

THE LIFELONG JOURNEY

Loving and Grieving Your Child Through the Years

Love | Grief | Memory | Living Forward

The loss of a child is not something you get over or leave behind. It becomes part of the landscape of your life, changing as you move through new seasons, milestones, relationships, and years. Some days may feel tender; others may hold more room for meaning, peace, or joy. There is no finish line and no right pace. You are allowed to keep living, growing, and loving your child in ways that feel true to you.

There is no finish line for love; it changes shape as you carry it forward.

1 NO TIMELINE FOR GRIEF

- Grief does not move in a straight line.
- There is no point when you should be “over it.”
- Your needs may change as life changes.
- Your pace is your own.

2 NEW SEASONS, NEW FEELINGS

- Birthdays, holidays, and anniversaries may feel different each year.
- New life events can bring fresh waves of grief.
- You may meet new layers of missing them over time.
- This is a natural part of a lasting bond.

3 THEIR PLACE IN YOUR STORY

- Your child remains part of your family and your life.
- You can speak their name and share their story.
- Their influence may show up in many quiet ways.
- Love keeps their place present.

4 LIVING ALONGSIDE GRIEF

- Life can grow around grief without erasing it.
- You may hold sorrow and joy in the same day.
- Both can be real at once.
- There is no betrayal in living fully.

5 RELATIONSHIPS MAY CHANGE

- Some people will understand your continuing grief; others may not.
- You may need different support in different seasons.
- It is okay to protect your heart and energy.
- Safe connection can sustain you.

6 MILESTONES AND MEMORIES

- Milestones can highlight both absence and love.
- Plan ahead when a date feels especially hard.
- Create rituals that feel meaningful, if you wish.
- You can honor them in ways that fit your life.

7 MAKING MEANING OVER TIME

- Meaning is not something you have to find right away.
- It may grow through memory, values, faith, or service.
- What feels meaningful can change through the years.
- You get to decide what carries purpose for you.

8 LOVE CONTINUES

- Your relationship with your child does not end.
- It may be carried through memory, ritual, and the way you live.
- You can move forward while keeping them close.
- Love remains part of the journey.

A GENTLE REMINDER

You are allowed to keep living a life that includes love for your child.

