

Chicken Soup for the Grieving Soul: Stories About Life, Death and Overcoming the Loss of a Loved One (Chicken Soup for the Soul)

By Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen



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This collection of inspirational stories will undoubtedly touch many hearts. Written by authors who have lost loved ones, these stories offer comfort, peace and understanding to those going through the grieving process.



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Editorial Review

From Booklist

This latest entry in the Chicken Soup series is targeted at the newly brokenhearted: those who've recently experienced the death of a beloved friend or family member and are still reeling from the experience. It's a collection of stories by authors who have lost loved ones, and in their stories, they detail the particular death, the aftermath, and how they dealt with their overwhelming grief and found the courage to live again. This collection is very sad, bordering on the maudlin, and while it's not clear whether the stories will make anyone feel better (they may actually cause mild depression), some readers may find comfort here. Divided into chapters with titles such as "Final Gifts," "The Power of Support," and "Living Again," the stories emphasize the universality and commonness of death, which may be something of a panacea. In any case, this series is hugely popular, and librarians should stock up. *Kathleen Hughes***Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

About the Author

Jack Canfield is co-creator of the Chicken Soup for the Soul® series, which includes forty *New York Times* bestsellers, and coauthor of *The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be.* He is a leader in the field of personal transformation and peak performance and is currently CEO of the Canfield Training Group and Founder and Chairman of the Board of The Foundation for Self-Esteem. An internationally renowned corporate trainer and keynote speaker, he lives in Santa Barbara, California.

Mark Victor Hansen is a co-founder of Chicken Soup for the Soul.

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A Surprise Gift for Mother

On Christmas Day, all the joys of a close family relationship radiated throughout our parents' home. The smells of roasted turkey, Southern-baked ham and homemade bread hung in the air. Tables and chairs were set up everywhere to accommodate toddlers, teenagers, parents and grandparents. Every room was lavishly decorated. No family member had ever missed Christmas Day with our mother and father.

Only this year, things were different. Our father had passed away November 26, and this was our first Christmas without him. Mother was doing her best to be the gracious hostess, but I could tell this was especially hard for her. I felt a catch in my throat, and again I wondered if I should give her my planned Christmas gift, or if it had become inappropriate in my father's absence.

A few months earlier I had been putting the finishing touches on portraits I had painted of each of my parents. I'd planned to give them as Christmas gifts. This would be a surprise for everyone, as I had not studied art or tried serious painting. There had been an undeniable urge within that pushed me relentlessly to do this. The portraits did look like them, but I was still unsure of my painting techniques.

While painting one day, I was surprised by a doorbell ring. Quickly putting all my painting materials out of sight, I opened the door. To my astonishment, my father ambled in alone, never before having visited me without my mother. Grinning, he said, ôI've missed our early morning talks. You know, the ones we had before you decided to leave me for another man!ö I hadn't been married long. Also, I was the only girl and the baby of the family.

Immediately I wanted to show him the paintings, but I was reluctant to ruin his Christmas surprise. Yet something urged me to share this moment with him. After swearing him to secrecy, I insisted he keep his eyes closed until I had the portraits set on easels. ôOkay, Daddy. Now you can look!ö

He appeared dazed but said nothing. Getting up, he walked closer to inspect them. Then he withdrew to eye them at a distance. I tried to control my stomach flip flops. Finally, with a tear escaping down one cheek, he mumbled, ôI don't believe it. The eyes are so real that they follow you everywhereùand look how beautiful your mother is. Will you let me have them framed?ö

Thrilled with his response, I happily volunteered to drop them off the next day at the frame shop. Several weeks passed. Then one night in November the phone rang, and a cold chill numbed my body. I picked up the receiver to hear my husband, a doctor, say, ôI'm in the emergency room. Your father has had a stroke. It's bad, but he is still alive.ö

Daddy lingered in a coma for several days. I went to see him in the hospital the day before he died. I slipped my hand in his and asked, ôDo you know who I am, Daddy?ö

He surprised everyone when he whispered, ôYouÆre my darling daughter.ö He died the next day, and it seemed all joy was drained from the lives of my mother and me.

I finally remembered to call about the portrait framing and thanked God my father had gotten a chance to see the pictures before he died. I was surprised when the shopkeeper told me my father had visited the shop, paid for the framing and had them gift-wrapped. In all our grief, I had no longer planned to give the portraits to my mother.

Even though we had lost the patriarch of our family, everyone was assembled on Christmas Dayùmaking an effort to be cheerful. As I looked into my mother's sad eyes and unsmiling face, I decided to give her Daddy's and my gift. As she stripped the paper from the box, I saw her heart wasn't in it. There was a small card inside attached to the pictures.

After looking at the portraits and reading the card, her entire demeanor changed. She bounced out of her chair, handed the card to me and commissioned my brothers to hang the paintings facing each other over the fireplace. She stepped back and looked for a long while. With sparkling, tear-filled eyes and a wide smile, she quickly turned and said, ôI knew Daddy would be with us on Christmas Day!ö

I glanced at the gift card scrawled in my father's handwriting. ôMotherùOur daughter reminded me why I am so blessed. I'll be looking at you alwaysùDaddy.ö

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Gena Colgan:

The book Chicken Soup for the Grieving Soul: Stories About Life, Death and Overcoming the Loss of a Loved One (Chicken Soup for the Soul) has a lot of information on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of advantage. The book was written by the very famous author. Mcdougal makes some research prior to write this book. This book very easy to read you may get the point easily after reading this book.

Herbert White:

This Chicken Soup for the Grieving Soul: Stories About Life, Death and Overcoming the Loss of a Loved One (Chicken Soup for the Soul) is great guide for you because the content that is certainly full of information for you who also always deal with world and have to make decision every minute. This book reveal it information accurately using great plan word or we can say no rambling sentences inside it. So if you are read the idea hurriedly you can have whole information in it. Doesn't mean it only will give you straight forward sentences but tricky core information with attractive delivering sentences. Having Chicken Soup for the Grieving Soul: Stories About Life, Death and Overcoming the Loss of a Loved One (Chicken Soup for the Soul) in your hand like obtaining the world in your arm, info in it is not ridiculous just one. We can say that no publication that offer you world within ten or fifteen second right but this reserve already do that. So , this really is good reading book. Hello Mr. and Mrs. occupied do you still doubt that will?

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