

Forever Angels



Hello Everyone,

I have had a couple of delightful comments from the Gardeners amongst you, letting me know about their own gardens and how spending time within soothes, comforts and refreshes. It is great to know that there is more than one green thumb out there. I always note when I am at the nursery buying plants, that all the customers have grins on their faces. It would seem that Gardeners are a happy bunch. Another sure way to recognize a fellow Gardener? Check for dirt under their fingernails. It gives us away every time!

This issue is weighted towards grieving Grandparents and that is a good thing. It is not easy being a bereaved Grandparent and the journey is very unique as they also suffer for their own grieving children and the perceived inability to spare their child(ren) from the deep pain of loss(es). May you find strength from sharing and may we all learn to better understand the different kinds of grief roads travelled.

If you have anything at all to share or comments you might like to make about anything at all, you know the drill and we can be reached at loss@multiplebirthscanada.org

Thinking of you,

Lynda

Letter to the Editor.....

RE: #09-05, Forever Angels

Hi Lynda: Something came up that reminded me I'd meant to comment briefly on the Ques/Suggs in your last bulletin. IMO, being pregnant again with a singleton after the loss of twins, and having lost one twin with a young survivor, actually are very similar emotionally. The one living baby that we are so grateful to have is also the most vivid reminder of what we have also lost, and a solitary reminder of the loss of "my twins" and the end of the dream of having them or the fantasy of having them again. This is along with the anxiety of knowing very vividly what could happen to the living baby, too, and other parenting challenges (for many, including having a living child for the first time).

So if anything, the grief for the multiple baby or babies who died becomes more demanding and complicated, not less--and it's already along-termgrief as it is, often not supported by others. After the sheer reality of the loss itself, this kind of parenting situation is THE biggest challenge for multiple birth loss parents: grieving while parenting. And it will never be as if the living child is the only one emotionally, even if he is the only one there physically--even more complicated than sharing oneself with twins who are both physically there, or another child after living twins.

Parents need to know, I think, that they are in an active and complicated grieving process that goes on long after another child is born, and need to be very creative all the way along about finding ways through counseling, support groups and elsewhere to parent their multiples who have died and address all of the many possible sticking points (and this of course is also true of those who do have subsequent multiples). This is not really different at all from parenting the living child or children--once you accept that there is more than one child emotionally, by virtue of having had multiples, it's what makes it possible to do, and do joyfully, without "trying"! and without imposing on or shortchanging the living children.

Jean Kollanti, Co-Founder of The Centre for Loss in Multiple Birth (CLIMB), Alaska, www.climb-support.org

Child of mine
Mirror of myself
Soul of my soul
On this day, your birthday
I remember with joy
The day you were born
While trying to forget
The sorrow of the day
You were taken from us.
I pray that your spirit is at peace
And that you will be with me
When my days are done.

~~~~~from an obituary

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Loss of Triplet Grandchildren.....

I've lost 3 grandchildren this month. One of the triplets, Bradley Michael, was miscarried on June 3, and the other two, Brandon Wesley and Brittany Ann on June 13. I saw their pictures. My Son Wesley and his wife Heather are heartbroken. They are both in their 30s and these were their first children. I feel so helpless. I can't fix this for them, and my grandchildren did not have a chance to live. They did live for 1/2 an hour. They died in my Son's arms. How do you grieve such a loss? My husband Sam and I were with them the day they died on Saturday and today the kids asked us to join them for a memorial service. They are shutting the rest of the family out. I don't think that is good. They need all the family's love and support right now. But I guess I have to respect their wishes. Any words of wisdom or comfort would be appreciated. The baby shower invitations went out the day before they died and we are getting confirmation calls. It is so hard to talk about it.

Carol S.  
Hope you have a Great Day!

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Hello Carol,

My heartfelt sympathies for the loss of your precious grandchildren. The loss is made more difficult by the fact that grandparents are unable to protect their own children from such pain, as well as the loss of much-anticipated grandchildren. It stands to reason that you feel helpless.

Regarding the calls for the shower invitations, whomever is taking the calls can put a message on the answering machine indicating that sadly, the babies have all died, the shower cancelled and that the family is not answering the phone for the moment. Thank the callers for their concern and 'we will get back to you at a later date.' A message along those lines will help having to retell the story and facing people over and over.

You are right that one needs to respect choices made for the service. Sometimes the message we offer is based on how we say our message. Could you say that Aunt Susie and Cousin John (...or some of our family) would love to be in attendance to share this sad time and celebrate Brandon, Brittany and Bradley's short lives? Would they reconsider? Kindly, softly and once so that they may reconsider? And then, of course, you would have to respect their thoughts and decision. It could be that they do not want to face so many people at this time and keeping it simple may be the best they can do.

I am truly sorry for your loss and hope that time is gentle with you all.

Sincerely,
Lynda

This delightful photo (I sure hope you can open it) was shared by Grampa Ed. The on the left is Giana, 2 yrs 8 months, Victoria is standing, 1- 1/2 yrs, Nicolle is the mother of Nicholas and Anthony, and the girls' grandmother. The girls are Nick and Anthony's first cousins. Nick is crazy about them. *Nick and Anthony are twins. Anthony died aged 15 years after being hit by a car while riding his bike.*

