

Are you dreading the thought of Christmas without your loved one?

Wednesday 25 September, 2019

Christmas is the time for happy families and having fun - of course, it is. But what about those marginalised and forgotten-about people who don't fit the ideal of the Christmas advertising dream? Those grieving people, feeling alone with their pain and suffering as they try to navigate the highly emotive festive season. The stress of Christmas exacerbated because the one they love is missing, seemingly gone forever.

'RAISE' is a **new and unique online grief community** providing an alternative viewpoint on death, grief and loss, inspiring and empowering people to find their own, healthy, way of coping with the pain triggers surrounding Christmas, and beyond.

It would be hard to find a family, or community, untouched by grief - these grievers are your readers and by your connection to 'RAISE' you will be pointing them towards a much-needed and revolutionary service, in a society generally offering only platitudes and condolences after the death of a loved one.

The community is hosted by writer, Hannah Velten, whose brother, Christian, went missing in Mali, Africa in 2003. Over the course of 14 years, the search for him, living in limbo and fear and denying grief, led to a crash in Hannah's emotional, mental and physical health. She decided in the run-up to Christmas 2017 to **find a way to heal her loss**, for her sake and that of her parents and her young family.

She shares within RAISE the 8-pointed pathway she found to full healing, which relied on her harnessing the love she felt for her brother. Rather than concentrate on what she'd lost, Hannah began to see the opportunities surrounding Christian's physical loss: she could rebuild herself, gradually release her grief, perceive the situation differently, face truths, understand and forgive herself and others, and open herself to all the possibilities which appeared.

It's taken Hannah over a year **to pluck up the courage to speak up** about her experiences and the lessons she's learnt, because her story (and that of her brother) contains many taboo subjects, which many grievers will recognise but not openly admit.

'RAISE' is the platform Hannah's chosen for her work, to **inspire and empower others** to courageously view the loss of a loved one as an opportunity, as a precious gift not to be squandered. Love is all you need to heal and grow after loss.

And as the nights begin to draw in, it's the perfect time to **find support**, **friendship and hope** within the 'RAISE' community as Christmas looms. We'll share how to:

- strengthen yourself and practise self-care,
- peel away the seven layers of grief (found from personal experience),
- · listen to your loving voice, rather than the fearful voice keeping you in fear and grief,
- recognise the sure signs that you still have a strong connection with your loved one,
- tools and techniques to rise above potential trigger moments.

Members of 'RAISE' will receive a PDF of Hannah's book - Lost & Found: The 8-Pointed Pathway to Healing and Growth after Loss - and access to a wealth of resources, discussion, expert guests and online events.

There will also be a **live (online) meet up on Christmas morning** 2019 (GMT) in which Hannah will provide messages of support and love, answer any questions and provide further tips for the day, and night, ahead.

Hannah aims to create a **global community thriving at Christmas**, rather than individuals feeling isolated, alone and struggling with grief.

Media:







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"I hadn't actually realised how heavily immersed in grief I still am, how it has been dictating a lot of my life, and thank you for showing me this... I came away feeling happy, focused and strong - upbeat and energised. I'm so grateful to you for the journey so far..." (Message from a RAISE member)

Please visit the website <u>raise.mn.co</u> for more details, and Hannah's offer a **FREE week's trial** to see whether RAISE is the home for you.

RAISE encourages the honest sharing of stories and experiences and, to safeguard all, membership is subscription-based. Hannah's offering a **HALF PRICE subscription** of \$13.99/month for the first 500 members to enrol. Your readers could be filling those founding spaces; with your signposting!

Hannah is available for comment and interview. She has an incredible story to tell about how she healed the 'surely-impossible-to-heal' loss of her explorer brother and why RAISE is so important to her. She would be happy to write an article or first-person experience piece and is most open to being interviewed.

Hannah can be reached several ways:

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