

Lessons in Loss

COMMON LIFE LESSONS LEARNED THROUGH LOSS

LESSONS THAT COME THROUGH LOSS

- appreciation of loss and grief as a universal part of the human experience
- the time we're given with loved ones is precious
- faith is challenged and often grows deeper
- we become more patient
- that we should live every day creating memories that will comfort us after our loved ones are gone
- about our feelings
- that it is necessary to hold space for our grief
- mourning allows us to move forward with our grief
- helps us find new purpose in life
- that pain and joy can coexist
- to be our authentic selves
- that hope that comes through faith can carry us through the hardest days
- the value of social support
- that we need to communicate our feelings
- who is most important in our life
- who will show up when the storms rage
- who we can trust and count on

LESSONS IN HELPING A GRIEVING FRIEND

- silent presence is more helpful than clichés of comfort
- grief cannot be "fixed," only witnessed
- it's important to communicate that you care, even if you don't know how to help
- grief is personal and intimate--accept whatever you are told as a gift that they trust you
- respect whatever time and space is needed
- welcome tears
- listening without judgment is an invaluable gift
- normalize grief with the griever and those around them--be cautious about comparisons to your own grief
- recognize that your friend will be forever changed after this loss
- help your friend to continue or change traditions as they need
- invite your friend out of the house
- ask your friend what helps and what causes more pain
- use words of compassion like *I'm here for you, I will help, I love you, and I support you*

