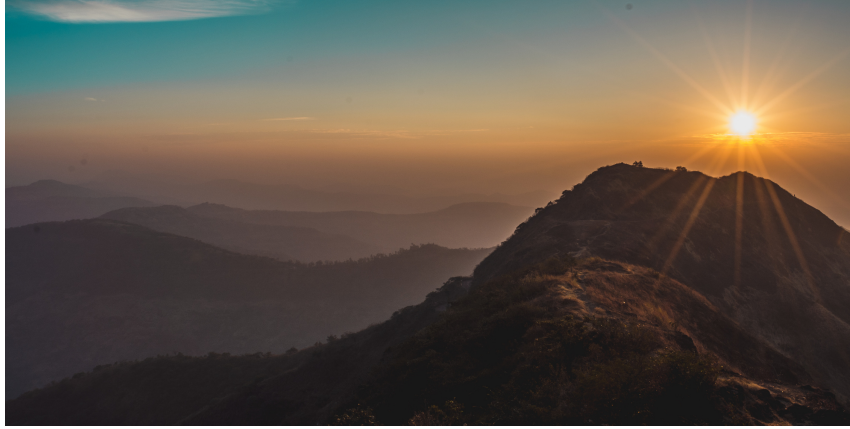


HELP WITH DEALING
WITH THE LOSS OF A

Parent



Written by Linda Findlay

Losing a parent will forever change the landscape of our lives. Our parents are part of our identity. When losing a second parent, some people say they feel like they are an orphan. You no longer have a grownup to rely on. In most cases, losing a parent changes our lives in many ways. Our usual routine, family celebrations, and gatherings will never be the same without them.

If the relationship with the parent was good, it is the loss of that person who has been there throughout your entire life! There are more memories than can be counted. They stood by you during all your own life milestones, accomplishments, and special occasions. They were always there for you. Helping, doing, being. They did whatever you needed with no questions asked. They showed you an unconditional love that you could only know by having children of your own. Their value in your life is great, their loss can rock your world.

If the relationship was less than favorable, you may have mixed emotions. You may grieve the loss of your hopes of what the relationship could have been. You may have regrets about what you would have done differently. You may question why you are grieving so greatly for a parent who may not have been there for you as you needed. Sometimes people feel angry with a parent whom they did not have a good relationship with. Feeling anger can cause you to feel resentment toward the parent. Maybe, there was a lot that was left unsaid! You may find that you are now the “grown-up” in the family, the next in line being the eldest! It is your turn to take on a new role in the family. With that brings new responsibilities. You may also feel as though you are confronting your mortality.

Some people find that their relationship with the parent was a mixture of good and bad through the years. Maybe the early years were rocky. Know that it is normal to focus on the bad memories at first. Those memories can be very vivid and bring feelings of regret, anger, or intense sadness! We find as we get older that we all do the best that we can at the time. There are no redoes. We cannot go back in time to change anything. All we can do is allow ourselves to reflect on our thoughts and the circumstances. Trust me when I tell you, the hard memories will dissipate. In time, the good memories will surface and remain everlasting memories.

No matter the state of the relationship, your parent has died, and nothing will ever be the same again. What we can do is live our lives honoring all the good influences our parents shared with us. We can make them part of who we are and go forward in life sharing their influences with those we love and care about.