North Iowa Hospice - Youth Grief Worksheet #3

In the roller coaster of feelings, some of them might be fear and/or guilt. Your world feels different and out of control at times. Some of the symptoms you might experience are:

- Nausea
- Loss of appetite
- Heart pounding
- Headaches
- Insomnia (can’t sleep)
- Can’t think clearly
- Tired all the time
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Sickening sensation in the pit of your stomach

A major fear that many of us have experienced is believing the same thing that caused the death of our loved one will happen to you or someone else you love. Another fearful event is returning to school. Will your friends treat you differently? Holidays, birthdays and other special days can cause you to remember past events and miss your loved one even more. Some ways to handle your fears and feelings of guilt are:

- Cry it out. Tears are not a sign of weakness; they are a way to express your feelings.
- Talk it out. Put your feelings into words, talk to a family member, friend, teacher or pastor.
- Write it out. Write a letter using the sentences below.

One thing I fear is __________________________________________________________.
When I am afraid, I will ____________________________________________________.

Taking a look at guilt, we see that most of us experience this in one way or another. It is only natural to look back and ask yourself, "What if...?" or, "Why did I...?", "I wish I could...". Maybe there were arguments or misunderstandings that you regret. Maybe you wish you had been nicer to the person who died or perhaps you feel guilty about angry thoughts you had toward them. It is possible that you blame yourself for something done months or even years ago, or for even having caused the death. You may wonder if you are the only one who has ever felt this way. Please remember that what you are feeling is very normal.

Remember that no one is perfect. Every relationship has its ups and downs. We probably did the best we could, and if there is something we really wished we could have done differently or said, we can write a letter to our loved one or talk it out with someone we trust. Here are some sentences you could complete or talk to someone about.

If only __________________________________________________________.
I’m sorry that ________________________________________________________.
It is hard to forgive ____________________________________________________.
I need to stop blaming myself for ________________________________________.

We hope these suggestions will help you deal with fear and guilt feelings and the changes in your life that have come about after the death of your loved one. Again, don’t hesitate to call the bereavement coordinators at North Iowa Hospice if you need someone to talk with.