Losing a loved one through death causes a deep aching and sadness in our hearts and souls. We grieve the loss of love, closeness and understanding that we shared. We can only trust in the words stated in Isaiah 40:1 "Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God." As we remember our dear ones, there are some things we can do that may help us to be comforted.

Keeping an item that was dear to our beloved is one way. I kept an old, faded bathrobe that my mother had worn daily until she died. This robe was really beyond redemption for the last few years that my mother used it and then I wore that robe for another 10 years!

Others may create a living memorial to remind them of the person they miss. My mother was an avid, self-taught gardener and I tend my plants with love and think often of the lessons she taught me. I still have a thirty-year-old rhubarb plant that my mother cultivated. I have moved that rhubarb to four different homes and we still get a delicious crop yearly from that original plant. Thanks, Mom.

Telling stories that recall the thoughtfulness and courage of our loved ones are so precious, as are remembering the silly times. Memories of misstatements or cooking disasters or wardrobe errors can help us relive heartfelt laughter. I remember my double-amputee father teaching me to drive when I was a teenager. Finally, the big day arrived and my father accompanied me to take my driving test. I didn't know, until after the test, that while I was out driving with the examiner my father kept shooing cars away from the street parking area where I would need to return. He told folks: "My daughter is going to be coming back from her driving test in a few minutes and she doesn't parallel park so well." People were delighted to enter into the conspiracy to help me pass my driving test and left several spaces open! Thanks, Dad.

Yes, we all suffer when a loved one dies. By recalling them, reflecting and sharing stories, we can slowly move through our grief to realization of the ongoing blessing that our loved one was and continues to be in our lives and this is indeed a comfort.

Please reflect on your own story and consider sharing.