



for Every Season

Guilt and Regret

By Andrew Sweet, MDiv, BCC, Chaplain & Bereavement Coordinator,
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Guilt is a Common Feeling When You Have Experienced the Death of a Loved One.

You feel that you should have done something that you didn't. Or you feel bad about things that you did to your loved one or that happened to the two of you. There are all kinds of things that people feel guilty about, from a sharp word exchanged to serious conflicts.

Often, people feel guilty over things for which they had little control. "We were going to go on a cruise together, she was looking forward to that so much." "I should have gotten him to go to the doctor sooner." In cases like this, it may help you to think of these things in a different light. Guilt carries a strongly negative connotation: if you are guilty, you have done something bad, or you have wronged someone. It may be better to look at some things, instead, as regrets. You regret that things happened the way they did, or did not go as you wished, or you regret that you didn't do things differently. Regret does not carry the same burden of wrong that guilt does.

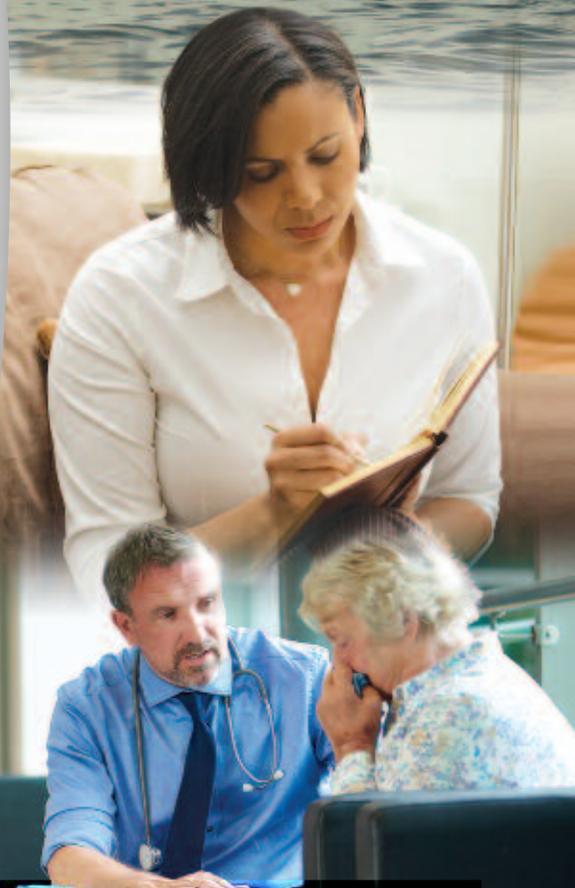
When you have regrets, you may still say it in the same way, "I'm sorry that...." But your "sorry" does not have to imply that you did wrong, or hurt someone, or could have done better if you tried harder. Often, people have done the best they could in the circumstances they found themselves. It is understandable to feel bad when things go poorly for your loved one. But you don't need to beat yourself up that you were at fault.

Think through things that you feel guilty about, trying to be as specific as you can. You may want to write them down in a journal or diary. "I feel guilty about..." "I feel guilty that I..." Then, look through them again and see if you can cross out "guilty" and substitute the word "regretful." This may help lift a burden from you not to feel so bad about things that happened.

It may be that you did things that truly did hurt your loved one, or did not do things that could have helped. First, think again about the circumstances, as things unfolded in the situation. It's easier to

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*small things
that matter most*



