



A GRIEF NOTE ON...

Continuing Bonds

Did you know that...?

The counselors at the Center for Loss and Bereavement work from a variety of the latest and best researched Grief models and concepts. One of these is called "Continuing Bonds". Continuing bonds simply means that it is encouraged and healthy for survivors to maintain the relationship with the deceased. This relationship can no longer be one of "flesh and blood", but can be maintained as a mental image or internal representation of the deceased. This ongoing "relationship" may involve perpetual "conversations" in one's imagination with the deceased, a sense of maintaining loyalty to the deceased, a sense of "being watched over" by the deceased, and involving the deceased in decision-making. Maintaining continuing bonds Does Not Mean denying that the death happened, living in the past, or failing to adapt to the loss and move forward with new life changes. In fact, studies show maintaining a relationship with the deceased can be a strong motivator for healthy adjustment and eventually finding a new happiness again in life. In this way, the deceased and former life are never forgotten, but "carried forward" and integrated into the future.

Silverman, Phyllis, R. & Nickman, Steven L. (1996).