

ELEMENTS OF HEALING

1. Good memories and “I remember when...stories” are important.
2. You need support from both inside and outside your family.
3. Time can result in either healing or infection.
4. Learning about the experience of others gives insight into your own story.
5. Assume whatever you are going through is normal.
6. Share the pain of your darkness.
7. Be sensitive to the fact that people grieve differently.
8. Sharing with those who have been there has a special meaning.
9. Feel free to protest the “why” of death.
10. Take time and space yourself and work through your guilt over doing so.
11. Take time to laugh and to cry.
12. Take the initiative and make things happen for yourself; work, activity, exercise.
13. Life will never be like it was. You will need to create a new life, make new choices and develop friendships.
14. Reach out and help others. Beware of dwelling on self.
15. Confront guilt by realizing you did the best you could. (“All things considered, with no rehearsal for what you went through, you did the best you could.”)
16. Be grateful if you experienced a happy death.
17. You must let go of your loved one(s).
18. Through dreams, visions and other comforting and reassuring presence of your loved one(s). Don’t be afraid to ask God for some sign of your loved one’s) presence.
19. There is nothing wrong with talking to the dead.
20. Persons who have been down the road before you can be symbols of hope.
21. Your experience of death may cause others to make significant changes for the better in their lives and relationship.

-Excerpted from newsletter of The
Compassionate Friends of Northern Virginia,
February 1993