it is—something that is significant, life altering, uncontainable and, hopefully, something that will evolve and become more bearable over time.

This past year, I had the honour of developing and teaching a Hospice workshop for people who wanted to learn journaling techniques for processing loss. Journaling is something that I have always gravitated toward because I find private, contemplative, self-expression very soothing. Expressing myself through journaling helps me solve problems, vent anger, build my self-awareness and externalize and resolve complicated emotions. Knowing how essential journaling is to my health and well-being, when Hospice called asking me to facilitate a journaling workshop I was happy to volunteer.

Registration opened and the class was filled with a waiting list the very same day. Clearly, Hospice wasn't alone in thinking that journaling held value as a way of processing grief. Over the two evenings we had together, I spoke to the group about the different benefits of journaling and some ways to deepen the journaling experience. I taught different journaling techniques, gave ideas on how to make time for journaling in a busy life, and provided everyone with a drawstring bag full of daily writing prompts to take away. We had a lot of group discussions, one of which

focused on why we were drawn as individuals to journaling. The general consensus was that we journaled because we needed to express ourselves, and that this self-expression was essential to living a good life. And, more important than just talking about journaling, we put pen to paper and wrote. One of the exercises that really connected participants to their grief was an exercise I call "The Wind Telephone".

The exercise is named for the real 'wind telephone' (or kaze no denwa) in Otsuchi, Japan. The phone is an old, black, rotary style device that sits in a white phone-booth overlooking

*With self-expression,
we can plumb our
depths and bring our
grief into the light.*

*And in seeing our grief
clearly, we can begin
to understand it
and to heal.*



The Wind Telephone

the ocean. Itaru Sasaki, a 70 year-old resident of Otsuchi, set up the phone-booth in his hillside garden to create a private space where he could cope with the loss of his cousin. The phone was never connected, but he would visit the booth regularly to talk to his dead cousin. His words, his self-expression, travelled in the only way I could imagine reaching someone dear we have lost—over the wind. The magic realism of picking up a wind telephone to talk to the dead still puts me in a state of awe—even after sharing this story so many, many times.

After the tragic 2011 tsunami that leveled much of Japan's north-east coastline and killed more than 15,000 people, the phone booth became a place of pilgrimage for people who wanted to talk to their dead relatives. It was a way to say things they couldn't say because their loved ones had been taken from them so suddenly and unexpectedly. The wind telephone became a well-known site—three years after the disaster, it had drawn over 10,000 visitors. All of these people came to talk privately—to express themselves in conversation with those they had lost.

In the Hospice journaling workshop, we use the idea of the wind telephone to connect with our loved ones through journaling. Each participant is asked to think about a loved one they have lost, and to write them a letter. This

self-expression through journaling allows people to voice things left unsaid or to articulate new insight or turmoil that has come about as part of the grieving process. With self-expression, we can plumb our depths and bring our grief into the light. And in seeing our grief clearly, we can begin to understand it and to heal. And, if there is any possibility of a silver lining around grief it is this: through our healing from grief we can grow. This growth changes us in profound ways. Through change, we can thrive in new ways unavailable to our old self.

So who would you call on the wind telephone? And what would you say to them? Has it been a long time or was it just a week ago you last saw them? Maybe you would just hold the receiver to your ear and enjoy the silence between two people. Maybe you would yell or whisper or cry or laugh. I've always valued other cultures for what they can teach us about the difficult but rewarding work of being human. And because we all, regardless of our culture, share the capacity to know love and to experience loss, there is a whole world of ways to heal from grief. If you are feeling stuck on your grieving journey, I hope you'll consider journaling (or any form of self-expression) to help you process your loss.



