

GRIEF BEGINS AT 0.08%

A son's journey

Carl's 56-year-old father James was killed by two drunk drivers in 2007

BY CARL HARMS, adapted from the book,
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Self care articles for the bereaved

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"It will get easier." Now, eleven years later, I can say that yes, in some ways it has. My dad's death is no longer the first thing I think of when I wake up, nor is it the last thing I think about before I fall asleep.

**It has been 4,019 days,
and I still miss him.**

I still have days and weeks when it's just as painful as it was eleven years ago, and I still have moments that make my head spin.

There are several things that almost always trigger one of these moments and force me to quite literally say hello to my grief. There have been countless occasions when I'm watching a movie, TV show, or listening to a song and something hits me. A line or situation sticks out, reminding me of my dad in some way. Suddenly something's different; there's a pang of sadness, a feeling of nostalgia, or a flood of bittersweet sentiment. Sometimes this moment is brief and I bounce back immediately. Other times, I feel the tears rushing to my eyes.

Accomplishments are bittersweet, knowing Dad isn't here to enjoy them with me. Hands down, one of the hardest things that has come with losing Dad is the occasional realization of how much time has passed and here we are eleven years later. Birthdays, holidays, and other milestones are all reminders. There are days when I feel like it was just yesterday that he was taken from me, other times, I feel as if it has been a lifetime.

Many people who have not lost someone mistakenly believe that it's something you will get over, or that you'll have some sort of closure.

**The truth is, I still hurt
eleven years later.**

It's not a constant, overwhelming, consuming grief, but the little things within which grief hides hit me when I least expect it.

Life can change in an INSTANT. There are no second chances. Drive safely and responsibly. The presumption of guilt starts at 0.08%. Responsibility starts at 0.00%.