

COLLATERAL BLESSINGS

Loss changes our lives. It changes who we are, where we are going, our relationships, and even how we look at life. It changes our priorities and often puts life into perspective. The idea that collateral blessings can come from a loved one’s death can be shocking to some, and yet it’s a common experience for many mourners. Sometimes the silver lining is small, other times it can catapult us in a positive new direction. Consider the following cases.

CASES TO PONDER

A mother who lost her daughter in a car crash said, “Losing our youngest daughter brought my oldest daughter and I closer. We used to be like oil and water. Now we’re best friends.”

A mother who lost her daughter to multiple congenital defects said, “My silver lining is that I will never wish to have her back. I miss her terribly, but never would I want her to come back to living with her multiple disabilities.”

One father who lost his young son to drowning said, “My relationships with my mother and brothers are better. I didn’t have this realization until I had to think about it.”

A young woman who lost her father said, “The silver lining comes and goes. Some days it’s bright and I’m filled with gratitude. Other times it’s hidden behind the storm.”

A husband who lost his wife to suicide said, “I have not found a silver lining just yet, maybe because my grief is still so new.”

A man who lost his brother to overdose said, “I do not take time for granted. I tell everyone I love, ‘I love you.’ My relationships have become deeper and more meaningful.”

A young wife who lost her husband to cancer said, “I’m sure that some people who are new to their grief wonder how there could be a silver lining. It took years before I realized that there were good things in my life that would not be there if not for my husband’s deaths.

A father who lost his son to an asthma attack said, “Unbelievably, there are many silver linings that have come to me. For years I was certain my life would not have any great meaning, nor did I care. I’ve learned that life can hold more than we could have imagined.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

What collateral blessings have you found in your journey?