Spring Planting

Poem excerpt by Clea Roberts

*Grief is a slow
river, never freezing
to the bottom.*

*

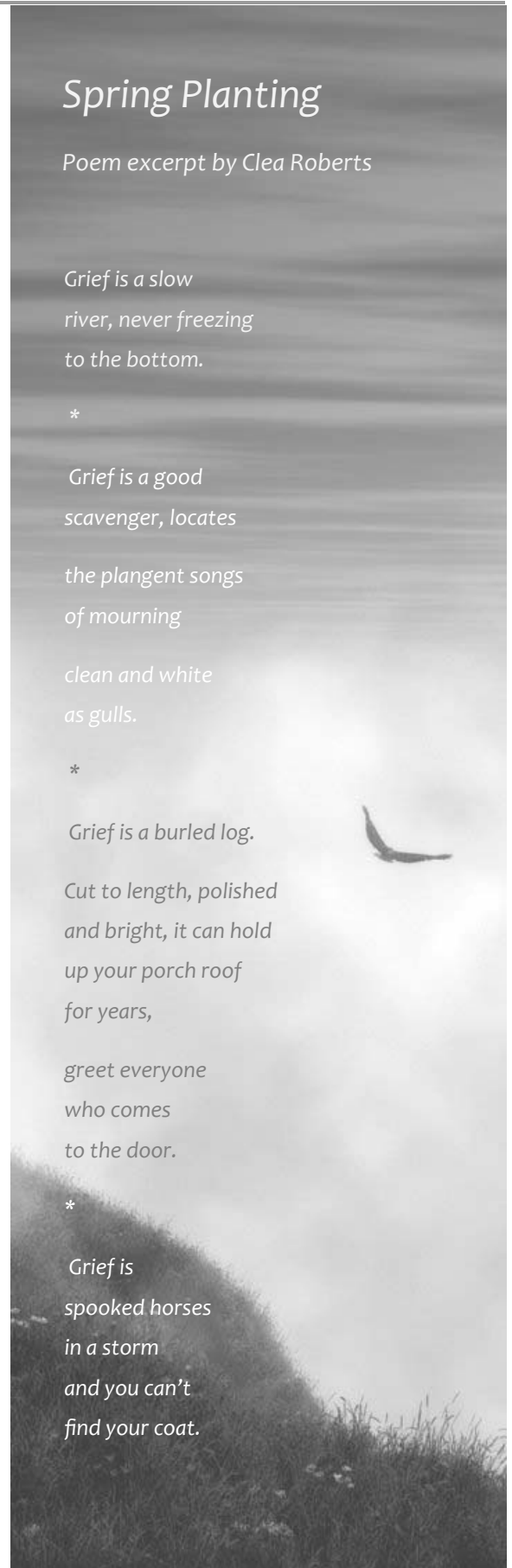
*Grief is a good
scavenger, locates
the plangent songs
of mourning
clean and white
as gulls.*

*

*Grief is a burled log.
Cut to length, polished
and bright, it can hold
up your porch roof
for years,
greet everyone
who comes
to the door.*

*

*Grief is
spooked horses
in a storm
and you can't
find your coat.*



Honouring A Loved One Your Own Way

By Krystal Olito

When a family walks into the funeral home and the first thing out of their mouth is “Mom has requested no service, please just have her cremated and we’ll take her ashes.” I have to question, *well what do you need?* Did you want a funeral service, a memorial, or a celebration of life?

There seems to be a significant shift in funeral service recently. I have been working at Heritage North Funeral Home for 6 years now, and as a newly licensed funeral director and embalmer I notice that we see less and less of the ‘typical funeral’. This is not necessarily a bad thing, it is just the way our society is moving—more people want personalized memorial services.

This is a very positive thing if taken in the right direction. The most important fact is that we are not only celebrating a life lived, but also grieving and mourning it. Mourning allows the bereaved to publicly show that they are grieving and that support is desired. Grieving is a more personal experience that is different for everyone; it allows us to emotionally show that we miss our loved one.

A service can be anything from a celebration of life at a public place with four hundred guests, to a three person private service at the funeral home. There is no limit on how to mourn a loved one.

There are valuable benefits to having a memorial service of some type.

Catherine Saunders, the author of *Surviving Grief*, outlines that a memorial service:

“Initiates bereavement; Provides support and comfort to the bereaved; Validates the life of the deceased; Serves to recognize the major change that has taken place in the lives of the bereaved; Gives people the opportunity to publicly acknowledge their love and devotion to the deceased; The rituals are, in the highest sense, a celebration of that life.”

Sometimes families are the ones who do not want to have a public service. I try to suggest a simple yet significant way to celebrate their loved one:

A family dinner and favourite meal mom used to make, going for a hike on your favourite trail and sitting to reflect on a life lost, a small graveside service and releasing balloons to ‘release’ a loved one together, having grandma’s favorite tea with her fine china.

