

Everlasting Sorrow

Category: In Pain

written by Ronna L. Edelstein | October 2, 2017

As a Jewish American, I recently celebrated my faith's new year. I followed tradition by going to the cemetery prior to the beginning of the holy days to pay my respects to my beloved paternal grandmother, mother and father. Standing in front of the Wall of Eternal Life, I read the prayer for the deceased—until a tsunami of pain inundated me.

These three people—the people who loved me from the moment I was born, encouraged me throughout my life to always try my best, consoled me when I did not succeed—were forever gone from my life. I would never again eat the delicious matza ball soup that Grandma made, hold Ma's hand when entering the library, or sit on a park bench with Dad and listen to his stories of the "good ol' days." I would never again feel the hugs and kisses that these three people so generously bestowed upon me.

Since 2008 I have lived in constant physical pain from a jaw problem that has led to four unsuccessful surgeries—with a fifth surgery scheduled for December. I can barely open my mouth; having dental x-rays is impossible, eating is difficult, and getting a good night's sleep is challenging. I take strong medication to reduce this 24/7 intense pain.

However, there is no medicine for the emotional pain I feel, also 24/7, due to the death of my loved ones. Neither therapy nor the passing of time has enabled me to accept the forever pain that accompanies such loss. Emotional pain does not show up on an MRI or through blood work, but it is real, it is debilitating and it is everlasting.

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