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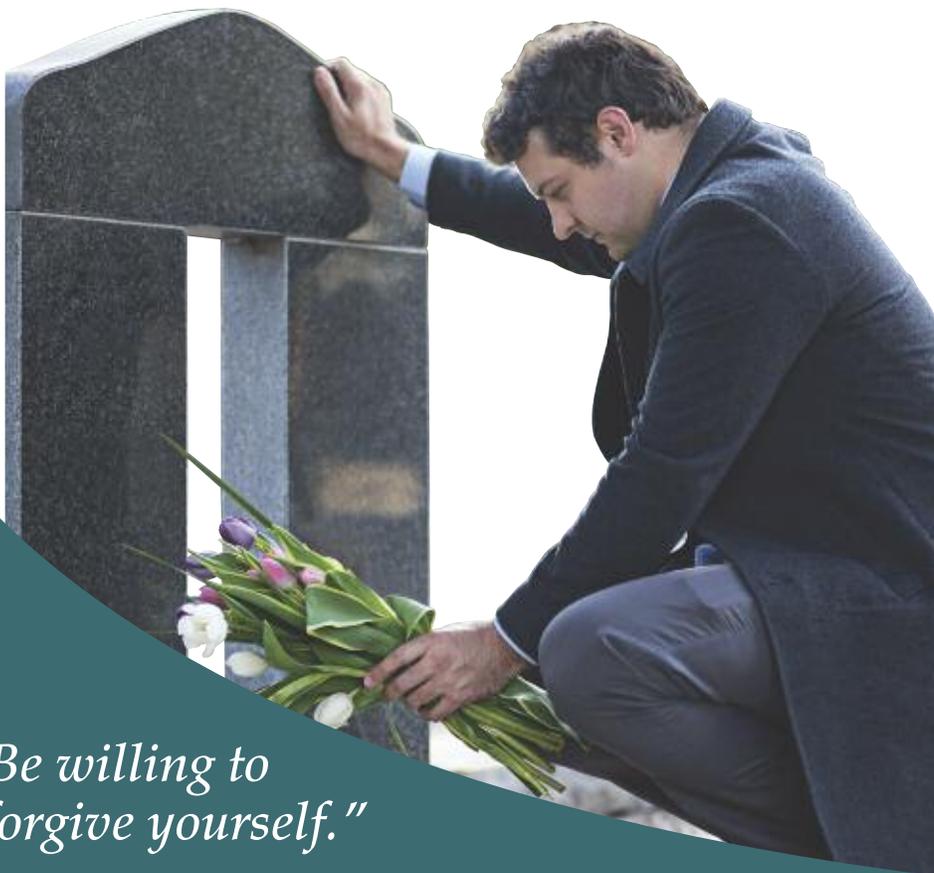
see how we have gone wrong in retrospect than at the time. Perhaps you did the best you could at the time with the information and resources you had.



Perhaps these remedies don't work for you; you still feel guilty about things you did or didn't do. It may help to be as specific as possible, to separate these feelings as much as you can from the general feelings of sadness and upset that your loved one died. Perhaps write them down in a journal or notebook. If you are a religious person, you may want to pray and ask for forgiveness

from God or whatever higher power you believe in. If there are ways you can make amends or talk to someone else to ask for forgiveness, this may be appropriate and helpful. Or you may wish to ask your loved one for forgiveness, even if they have died. You could write a letter to him or her. You could go to the gravesite or other special place, and read the letter or share your feelings and ask for forgiveness. You could bring flowers or a balloon or some other symbol of your feelings and wishes. You could pledge to act differently to other family members in the future or otherwise change the pattern of behavior that you feel guilty about.

Then, give yourself some grace, and be willing to forgive yourself for your mistakes or faults or problems, whatever it is that you feel guilty about.



"Be willing to forgive yourself."

Grief and Loss - The Mind/Body Connection

By Terry Glusko, MS, MT-BC

Grief is our natural response to loss. It can be felt as both emotional pain and physical suffering. In addition to all the thoughts and feelings related with grief, common physical reactions can include: fatigue, loss of appetite, sleep disturbance, headaches, tightness in the chest, inability to focus, digestive issues, and more. Several studies have indicated that elevated cortisol levels (hormones known to be induced by stress, and proven to weaken our immune systems) are evident in grieving persons. There is no doubt that our bodies and our minds are linked, both chemically and physiologically. That



means there are things we can do physically that could positively impact emotional pain. This is often referred to as Yin and Yang in Chinese philosophy. As we enter these early months of summer, here are a few suggestions to move your body and nurture this connection:

- Walking
- Hiking
- Yoga/Stretching
- Gardening
- Massage
- Cooking Healthy Meals
- Singing
- Breathing Exercises/Meditation
- Biking

It's important to engage in physical activities within your own comfort level. Most of these examples are known to release endorphins. These hormones attach themselves as receptors in our limbic system and often provide a feeling of well-being. The above recommendations are not intended to eliminate feelings associated with grief. But rather to care for your whole self in a holistic sense as you journey through that process.



All Aboard The Horzen Express!

From the day that 75-year-old Frank Horzen signed on to care with Seasons, our staff knew that he and his family would have a lasting impact on our lives.

