



### THOUGHTS ON “GETTING THROUGH”

Our thoughts are with you during this period approaching the first anniversary of the loss of your loved one. You may find yourself “re-living” the weeks leading up to the death and “re-experiencing” the same feelings you had at that time. Be assured that this is a natural part of the grief process. There is no right or wrong way for you to spend this anniversary. You may choose to spend it alone or maybe in the company of those who were with you during your loss. Maybe you will do something to honor your loved one or celebrate the life that was lived. Or you may chose to go about the day like any other day. And that is OK too.

Grief is a natural, normal, and necessary response to loss. It is a learning process that forces us to change and rethink our world. It provides us with the framework (a very fragile framework at first) to begin to figure out who we are without our loved one. It takes a long time to strengthen that framework and build upon it.

If grief is a response to loss, and the loss is always going to be there, we really don't get OVER grief---but we do learn to get THROUGH it. By now, you have probably found that some of those around you are trying to rush you through. They may mean well but may become less patient as time goes by. They want you back the way you were. They may be hoping, and so might you, that once the first anniversary passes everything will be “normal” again. Unfortunately, the one year anniversary date is not a magic number. **It does not mark the end of grief. Grief is a journey with no set time frame.**

Many families seek out support groups and other bereavement services as the anniversary nears or just after it passes. It is not unusual for us to hear from our hospice families around this time and beyond.

Although we will soon be ending our regularly scheduled calls and mailings, you and your family can continue to utilize our community bereavement services indefinitely. In the meantime, know that we are remembering your family at this time. Take care of YOU.

If you or anyone in your family would like to talk to a grief specialist, join a support group, borrow books on grief and loss, or hear about the services we have available, please call the VNA Bereavement Team at the number below.

VNA Community Bereavement Center  
154 Hindman Road  
Butler, PA 16001  
724 431-3520  
[www.lutheranseniorlife.org](http://www.lutheranseniorlife.org)