

## *Dear family of the late*

When I lost my father to lung cancer, I had regrets because I felt that I did not spend enough time with him, since I was overseas pursuing a degree. Upon hearing he was very ill, I rushed home and managed to spend the next few months with him, before he passed away. Born during the Japanese occupation, my dad had to grow up quickly to support a big family. As a child, I saw him leaving the house in the mornings and returning late in the evenings from Mondays to Saturdays. My dad taught me the importance of grit and tenacity. Remembering what he taught me, always brings me a lot of comfort. I now remember him by reminiscing what he had said and what he would have done whenever we are stuck in a situation.

Recently, when a patient I was journeying with passed away, her son asked me if it was okay to fulfil his mom's wish to scatter her ashes in the ocean. I encouraged him to fulfil her desire to be in the ocean and to be free. At the funeral wake, he told me that he and his younger sister would keep some of her ashes and make them into a pendant in remembrance of her. He asked also for suggestions to commemorate her death anniversary. I suggested they could go to the nearby beach where her ashes are scattered, to have a family picnic in celebration of her life lived.

There are many ways in which we remember those who have departed. For some, it means visiting the cemetery or the columbarium. For others, it could be doing activities which you and your departed loved one used to enjoy together. May you discover ways to commemorate the precious bond you will always share with your loved one.

Grief is an emotion that sometimes accompanies us when we remember the love that our loved one, who has passed on, had for us. By continuing to remember them, even after their death, we continue to honour the bond and relationship we once shared with our loved one before death. This relationship continues in different ways and varying degrees throughout our life.

This relationship is not unhealthy, nor does it mean that our grieving process is abnormal in any way. Instead, this continuing bond with our loved one provides a natural way for us to feel connected with our loved one, who has departed, fulfilling our need for human attachment, even when death may end the physical relationship.

Shalom and peace be with you, as you continue on your journey of this renewed bond and relationship with your departed loved one.

Yours sincerely,

*Irene*



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Remembering  
Experiences with you

# **Chapter 3. Continuing Bonds**



**On days you need a listening ear, you can  
email [pss@hcahospicecare.org.sg](mailto:pss@hcahospicecare.org.sg) or  
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**Chapter 3.**  
**Continuing**  
**Bonds**

*“The journey ahead may no longer carry your footprints,  
but I know I’ve kept a part of you with me.  
So from here on –  
everywhere I am, there you will be...”*

***- En, bereaved daughter***

**Death does not end the bond and relationship shared.**

**I will never forget the time spent**

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*Pen down a cherished memory here*

**with**

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*your loved one's name / relationship*

Share this treasured memory with your family or a friend.  
You may place this card together with a cherished photo or a beloved item of your loved one.





**HCA CAREs  
Chapter 3.  
Continuing  
Bonds**

*“There are no goodbyes for us.  
Wherever you are,  
you will always be in my heart.”*

***- Mahatma Gandhi, freedom activist***

# *Continuing Bonds*

We don't leave deceased loved ones behind.  
Rather, we carry them in our hearts throughout our lives.

The good news is, you may find that over time, as you work through your grief and make room for its necessary existence, it can become a more peaceful presence.

One where warm memories and a connection with your loved one can grow.

