

The Erika Whitmore Godwin Foundation



E-Haven Newsletter from griefHaven

Where Hope Resides™

E-Haven™
May 2009

*Let's make a resolution. I'll drink to that.
Let's always stay friends.
Friendship is thicker than blood.
That depends . . . on trust.
Depends on true devotion.
Depends on love.
Depends on not denying emotion.*
—From the play, *Rent*

Simple Requests; Simple Dreams Wondering What You Can Do?



We asked our mothers what they would like for Mother's Day. As we read through their responses, we quickly discovered similar themes running through each one. Here we share some of them with you. As you read, you, too, will begin to see the common themes that thread them together. Simple requests; simple dreams, and so easy to fulfill by those who love and care.

We would encourage you to share this May 2009 E-Haven

Newsletter with others who might not know how to best support a bereaved mother, as well as those mothers who are in a quandary about what they want to do on Mother's Day. Everyone will benefit in some way from these frank and heartfelt sharings.

Here are those responses to the question, "What would you like for Mother's Day?"

"Mother's Day is the hardest of all of the holidays, and I really don't want to do anything on that day, but I do it because I know how much it means to my own mother and family. So I would like those I am with to say something like, 'I

know it's hard for you to be here today, so thanks for coming anyway.' That's all I want."

"No amount of gifts will ease the difficulty of this day, but special moments with those I love who do not judge or pressure me are the most precious gifts of all."

"Honestly? I'd like to spend the day in bed, alone. But I won't, because that would be hard for everyone around me. I'm just grateful to those who remember."

"Take the kids for a couple of hours so I can have some downtime. But then I need them all back!"

"To be with nice people who don't judge, either inwardly or outwardly, even if I do cry a little."

"I'd like my husband to go with me to the cemetery where our son lies."

"I have no idea what I want, but I know a lot of what I don't want."

"Just let be whatever will be. No 'have-tos' calms my heart."

"It would be nice if everyone would always remember on these holidays, especially Christmas and Mother's Day, to say her name and talk about her when we are together. That's the best gift you can give me."

"I would love it if my family gave me something from my daughter that they think she would have given me."

"We lost our only child, so this day is the hardest of all. I guess I would just like to know that I don't have to do anything if I don't want to—if it's just too hard—and not be judged or pressured by others."

"I want to have a picnic with the entire family at the grave site. We did that before, and it was nice."

"To take that day off of the calendar forever."

"To be happy, but I just can't, no matter how hard I try."

"You know, what is bothersome to me is that it's been nine years since she died, and everyone is now acting like it was a time back *then*—that she's gone, life has gone on, and that's that. THAT kills me, because for me she's still my daughter, and Mother's Day is still the

hardest day of the year for me. So I'd just like people to bring her forward into our lives and our gatherings as we grow older. In other words, please don't forget her, no matter how much time passes."

"... but I would love more than anything for people around me to understand that, no, I won't ever be 'over it,' I won't ever be the same again, and that I am doing the very best I can. I'd like their ongoing support no matter how long it goes on—for them to trust me and know that everything I am going through and the way I am being is normal. I guess you could say I would like to know that no one is judging what they think I should be doing at this or that stage when I'm with them."

"I want to *want* to celebrate Mother's Day."

"A spa day that is set up for me with maybe a manicure, pedicure, and massage. Something where I can just let go. Then a nice dinner with my son and husband where we share stories that include my son who died."

"Another shoulder to cry on who understands why I'm crying on Mother's Day."

"We lost our only child, so I would like to have lunch or dinner with a group of others who have also lost a child, so we can just 'be' in the moment and not have to worry about how we might be upsetting others."

"If the weather holds out, I'd like to honor our son by going to the beach and flying a kite as high as we possibly can with everyone holding the string together."

"I want to get out of town and come home when it's over."

"To go by myself to the cemetery so I can cry, talk to her, do whatever I need and want to do."

"Last year, three friends made sure that Mother's Day wasn't forgotten. This year I haven't heard a thing from anyone. I just don't want to be alone."