Anything that brings you closer to the one you have lost is a meaningful experience and can be a way to help you in the grief process.

As a funeral director I see the importance of having some type of memorialization after a life has ended. There needs to be a grieving period and a celebration to show that this life was significant and has

impacted people.

Part of our job as funeral directors is to help the bereaved find expression for their emotions through ritual. We can help by showing them effective ways to help the mourning process.

Funeral services are also a way to start the grief work; it allows us to un-attach from the physical being and to mentally accept that they are gone. This is a hard task but a very healthy part of grief work. Funeral rituals are a valuable way to recapture the essence of our relationship with the one who has died.

Ultimately there are no rules in funeral service; there are no limits on how personal, how small or how large the celebration has to be.

It can be a tough time for the community to show they care. Many do not want to impose but it is an amazing feeling to have the love and support shown from many different people. The community is able to show the family members an integrated image of the deceased.

By personalizing the service we are able to say goodbye to our loved one the way we need and want to.

I hope that over the next few years I continue to see a significant shift in the way funeral service is going, and that we as funeral providers are able to accommodate people in the best way that suits their needs.



Krystal Olito was a funeral director at Heritage North Funeral Home in Whitehorse.

“Funeral rituals are a valuable way to recapture the essence of our relationship with the one who has died.”



“having grandma’s favourite tea with her fine china”

A family physician reflects on rituals By Dr. Rao Tadepalli

Whether we expect it or not, the reality of the life cycle process ends in losing a loved one, whether it be a close friend, somebody we came to know, or a family member.

Thoughts of that person, what they would be doing if they were still around, and thinking of their lives fill our conscious brain after they have passed away.

Personally, as doctors, we have come across many who are going through this very sensitive period.

Researchers have suggested that the normal 'grieving period' is anywhere between 3 months to 2 years, but can be longer.

Most people 'slow down', pause for a moment and recant the memories with the

person they have lost. Those vivid arguments, birthdays and other things, may bring a smile or a tear to your face.

Meeting with your friends or family, going over your memories of the person, and looking at pictures helps bring a tone of completion.

Counseling in the form of an experienced friend, family or professional counselor is helpful in most situations.

Local Hospice Yukon can be a helpful resource at the time of need to help connect the dots and provide useful information.

At times the end comes unannounced and prematurely. This is quite a difficult time and one needs all the support they can get from friends, colleagues,

counselors, study or work place.

Doing something to honor the loved ones life also, in most cases, helps with the healing process.

Examples I have encountered that honour the lost ones would be; to have a formal funeral, holding a ceremony, immersing or spreading ashes, erecting a bench, or doing nothing according to the loved one's wishes.

When one is healthy and safe, return to normal activity as much as possible lessens the pain of the loss.

In closing I would say that every person's healing process is different and we need to be mindful and respectful of the way they cope.



Dr. Rao Tadepalli has supported many patients through major losses in their lives.

"Doing something to honor the loved one's life also helps with the healing process."

Death Is Nothing At All A Poem by Henry Scott Holland

This is the poem that was read at Yukoner Trevor Sellars' celebration of life:

Death is nothing at all.
I have only slipped away to the next room.
I am I and you are you.
Whatever we were to each other,
That, we still are.

Call me by my old familiar name.
Speak to me in the easy way
which you always used.
Put no difference into your tone.
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.

Laugh as we always laughed
at the little jokes we enjoyed together.

Play, smile, think of me. Pray for me.
Let my name be ever the household
word
that it always was.
Let it be spoken without effect.
Without the trace of a shadow on it.

Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same that it ever was.
There is absolute unbroken continuity.
Why should I be out of mind
because I am out of sight?

I am but waiting for you.
For an interval.
Somewhere. Very near.
Just around the corner.



Ways to Mourn

We asked volunteers and others about what they have done to mourn the death of a loved one...the little things that helped them through the hardest times. Here is what they shared:



Because my daughter was buried on our rural property, I was able to visit her grave often. I hung a wrought iron lantern beside her, and made little beeswax candles for it. When I visited her, I would light a candle and when I got back to the house, I could see its flickering light. It felt like our special connection. It also allowed me to feel like I was 'mothering' her by providing light to her dark place on the hill.

