

Name

**The Magic Pill**

***by Jessie Flynn***

One month ago, my brother Jimmy died in a car accident on an icy road during a fluke April snow storm. I was devastated. Brother, best friend, confidante, fun-loving companion for life (or so I thought), he was my personal treasure. And after a tough childhood, we both had vowed always to be there for each other.

The irony of this loss is that I am a grief counselor who helps others heal. And now I am in such indescribable pain that getting through the day without crying or thinking constantly of him is impossible.

You see, I know the drill, but there’s no magic pill. The hard truth is that when we dearly love someone and that person is taken from us (the word “bereaved” literally means “robbed of”) we suffer. Absolutely. Positively. There’s no way around it.

I guess it helps to know the stages; shock, disbelief, confusion and chaos, reorganization and reinvestment in life. I realize sleep is necessary (if elusive). Food needs to be eaten (in spite of the butterflies). Exercise (walking, walking, and walking) alleviates some of the stress. But, this is hard work and I am exhausted.

Tears, Wow! They pour out whenever someone asks, “How are you doing?” They ambush me anywhere, any time…when I hear a song, when I look at his picture, when I do something he would have done for me. And at night (that’s the worst), I literally cry myself to sleep while I think about what could have been and would never be.

But you know what I’m talking about. You’ve been there. You know it stinks!

The truth is, even though I know this information in my head about healthy grieving, it’s my heart that is hurting. Sometimes, in fact, the boulder in my chest becomes unbearable. I shift between my head (“He’s at peace now!”) and my heart (“I miss you so much!”) until my mind says STOP (stop figuring it out, since you can’t) and my heart says OKAY ENOUGH (love lives on).

There is consolation, however, in knowing that all that I am experiencing right now is not permanent. I hold tightly onto hope for a different happy future. Why? Because I’ve seen people heal from loss over and over, and I know that the feelings will become less intense. I realize that memories of Jimmy will continue to enrich my life. Tears well up especially at holidays, on birthdays and other special events. But gradually the laughter will be greater than the tears when I recall how he was; everybody’s friend, a spirited, funny person who filled up a whole room with his energetic presence. Yep, he will forever be a huge part of my life. For that I am grateful.

So, I am in this healing journey from loss for the long haul. Just like you, it will take time, probably more than even I realize. But his life and our relationship and our love bond were worth it. Hopefully, we’ll get through this together (now that his spiritual help is permanently accessible). Certainly, the support of people who care will be invaluable.

Perhaps knowing the drill and knowing what to expect, as well as how to help myself, DOES help after all. I vow to take those actions that will ennoble the life of others, in addition to my own, and honor the memory of my brother as well. Rest assured, however, than when I do discover the magic pill, I shall make it available, free of charge for every one of you. That’s a promise.

Meanwhile, hold onto the hope. Trust the process of life (surely your loved ones would attest to its preciousness). I am.