

A HOLE IN THE SCREEN  
by Eunice Brown

With the death of a child sometimes comes the death of a marriage. Love is work; it's sometimes a decision, not just a feeling. The grieving process is also work, sometimes a decision, and takes its toll on a marriage. Dick and I had our difficult times. When he was up I seemed down, and vice-versa.

We made a bargain with each other early in our grief that if either of us felt the need to talk about Keith we would, and the other would listen. We continued doing things we liked to do – he golfed and bowled, I've always been interested in arts and crafts. Together we went out to dinner or lunch frequently. We bicycled in summer, cross country skied a bit in the winter. We spent a lot of time at our camper in a peaceful campground where we enjoy canoeing. Getting away for a weekend with friends or alone has always been therapeutic.

One thing we differed on was a hole in the screen of our patio. Our son and his wife, on their last visit before his death, were playing ball and one of them missed – the ball broke the screen. The following summer I found myself unable to sit on the patio. I asked Dick to fix the screen - he said it was okay the way it was. What was painful for me was a happy memory for him, and the broken screen remained that way when we sold the house the end of that summer. It's strange how differently two people feel about the same situation. We both found satisfaction in this instance; he didn't fix the screen and, having sold the house that summer, I no longer had to look at it!

We would have come to a solution another way, had we stayed there, however, because we learned a lot about communicating through our grieving process. We learned to grieve alone and we learned to grieve together. Our marriage is important; it's a commitment we made thirty-eight years ago. We feel it is worth the hard work we put into it. We're grateful we have each other, and finally can count our blessings once again.

*“Some wounds do not heal, even given an eternity. The scars they leave are permanent and can only be woven into the fabric of one's life.”*

Bernice Rubens from her book, BROTHERS