- Katy Delau

When my dad passed away, I took his ashes on one of my favourite walks in the hills near my home. There is a spot with remnants from an old cabin that overlooks the valley where I can sit and think of him. He was never a really active guy but it is a place that I would have loved to have shown him. Now when I go for walks I stop by 'Grandpa's bench' and imagine him sitting there admiring the scenery.

- Carrie Dinn



Oscar came to live with us for three brief years and died young and suddenly. It was the first time I 'got it' about pet loss and what a pet can be: compassion and love for everyone. I did the Loss & Creative Expression Workshop and made a booklet with his photo and wrote briefly about the qualities he shared with us all. Something in the creating with my hands connecting to my brain moved my healing along. I was surprised. The booklet comforts me as it sits on my kitchen cabinet.

- Barb Evans-Ehrich



When my brother was dying I made a rag quilt constantly thinking of warmth and love for him. Before sending it to him I smudged it, concentrating all my strength into seeing him and I did Healing Touch on the blanket.

When he left us I placed a square of the flannel I used to make his blanket and pinned it behind a picture of us together. When I touch it or look it I know he is in a better place, not in pain ...and in time I will be ok too.

- Christine Gray



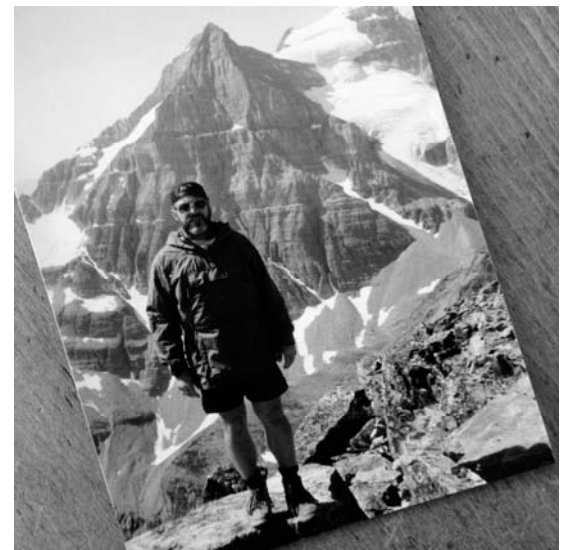
I mourned the death of our dog Jaz by painting this portrait of her for my son, who was very close to her. It felt really good to spend intimate time with a photo of Jaz, noticing and re-creating the details of her beautiful nose and paws and zenned-out eyes, and recalling how her presence brought such a sense of peace and love.

- Becky Striegler



When I had a miscarriage at ten weeks, I bought a statue of Jizo, the Buddhist patron saint of unborn babies. When I lived in Japan, I'd seen parents dressing these statues in temples and leaving snacks and toys with them in hope that Jizo would deliver these supplies to their children in the afterlife. I always thought this was a touching way to honor the souls of the unborn, but when I found myself in the same position, I found great comfort in mothering the statue itself -- crocheting it clothes, planting a garden for it in the yard. I still make my Jizo a new outfit every spring as my way of remembering the baby who never was.

- Angela Elson

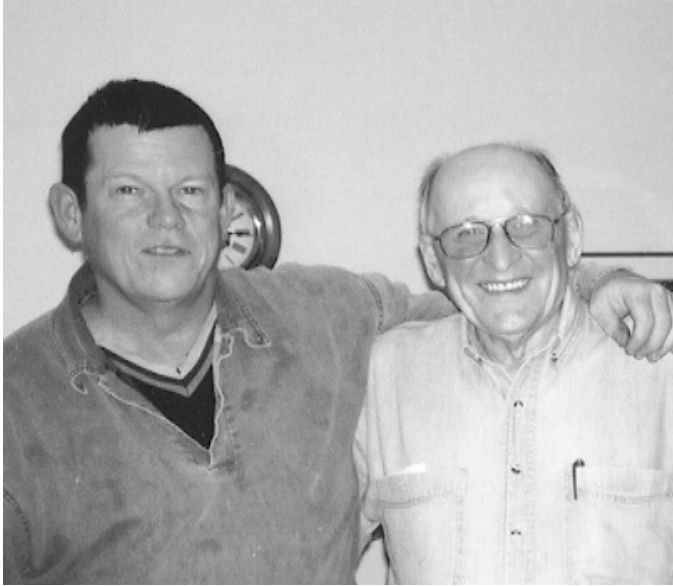


I was 32 when my dad passed away and worried that I would forget about him. So I started making a list describing favorite expressions, odd things he liked, a laugh, a smell, a funny face, or a bad habit he had to remind me of him. At first, memories were overwhelming. I cried a lot. Memories would come and tears followed. Each little memory was like pearls on a string. Keeping the list 'alive' was a good thing for me; I was not afraid of losing my father anymore.

