

## L1 - Managing Grief



Dear Sir,

How can I explain the impact the loss of my daughter Margaret has had on my life to someone who didn't know her? I would ask you therefore to bear with me for a moment to allow me to introduce her to you.

Margaret was physically beautiful, fiercely intelligent and a caring thoughtful girl who loved fun, good food and wine, and especially the company of family and friends.



How much time can I spend telling you about the two summers she spent working in dreadful conditions in Bulgarian orphanages; of the hours spent working for KEEN, which is an organisation in Oxford, helping disabled youngsters to have fun and reach their potential.

How do I feel knowing I will never see her smile again?

How do I feel knowing I will never see her arrive off the train, toss down her bag and wrap her arms around me and hear her say "how's my wee mum?"

How do I feel when I know a text message or phone call will never again be from her?

How do I feel knowing I will never hold her child in my arms?

My heart is broken, and nothing in this life will ever mend it. I feel a physical pain when I see her photograph or when a memory comes to mind, or when I see a little girl with bunches in her hair?

Can you imagine the pain of having to choose flowers, pick hymns for a church service and arrange a meal for people attending your daughter's funeral instead of her wedding? Can you imagine the distress of having to choose the dress she will wear in her coffin instead of the one she will wear on her wedding day?

I can't begin to tell you the sorrow of telling my son by phone that his dear sister Margaret was dead? All that talent, all that hard work, all wiped out in an instant.

Another strange thing has happened. I am conscious now of not being Elizabeth Davidson, but of being the woman who's daughter was killed. People have been very kind, but you sense their discomfort because they don't know what to say. We were able to see Margaret, and strangely these are the only moments of real peace I have known since she died. I wish I'd sat with her longer. But how long would have been long enough? I tried to go to my church recently but all I could see was her coffin and I wanted to run out.

On the 16th of July 2005, we as a family had one of the happiest days of our lives. After years of studying and hard work on her part and financial struggles on ours, Dr Margaret E



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Davidson BM BCHMA graduated from Oxford University. On her way up to receive her degree, she turned to me and smiled a smile of sheer joy, love and gratitude.

Less than a year later I collected a very tasteful carrier bag containing a cardboard box labelled the remains of the late Dr Margaret E Davidson.

I know I was lucky to have a daughter like Margaret, but then I knew that when she was alive. And while I am devastated that she has been taken, after only 26 years, I would rather suffer this pain than never to have shared the love we shared in those 26 years.

I don't know if these words have conveyed to you my sense of loss. Maybe there are no such words. Perhaps I should just have saved your time and said I loved Margaret from her first breath, and I will love, mourn and miss her until my last.

Elizabeth R Davidson  
Mother