

THE HOUSE BECAME MY PRISON

A husband's journey

Chuck's 60-year-old wife Gloria died unexpectedly from heart disease in 2014

BY CHUCK ANDREAS, adapted from the book,
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Self care articles for the bereaved

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Nothing prepares you

When Gloria passed away, I could not find anything to read that really covered the way I felt. I've seen people dying and dead. I've lost my grandparents and my parents, but nothing prepares you for when you lose your soulmate. Nothing.

I was not used to having a meltdown. I could be driving down the road, walking through the halls at work, or sitting on the couch at home. I even had to leave the grocery store once in the middle of shopping. Your emotions just take over. You can fight it, but your emotions win every time. Now I've come to accept them as moments of remembering how much I truly loved Glor.

They say you become part of a club; that's the way I've heard it described more than once. You really do become more aware of people who have lost their loved ones. It's a look you get from someone, or that extra hug.

When you get the opportunity to talk to someone who has unfortunately experienced a loss, please do that. You are not alone, and it really does help to talk to someone who has gone through it. Please don't hold it in like I did.

There was a couple, Frank and Judy, who said, "Just come over to our house. You don't have to say a word, just get out of the house." It helped me open up.

I will never be able to thank loved ones enough for the times they made sure I got out of the house to do something—anything—because the house became my prison. When I first lost Glor I needed time alone just to try to get myself together. But there comes a time when you need to let go of that security blanket. When you're ready, take a deep breath, open the door, and get outside.

I've been waiting to get over the pain of losing Glor, but I don't think I'll ever get over the pain. I'll just learn to live with it.