- Sandra St. Laurent

Celebrating a Life

By Doug Bell



Doug Bell (right) and his son, Bernie (left), who died of cancer in January of this year.

"The richness my wife and my son brought to our lives helps our family carry on."

Once upon a time, many decades ago, a friend asked me to do something I'd never done. She wanted me to do a eulogy at a "celebration of life." I had not met the phrase before, and was appalled at the thought of celebrating the loss of our friend.

Thinking long and deeply about the unique friend we had lost I soon embraced wholeheartedly a celebration of her life as the way forward, not an ending.

Our current proliferation of experts have put another word in my face about loss of life. I hear it almost daily, but

as "celebration" grew, "closure!" does not, as it pours out from every electronic orifice in the land if I switch them on.

Speaking personally "celebration" I need, "closure" I do not, ever. One pundit defined closure, as most grammar school grads know, as to 'finish', 'conclude', or 'an end.'

I have no desire for a conclusion! Yes, moving on as we must but I will continue to celebrate their lives. The richness my wife and my son brought to our lives helps our family carry on.

Our individual family celebrations of life will vary, and be as unique as each family is unique. That is our way and as it should be I think.

Recognizing and celebrating everyone's uniqueness is what we did with an Open Door to our home in Bernie's name in March.

It's a home where he played, talked, argued and laughed. When you pick up, or look at something in this simple family home, the stories flow.

The very air is rich with memories and this day we chose to be his day again. It was informal, as was he, but oh, he could fill a house with laughter and joy—and often did, our Mr. Reliable.

It was an informal "come when you can, stay as long as you can" gathering of friends and family. It was Bernie's way.

Besides, he loved a party, and we filled it with his personality through sharing memories of his foibles, follies and triumphs. This sharing from his friends, co-workers, customers, and all who met him on his trails around this place he loved was a gift to Caroline, Trevor, Leah and myself.

Closure will not come to this home. A continuing celebration of memories will, for they will carry us through as we move on toward our time!

I share an anonymous sourdough tribute with you which fits him, and all his friends and co-workers in the trucking industry, who daily contribute so much to this Yukon, the northern home we share.

"This is a hard, demanding country. For the most part it has always attracted the more self-reliant, individualistic and adventurous type of people. Most asked little of others, but gave freely of themselves. They were people worth knowing, and worth remembering."

They are, oh yes they are!

*"Little by little, step by step,
I learned that I didn't need to hang on to the death
to remember the life.
What a joyous discovery."*

Katie Brown

A Community Remembers *By Stacey Jones*



"It was a beautiful afternoon, which I think helped us all through our early days of the grieving process..."

In 2000, when my mother, Vivien, was dying from lung cancer, she told us that she did not want a funeral. She was a humble woman who never liked to draw attention to herself, so not wanting a funeral service came as no surprise to us.

We lived in a small town where my parents had lived for decades upon decades.

When it came time to decide how we could honour our mother's wishes and the many relationships that exist when you live in a tight knit community, we decided to host a potluck luncheon at the Community Hall.

Hundreds of family and friends gathered to pay their

respects and celebrate the life of a woman that many came to love.

My father, sisters and I sorted through photographs old and new and created display boards with pictures that we thought mom would approve of.

No one stood in front of the crowd to share any final words or stories about this woman. Instead, we each mingled and talked amongst ourselves sharing our sadness and joy.

It was a beautiful afternoon, which I think helped us all through our early days of the grieving process, while honouring the one that we had lost.

I often look back, reflect and wonder what my mom would have thought about that afternoon; I think that she would have enjoyed seeing all of us together.

I also think that she would have gained some comfort in knowing that we would eventually be okay.

How couldn't we be, with all of the love and kindness that was gathered in that big old hall?

There is no doubt in my mind that she would have been completely humbled to see just how many people came out that cool October afternoon to honour her and her family.

