



LIVING FORWARD WHILE CARRYING YOUR SIBLING WITH YOU

*Making Room for Life, Love, and the Bond That
Continues*

After a sibling dies, there may come a time when you begin to wonder what living forward is supposed to look like. Moving into the future can feel complicated when someone who was part of your past and expected future is no longer physically present. Living forward does not mean leaving your sibling behind. It means learning how to carry the love, memories, and influence of the relationship into a life that continues to unfold.

LIVING FORWARD IS NOT MOVING ON

The idea of “moving on” can feel as though you are expected to close a chapter and separate yourself from the person who died. Grief rarely works that way. Your sibling remains part of your history and identity. Over time, the relationship may find a different place in your life - one that allows remembrance and continued living to exist together.

WHAT LIVING FORWARD MAY LOOK LIKE

- Allowing yourself to enjoy something without feeling that your happiness betrays your sibling.
- Making new plans while still wishing your sibling could be part of them.
- Carrying traditions, values, humor, stories, or lessons from your sibling into the life you continue to build.

GENTLE REMINDER

Living forward does not require you to loosen your bond with your sibling. You can carry the relationship with you while continuing to create a life that has meaning, connection, and hope.

WHEN LIFE BEGINS TO EXPAND AGAIN

You may notice moments when grief is not at the center of everything. You might become interested in a new activity, make plans, laugh freely, travel, celebrate, or feel hopeful about something ahead. These moments do not erase your loss. They are signs that your life can hold more than one reality at the same time - you can deeply miss your sibling and still experience meaning, connection, and joy.

WHEN GUILT APPEARS

Some surviving siblings feel guilty when life becomes easier or when they reach experiences their sibling never had. You may wonder whether enjoying your life means you are forgetting. It does not. Your continued life is not a measure of your grief, and suffering is not a requirement for remembering someone faithfully.

A DEEPER LOOK

Grief changes as life changes. A new job, marriage, child, grandchild, move, retirement, family celebration, or ordinary accomplishment may bring your sibling to mind. You may imagine what they would have said or wish you could call them. These moments can be painful, but they can also become part of the ongoing bond you carry.



MAKING ROOM FOR BOTH GRIEF AND LIFE

- You do not have to wait until grief is finished before participating in life. There may never be a clean dividing line between grieving and living. Instead, you may gradually discover that grief becomes one part of a larger life - still meaningful, still present, but no longer the only thing you can feel.
- On some days, carrying your sibling may feel comforting. On others, the absence may feel heavy again. Both experiences can belong to the same grief journey.
- Living forward also means giving yourself permission to change. You are not required to remain exactly who you were before the loss. Grief can reshape priorities, relationships, beliefs, and the way you understand what matters.

A THOUGHT TO CARRY WITH YOU

You do not have to choose between holding onto your sibling and stepping into your future. Love can travel with you.

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

CARRYING LOVE INTO WHAT COMES NEXT

Your future does not have to exclude your sibling. You can carry them through stories, traditions, values, memories, and the ways their life influenced yours. You can speak their name and still make new memories. You can miss them and still laugh. You can honor what was while making room for what is still possible. Living forward is not leaving love behind - it is allowing that love to travel with you.

As time passes, other people may speak less often about your sibling or assume the loss should no longer affect you. Your grief does not have to follow someone else's timetable. You can be functioning well, building a meaningful life, and still have moments when you deeply miss your sibling. Continuing to love and remember them is not the same as being unable to move forward.

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

What part of your sibling do you most want to carry with you as your life continues? Is there a value, memory, tradition, or lesson that you want to bring into what comes next?

GIVING YOURSELF PERMISSION TO HAVE A FUTURE

There may be moments when looking toward the future feels uncomfortable because your sibling cannot physically share it with you. You are allowed to make plans, pursue goals, form new relationships, and discover new parts of yourself. A future that contains joy and purpose does not replace your sibling or diminish the importance of the life you shared.

With heartfelt compassion,
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