"Go to church with my daughters and hear his name in the prayer."

"To be with people who won't say, 'Don't cry.' Please don't tell me not to cry."

"I want us to cook everything that she loved most and eat ourselves into oblivion in her honor!"

"A day of utter and total distraction! I don't know where or what that would be, but I want to be thoroughly distracted!"

"Ummmmm. A diamond would be nice. Hee Hee. Seriously, just to be with people who know my son and will talk freely about him."

"I would like to crawl under the covers and sleep all day."

"Something really special that represents *her*. Just something that my family thinks of that honors her, you know? Just so *she's* not forgotten and that I *am* her mother forever is remembered."

"A long, strenuous bike ride along the mountainous roads always makes me feel better."

"I miss my family. They are in America. It would be nice to be with them so we could all talk about him and just share

stories."

"Someone who will just do something nice for me this day since I lost my only child and just say to me, 'Okay, I'm picking you up at this time, so just be ready.'"

"My son always wrote something lovely to me on Mother's Day, so to receive something he wrote would be sweet."

"Her friends calling and just remembering would mean so much. Even emails would be great."

"Just a warm, heartfelt hug from my surviving kids and my beloved husband."

"Eggs, bacon, bagels toasted with melted butter, pancakes with hot syrup and melted butter, and lots of orange juice in bed!"

"One of those teddy bears that they make from your child's clothing. I would love that!"

"I don't really care what it is, as long as they feel good about whatever they planned. That means the most to me."

"It would be so great if the whole family got together and worked in our garden and then rode our bikes to town and had lunch. Along the way, we would leave flowers on her grave and remember."

"Someone to call and ask me, 'What would you like to do on Mother's Day?'"

"I could never share this with most people, but on Mother's Day it would be so nice if people would simply acknowledge what a difficult day it is, even though I'm there with them and my child is not."

"They say Mother's Day is for celebrating 'your own' mother, not for celebrating someone else's mother. But we lost both of our children, so Mother's and Father's Day is very difficult. What I want is for people to remember those who are alone with no children left on Mother's Day."

"I just want those with whom I spend the day to say her name!"

"That's an interesting question. What really means the most to me on Mother's Day is helping someone else in need."


"Please don't ever, ever forget that I am her mother now and until the day I die, especially on Mother's Day."

"What I want on Mother's Day is for everyone in the world to read our responses so they know that we simply want to be remembered as the mothers that we are and always will be."

*May you get what you want
on this Mother's Day.*

DEAR MR. HALLMARK

—Author Unknown



*I am writing to you from heaven,
And though it must appear
A rather strange idea,
I see everything from here.*

*I just popped in to visit
Your stores to find a card--
A card of love for my mother,
As this day for her is hard.*

*There must be some mistake, I thought,
Every card you could imagine,
Except I could not find a card
From a child who lives in heaven.*

*She is still a mother too,
No matter where I do reside.
I had to leave, she understands,
But, oh, the tears she's cried.*

*I thought that as I wrote you,
You would come to know
That though I live in heaven now,
I still love my mother so.*

*She talks with me, and dreams with me,
We still share our laughter, too.
Memories are our way of speaking now--
Would you see what you could do?*

*My mother carries me in her heart,
Her tears they cloud her sight.
She writes poems to honor me,
Sometimes far into the night.*

*She plants flowers in my garden,
There my living memory dwells.
She writes to other grieving parents,
Trying to ease their pain as well.*

*So you see Mr. Hallmark,
Though I no longer live on earth,
I must find a way to remind her
Of her loving, wondrous worth.*

*She needs to be honored
And lovingly remembered too,
Just as all the mothers' children
Still living on earth will do.*

*Thank you, Mr. Hallmark,
I know you'll do your best.
I have done all I can do now,
So to you I'll leave the rest.*

*Please find a way to tell her
How much she means to me,
Until I can do it for myself
When she joins me in eternity.*

May You Have
Peace of Heart™
On
Mother's Day