Honouring Dad with Dignity *By Trish Eccles*



Trish with her Dad, Ross Eccles, on one of his visits to the Yukon.

My dad died of pneumonia on September 11, 2012, exactly 3 weeks after his 90th birthday. I had the good fortune of being with him during the last week of his life and when he died.

My sister and I are very different people but fortunately when it came to making arrangements for our mom's death 14 years ago and our dad's death in September, my sister summed it up by saying, "We do this really well together."

We knew we would not be planning a traditional funeral for our dad as we had for our mom, which in many ways

was a blessing because it meant we didn't have to rush.

We planned his celebration of life for September 29th which meant that his sister from Ontario would be able to be there. It also gave us more time to write his obituary and for me to work on his eulogy.

Our dad was a pilot instructor during W.W. II and was a member of the Legion. We found out that the Colour Party from the Legion of which our dad was a member could come and march at his service. This turned out to be the highlight of our dad's memorial. The Legion

members were all in uniform and marched in with flags and recited a prayer. We found a bugle player and bagpipe player who played The Last Post and Reveille. I'm pretty certain there was not a dry eye in the house at that point!

All of this gave our dad's service such an air of dignity, honour and respect that I had not anticipated and it was overwhelming, rich and meaningful. I know our dad would have been extremely proud of 'his girls' for pulling it all together and would have been delighted at the number of people who attended and how it all worked out.

My Brother Died *By Susan Walton*



Just over a year ago my only sibling Brian died. He was my older brother by a year and eight days. I had never known life without him. Brian died of a sudden heart attack. He was 53.

One of the hardest things I've had to do in my life was to tell my mom that her first-born child had died.

Brian made his life in China. His family lived an ex-pat lifestyle with a housekeeper, a cook and drivers. When we arrived in Beijing after the 14-hour flight, it seemed we couldn't do anything; even making a cup of tea was taken care of by their Ayi. This meant we were isolated not only by the language barrier but idle with our emotions as well.

People came by who knew my brother's daily life more than me. I had hard feelings of being 'just the sister.' I felt I couldn't show more emotion than my mom, Li Hui or the kids. I felt stabs of guilt for not visiting more often.

For the funeral we followed Chinese tradition along with smatterings of Buddhist and Christian faiths. We lit candles and offered food, we burnt fake money on the city streets chanting "this is for you Brian."

Our own father had died when we were teenagers and this felt like history repeating itself.

I know how important it was to hear stories about my dad and so sharing our childhood memories is something I can do for TJ, Syndi Li and Daniel.

When I look at them I see and feel my brother. I forever want them to know how very proud he would always be of them.

Back in the Yukon I couldn't face work. I couldn't face friends too well either. I hid myself away in the safe comfort of home. Despite knowing it was not healthy, eating popcorn and watching Netflix for weeks on end was all I could do.

My work mates were quietly and generously supportive. I struggled to feel in the moment while being an upbeat nurse helping patients through their own issues.

Soon, I walked into Hospice house. I picked up a felted heart and was warmly greeted. The very air was peaceful. I had Healing Touch, and felt relaxed for the first time in months. I went to a counselor and talked. She listened. It helped.

In the spring I was a participant in the GPB photography show 'This is How I Really Feel'. It was a vulnerable and powerful process to share my grief with a wider Yukon audience. I posed in my nurses uniform with a black band on my arm. The black band used to signify a period of mourning. I seriously considered adopting the idea as a way to indicate to others to please be just a little more gentle. So strange that we live in a world where we have to ask for kindness.

As summer came my mom and I chose pink flowering shrubs to plant in honour of Brian. We watched with a strange sadness as two of the shrubs wilted and died soon after. Despite knowing that we all die, that life and death are part of the whole, it doesn't make it any easier to

walk through. Mom and I reminisce and let our feelings bubble up together. We hug each other and never leave without saying "I love you."

Within a 6-month period of time we ended up losing 5 family members. My brother, a cousin, 2 uncles and then last March, my husband's mother, Lenore, died as well.

One of the rituals we do is to light candles in their memory. This provides a moment to reflect, to cry and perhaps to smile with certain memories. The candlelight also feels warming to our hearts.

Grief is a personal journey. My husband John and I focus on remembering to be gentle with each other. I feel so very lucky to have him to hold.