Frank was a spunky, optimistic guy with an upbeat personality and a zest for life that is hard to find. He adored his wife, Barbara, loved his family dearly and was staunchly proud of his service in the military. Frank was also battling terminal heart disease, and we all knew that his time here on Earth was limited. But that also inspired both our staff and Frank to find creative ways to make every single day count.

Our staff always partners with Seasons Hospice Foundation to provide a last wish or legacy project so that, even long after he or she is gone, their loved ones have a special memory or gift that allows them to fondly remember them.

For Frank, we wanted to make a big splash!

Frank was always telling us of his fascination and love of trains. He's collected train cars since he was a child and has more of them than he can even count! It was something our staff could tell was very near and dear to Frank's heart.

He also spoke frequently about his service in the Vietnam War, when he was a communications specialist for the Air Force. He'd always tell our staff about his Air Force buddies, and how, even as the years had passed, they'd remained close friends.

Partnering with his wife and his friends and the Foundation, we knew we could combine all of these things to create an amazing legacy for Frank.

First, Barbara and Frank contacted Frank's Air Force buddies. These men, friends for more than 50 years, were spread out across the country, but readily agreed to drop

everything and make a trip out to California to be there for their friend.

Then, our staff contacted Travel Town Museum, which was more than happy to provide Frank, his family and his buddies with a behind-the-scenes tour of the museum, complete with lunch in a private railcar (provided by Seasons Hospice Foundation!)

The day of the tour, 11 of Frank's closest friends met him at his home. These Air Force buddies (and some of their wives!) flew in from Colorado, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Tennessee and Texas to be there for Frank's special day. Seasons Hospice Foundation provided transportation for Frank and his loved ones to get to Travel Town Museum; there was quite a crowd!

"This is awesome, simply so awesome. I feel like I died and went to Heaven," said

Frank, as he was being wheeled around what some may call the "ultimate" train set.

There was much loving, reminiscing and loving over their lunch in the private train car. Frank and Barbara told our staff that this was one of the best days of their lives, one that would surely not be forgotten.

Plus, to make the visit even more special, Frank's family took photos by the train cars with each letter of their last name. A frame with all of the photos combined, spelling out "Horzen," now sits in the family's home as a lasting memory of this incredible day.

"Even when Frank is long gone, we will have the memory of a lifetime," said Barbara Horzen.

"Today is another memory to add to all the rest of them," said Frank. "I think this is the great one. This will be the great one."



Honoring Life by Giving Hope



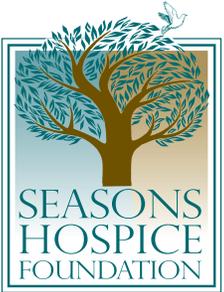
Gisèle D. Crowe
Executive Director,
Seasons Hospice
Foundation

Seasons Hospice Foundation has been working hard to honor our patients' lives, offer hope to their families, and provide comfort to bereaved individuals in the communities that we serve.

With the generous support from our donors, we've already fulfilled 136 final wishes for our patients during

the first quarter of 2018, an average of 45 wishes per month – enabling us to outperform last year's monthly average of 33. We continue to grow our bereavement camps and have been privileged to touch the lives of 123 grieving children and teens thus far, at four locations throughout the country during Q1.

We are grateful for your ongoing support of our mission.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

SeasonsFoundation.org

for EverySeason



If our mailing records need to be updated, or if you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please contact Seasons Hospice Foundation at 847-692-1000, ext. 4.

Helping Others Through SEASONS HOSPICE FOUNDATION



"Men fear death, as if unquestionably the greatest evil, and yet no man knows that it may not be the greatest good."

William Mitford

SEASONS HOSPICE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

Bereavement support for loved ones is an essential component of Seasons' mission. Thus far in 2017, we have provided outreach and grief support services to more than 20,000 family members. Seasons offers several opportunities for families to find support. Trained counselors provide:

- Support groups
- Individual counseling
- Check-in phone calls
- Supportive mailings
- Services of remembrance
- Educational workshops
- Online resources

These services are offered free of charge for families, friends and caregivers of Seasons Hospice patients. To learn more about support groups

available in your area, please visit <https://www.seasons.org/our-services/bereavement-support/>. If you are in need of support, please reach out to your local hospice care team.

