

A SACRED DAY FOR BEREAVED MOTHERS

What I learned on my journey of grief

BY LYNDA CHELDELIN FELL, International Grief Institute
lynda@internationalgriefinstitute.com

Self care articles
for the bereaved

FOR PROFESSIONAL &
COMMUNITY USE



An iCare Aftercare resource
International Grief Institute

INTERNATIONALGRIEFINSTITUTE.COM

Today is International Bereaved Mother's Day, a day to honor those who walk the hardest journey known to motherhood.

It's been nearly nine years since I began such as transformative path, and although that isn't much time in the world of grief, it's enough to uncover treasured lessons buried deep under the rubble.

The journey begins very ugly.

"Why me, God?" I wailed. "What did I fail to do to deserve such a fate?"

**"It's not what you did not
do," said God. "It's what
you will do."**

I didn't understand, and stood at the door of The Wailing Tent spewing vile words and gnashing my teeth. Outside were solitary tents for mothers who weren't willing to accept fate's invitation. Not wanting to be alone in my agony, I forced myself across the threshold.

Inside the tent, sisters tended to my broken soul without judgment. They taught me that love comes in many forms, and we don't need to know

someone in order to love someone. For we love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

I also learned to love without boundaries and judgment. This is the point in my journey when judgment of others faded from my heart.

I learned about compassion in ways I never comprehended. My sisters taught me to have compassion without fixing another soul's problem, lest I rob them of an opportunity to grow.

In addition to love and compassion, I learned about forgiveness. Forgiveness not just for perceived imperfections in others, but for myself as well. This opens the door to self love.

Next comes gratitude. This isn't fathomable in the journey's beginning. But through profound sorrow we learn that life can change in an instant, and to appreciate all we have. A grateful heart is a happy heart.

I then learned about hope.

I discovered that grief comes in many forms, and without grief there would be no need for hope. Many are robbed of hope but when we help them find it, it helps our own heart to heal.

Finally comes beauty. I learned that our hearts can hold joy the same time as sorrow, and I merely had to give myself permission to embrace life's beauty. In doing so, it balances the sorrow.

**That was perhaps the hardest
lesson of all, and yet one
I treasure most.**

Inside The Wailing Tent, no words are spoken. The eyes and heart teach everything we need to know.

So, you see, while my journey began very ugly, it has transformed into one of beauty. When I earned my membership into The Wailing Tent, an ancient and sacred sisterhood known simply as the club, I learned to become an ambassador for love, compassion, forgiveness, gratitude, hope, and beauty.

Although I don't always get it right, the lessons I gained through losing a child helped me evolve into a better version of myself.

"It's not what you did not do. It's what you will do," God said.

Today I'm honored to be a member of The Wailing Tent, a place that receives all mothers embarking on life's hardest teachings.

I miss my child with every breath, an ache that lives inside my bones, but without such a journey I would never have had the opportunity to learn life's most valuable lessons.

I am grateful.

Happy Bereaved Mother's Day to all.

