

How dads.care helps me Tim, 2020



You might wonder how dads.care still helps me 15 years since my daughter Naomi Grace died. Well, the way it helps has changed over the years but it is as important now as then and this is why I stay involved as a volunteer working with Marie Murray and all the amazing bereaved dads that meet up and share their thoughts, feelings, anxieties, upsets and tips in putting one foot in front of the other. When we tried out the idea of a one-off workshop in 2011 for fathers connected with Helen House Children's Hospice I was keen to give something back to help others and continue to work through my grief at the loss of Naomi.

As the years move on, fewer and fewer people ask after Naomi or how I feel about her. The rawness of my grief has moved on too – it is not as painful in my every fibre, the bad memories have faded - the sleepless nights/ 24 hour care, sickness and desperation – and what has come more to the fore are the memories of the gift of my daughter and what it brought me. Even in this pic above, taken in 2002 in Dallas, I can remember the joy of travelling with her to meet other international families dealing with the devastating impact of her rare condition.

And even with the constant stress and sickness I remember the happiness in being with her, meeting other children and families and the love we shared and received. So, as time goes by dads.care is still an important way to draw on my memories, bring back her presence into a room with others that want to hear and look for things (images, writing, music or places) that have meaning for me as I continue to integrate her spirit into my life. And like many of the dads in the group I am aware and grateful for how the personal experience in my life after the death of my child helps others much earlier in their loss.

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