It has been just over a year since Brian died. The fog of grief has slowly lifted. The intense hidden bathroom crying and middle of the night wrenching sadness has abated. I can talk about Brian without my eyes instantly filling up with tears.

Feelings of sorrow are now tempered with acceptance and a touch of lightness. Exercise, being outside and talking with friends helps so much. I can dance and laugh again despite knowing that life will never be the same. I'd like to say I've done a lot of 'work' on my grief over the past year – but honestly, it has been an up and down affair and I feel the greatest work is that of time itself.



I walked into Hospice house. I picked up a felted heart and was warmly greeted. The very air was peaceful. I had Healing Touch, and felt relaxed for the first time in months. I went to a counselor and talked. She listened. It helped.

Rituals of Death and Dying from a Yukon First Nations Perspective

Cultures around the world have always had traditions and customs for the end of life. Funerals, ceremonial fires, food offerings, song, dance, the laying of flowers, and more have given expression to one of the most poignant moments we experience. Helping us to accept the reality of death, feel the pain of grief, receive support, and honour the deceased - these practices bring greater meaning to life after loss.

Here in the Yukon each of the 14 different First Nations has its own traditions surrounding death and grief. Each community - and families and individuals within each community - have their distinct ways of mourning the lives of those they have lost.

First Nations people, from all Yukon communities, make up about one third of those who turn to Hospice for grief support. Many are bridging their traditional customs and the modern life in which they live and work. One traditional practice that is honoured by many, but not all, is the potlatch.

For most, the clan system is an integral part of the potlatch ceremonies. In the Yukon, all First Nations people belong to one of two clans: the Wolf or the Crow. The clans are matrilineal - children inherit clan lineage from their mother - and typically marry members of the

opposite clan. Each clan has responsibilities towards the opposite clan, especially in times of loss.

When a death occurs in a community, traditionally members from the opposite clan come to take care of the needs of the deceased person's immediate family. These include making food, housekeeping and welcoming visitors. This allows the family to focus on receiving support and being with their own grief.

Soon after the death a funeral potlatch is held. This gathering is to honour the person who has died, provide support to the family, and bring everyone together in mourning. Usually it includes speeches and sharing food, but no singing or dancing.

Members of the opposite clan perform the duties of the funeral potlatch, including reserving the hall, preparing the order of service, making and serving food, dressing and transporting the body, digging the grave, and acting as pallbearers. Again, this lessens the burden on the family and allows them time to grieve.

In the time between the death and the funeral a 'spirit fire' may be kept burning day and night to help the spirit of the deceased cross over. Other traditions may include smudging the home, or burning favourite clothes of the deceased.

After the funeral potlatch about

a year goes by before the headstone potlatch is held. During this time the family members continue to be supported by community. Traditionally they make or gather items in memory of their loved one who died to give away at the headstone potlatch. By creating carvings, beadwork, gathering and preserving food, or buying special mementos they keep busy while honouring their loved one.

The headstone potlatch is held after this year of grieving. It is a celebration with singing, drumming, dancing, eating, giving gifts and naming ceremonies. The gifts given are those that were gathered or made over the year in memory of the deceased, and are given to members of the opposite clan as thanks for their work and support at the funeral potlatch. The headstone potlatch traditionally marks the end of the grieving period.

Nina Bolton, respected elder, counsellor and program facilitator for various Yukon First Nations has shared with us some of these traditions - just a few of the mourning customs used that are used by First Nations in the Yukon. There are many others, both big and small, that create opportunities for comfort and support after a loss. As Nina says "we will never forget, but we can let them go and move on in our lives in a healthy way".



Programs and Services

Living with Loss- An Introduction to Healthy Grieving

Gain a better understanding of the grief journey in this online education session. Offered four times per year.

Counselling

One-on-one counselling support for those who are dying or grieving, and those who love and care for them.

Grief Support Groups

We offer a variety of groups to help grieving people find support and connection with others who are also experiencing loss.
Visit our website for upcoming offerings.

Healing Touch

A relaxing energy therapy that supports holistic health.
Volunteers trained in Healing Touch use gentle touch to clear and balance your energy system.

Lending Library & Kids Corner

Our extensive library of books and resource material is open to the general public.

Professional Support

Support, education and resources for professionals and caregivers.

These resources are provided at no charge.

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