

Last week, two of us were talking about our families. We'd both lost siblings who were in their teens or early 20s. No one in the family talked about them. Each was grieving silently. And that the silence only prolonged our agony.

After about six months of family silence, she decided she'd had enough. She called her other sister, and they decided to get together every couple of weeks or so to talk about and remember their sister. Yes, it was sad, and painful, but it hurt less than being silent. They did this over the years, and this moved their grief from only pain to appreciating how much they loved their sister, and what good times they'd had.

I mentioned to her, that when I shared memories, the first time, I'd get teary. The next time, I was still a little choked up. By the third time, I was feeling whatever the memory generated—sad, happy, funny, tender, whatever.

We are on the brink of three major family holidays: Mother's Day, Memorial Day, and Father's Day. Regardless of our losses, these holidays will touch each of us. Can they be painful? Yes. Can they be happy in spite of the pain? YES! I encourage each of you to find someone you can talk and share with. If you want, call me—leave a message and I'll get back to you. I'd like to listen to you talk about your loved one. Memories of those we've lost can be painful and happy at the same time. We need not fear the memories. Take good care, and may God bless you and yours.

Sincerely,

Dave Heidecker
Bereavement/Pastoral Support