



# Pastoral Healthcare Network Australia

*Committed to holistic healing*

---

## ♥ GRIEF NOTES ♥

. . . from your Pastoral Healthcare Associates Team Pastoral Nurse

The Awakening  
Six months

Friendships have the power to heal a broken heart – why? Because best friends would not walk out on us no matter how difficult the crisis might be when heartbreak occurs. Most people are surprised by how many friends they actually have.

It is almost universal truth: When you let others see your vulnerability, you receive love. When you show your hurt, others befriend you. There is a marvelous gift of healing that comes when you share your vulnerability. There is understanding, acceptance, encouragement.

If you are going to be helped by a friend, you need to share your pain. You may need to be careful in whom you put your trust. There are people who will not help you. Some will not understand what you are going through. Others will not care to know. And others would be more interested in telling you what to do than in listening to your concerns.

You may have experienced many friends offering encouragement in the weeks following heartbreak, but then a strange thing happens. Approximately six months later, they may no longer be available. The most difficult time in recovery is not the first few months. The hardest time begins six months later when the cards stop coming and the telephone stops ringing. But healing can't be timed by a stopwatch. No one turns the corner at the same moment.

We want to think that friends would give support no matter how long the healing may take, but even good friends aren't aware of the setbacks and the prolonged struggles. When you sense friendships change, you will feel sad. Perhaps a bit angry. But try not to personalize it, as it's not your fault – it's the nature of friendship.

You may have thought many times that nothing could make you feel better. However there may be incidents that begin to happen where meaning can be rediscovered in your life. There may be mind-blowing events, which firmly convince us that we can pick up the pieces and move into the future. But usually, they are small happenings that, in and of themselves, do not appear important, but that give a sense of hope. The desire to fill one's life with meaning is a sure sign that healing is taking place.

We have learned that healing takes place in stages, each of which has its own emotion, its own challenges – we hope you have discovered the courage to face life again with confidence, have found meaningful friendships for your support, and have found hope for the future.

Feel free to contact the PHNA team for information or support.

Carmel O'Dwyer rsm or Leonie Rastas RN. RM  
Ph 5229 7954 or 0408 217375