

The First Deep Breath

*Gentle support for the first
overwhelming days*



raisingthemwithoutyou.com

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO FIGURE OUT EVERYTHING TODAY

In the first days after loss, your mind may race far into a future you cannot imagine. You may feel as though every question needs an answer immediately.

It doesn't.

For today, you may set these things down:

THE REST OF YOUR LIFE

You do not need a plan for next month, next year, or all the years ahead. Today is enough.

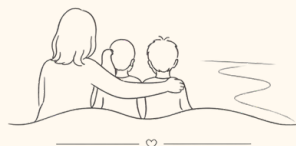
EXACTLY HOW YOUR CHILD WILL GRIEVE

Children move in and out of grief in their own ways. You do not need to predict every feeling or have the perfect response.

HOW YOU WILL DO ALL OF THIS

You are not expected to know yet. Help can come one person, one decision, and one small step at a time.

For today, the next necessary thing is enough.



YOU ARE NOT FAILING

You are grieving and parenting at the same time. Both are full-time, body-deep work.

If you cannot think clearly, you are not failing.

If ordinary decisions feel impossible, you are not failing.

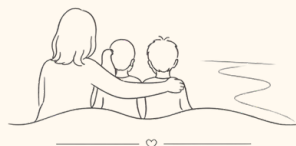
If the routines have fallen apart, the laundry is waiting, or dinner comes from a box, you are not failing.

If your child cries, plays, becomes quiet, asks the same question repeatedly, or seems unchanged, you are not failing.

There is no perfect way to carry your own grief while helping your child carry theirs.

Your child does not need a perfect parent today. They need honesty, safety, love, and the reassurance that they will not face this alone.

Your presence counts—even when that presence is tired, quiet, and unsure.

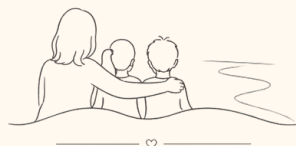


FOR THE NEXT 24 HOURS

Choose only what is helpful. This is not another list you have to complete.

- Drink a glass of water.
- Eat something simple, even if you are not hungry.
- Take any essential medications.
- Write down the one thing that is truly time-sensitive.
- Ask one safe person to handle one practical task.
- Tell your child, in simple and honest words, what they need to know about today - not everything about tomorrow.
- Let your body rest, even if sleep does not come.

Anything unfinished can wait. These boxes are reminders, not requirements.



A NOTE FROM ME TO YOU

Dear friend,

I wish you did not need these pages.

When my husband died, I was grieving the person I loved while trying to remain a safe and steady place for our son. I quickly learned that grief does not arrive with instructions—and parenting does not pause while we try to understand what has happened.

There may be people around you who want to help but do not know what to say. There may be moments when you do not know what you need, either. That is okay.

You do not have to be strong every minute. You do not have to hide your grief from your child. And you do not have to know today how you will carry all the tomorrows.

For now, take the next breath. Then do the next small thing.

That is enough.

With understanding,
Lori

Raising Them Without You

Helping widowed parents find their footing, one step at a time.

When you are ready for more support, the What Now? Survival Kit offers gentle, practical help for the days ahead.

raisingthemwithoutyou.com