

NO LONGER HERE TO RESPOND

Mary's mother died in 2010,
Mary's 60-year-old husband David died in 2012,
and Mary's 8-year-old grandson died in 2013.

BY MARY POTTERY KENYON, adapted from the book,
Grief Diaries: Poetry and Prose & More
ISBN: 978-1-944328-55-9

Self care articles for the bereaved

From the award-winning
Grief Diaries book series



An iCare Aftercare resource
International Grief Institute

INTERNATIONALGRIEFINSTITUTE.COM

I've always taken given names very seriously, even as a child. Never satisfied with my own plain moniker, I used to make lists of names I would have liked for myself, or that I was determined to bestow on my future children, even during my babysitting years when I was convinced I didn't want any.

The regal Katherine, the lovely Sarah, the sweet Beth, and of course, the Emily who was an aspiring writer from one of my favorite books.

My creative spirit balked at the
commonness of my name.

"You could have at least chosen a better middle name for me," I'd lament. "At least Teresa or Terese, and not the version that is spelled with an 'h.' It looks like it should be pronounced The-Rese. The-Rese. I hate it."

My mother would explain that Mary was the mother of Jesus and Therese was one of her favorite saints, but I would hear none of it. As far as I was concerned, my first name was plain and my middle name was spelled incorrectly.

A few months after my mother's death I unearthed my birth certificate for some needed paperwork. For the first time, I took a good look at it, and gasped out loud. There, clear as day, was my middle name, spelled without the 'h.'

How could my mother not have noticed,
when she'd been so insistent of the
honor she bestowed on me?

This would be only one of the many moments I would reach to pick up the phone to ask my mother a pressing question, only to realize, with a start that the beloved mother who'd gifted me with her favorite names, was no longer here to respond.