

POTHOLES OF GRIEF

Peanuts, the cartoon character, is walking blissfully along, when all of a sudden, he takes a somersault. In the last box of the strip he says, "...and suddenly, you're reminded of a lost love." It's like that for many of us.

I was having my hair cut at the beauty shop one morning when I heard a little boy behind me telling a tall tale about fighting Indians. Suddenly I was jolted with the memory of how my son, Arthur, used to tell about the Indians he killed in the back yard. Many years have passed since Arthur was killed, but that memory was like a knife through my heart.

Every time I hear the song "Betty Davis Eyes" the same thing happens. My granddaughter, Emily has been dead for years but, when I hear it, in my mind's eye I can see her dancing to that song. It hurts.

I call these experiences "potholes of grief." We can be years beyond our painful grief when suddenly, something will remind us of him or her. A song on the radio, a place we hadn't been to in years, or something someone says will bring our loved one back so vividly to us.

Occasionally, these are pleasant memories and bring us a feeling of warmth, but many times they hurt. Fortunately, the pain doesn't last long, although for a time it can seem like we're back to square one in our grief.

The best way I've found to deal with potholes of grief is to just let them happen and try not to fight them. They are a sign that your love is still deeply in your heart, and no matter how much time passes, you will always miss him or her.

Potholes are bumpy, but shallow, places in a normally smooth road. So it is with potholes of grief. They are bumpy, painful places in our lives that come after

we've resolved our grief. Fortunately, they only come occasionally.

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