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How to Recover from the Loss of a Parent

By [Jordan Fargo](#) - October 11, 2023

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Having to say goodbye to a parent can be one of the most painful and emotionally challenging experiences one will ever have. Whether it happens suddenly or over the course of many weeks, months, or even years, it's always difficult to watch a parent pass away. It's the type of loss that can fundamentally change you as an individual.

I remember the grief and disbelief I felt when my father passed away, back in the summer of 2019. He had Type 2 diabetes and end-stage heart failure...but he was actually on the mend. Every day I held out hope that he'd be able to get on the heart transplant list and one day be back to his old self, but that didn't happen.

He ended up suffering from a stroke one morning, and 10 days later he was gone.

Trying to Process it All

It felt like I was in a nightmare, or some alternate reality, one I thought that I could escape from. I couldn't process that my dad was really gone, that he was never coming back. The days and weeks after he passed, I kept trying to tell myself that it was all just a bad dream I'd soon wake up from, yet I was already awake. It hurt like nothing else.

I didn't give myself time to sit and home and grieve. I didn't give myself time to cry. Instead, I told my mother to take me back up to Cornell for my sophomore year of college the day after my dad died. School was my escape; I saw it as my therapy, in a way. Everyone I knew suggested I at least take a few weeks, or even a semester off to heal from this loss, but I didn't listen.

My dad's voice rang throughout my head, telling me to go back to school and live my life the way I wanted to. He told me to graduate on time, get my Bachelor's degree and a great job, and take care of my mother in his place. So I did. That was my form of recovery at the time, and yet sometimes I feel like it wasn't enough.

Advice to Anyone Who Just Lost a Parent

My advice to anyone that just lost a parent is to just take a moment to sit down and be with your thoughts. Acknowledge them. You don't have to embrace or accept them right away—that usually takes some time.

Of course, everyone's situation is different. Whatever emotion you feel, though, you should

understand that it is okay to feel that way. You're allowed to cry, scream, or just sit in silence and reflect on the past. It is okay to feel sad, angry, or confused. There is no right or wrong emotion here.

Take as much time as you need to recover from your loss. Do not be afraid to share your feelings with others, and let them know if you are not okay. I bottled everything up inside for many months, all because I wanted to be a strong man of color. One that could be strong in the face of adversity, and take care of my mother in the way that she cared for me for 19 years.

Most importantly, take life one day at a time. You may have days where sadness hits you like a tsunami, and it feels impossible to do anything. That is totally okay. When that happens, though, remind yourself what your lost parent would want for you. Think about the dreams they had for you, and the hope and excitement you gave them each and every day.

Keep fighting and pushing towards becoming the best version of yourself that they wanted you to be. That, I believe, is one of the best forms of recovery after the loss of a parent.



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Jordan Fargo

My name is Jordan Fargo, and I am a recent graduate from Cornell University, with a Bachelor's degree in English/Creative Writing and Film. I love writing about fitness, health, and lifestyle topics, as well as family, relationships, and tech products. My main goal with my writing is to create compelling content that can actually make a difference in someone's life, no matter who they are. Bringing the most difficult times to my life to light and putting them into words can be challenging, but it can also be one of the best forms of healing. I sincerely hope that the stories, feelings, and advice I share in my articles will not just help the Black community (and all of my readers) not just heal from any past trauma, but to also grow and be stronger for the future.

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