

## Bereaved Families of Cape Breton

### **Grief...Loneliness**

Loneliness is experienced in many different ways and areas of life. When you are grieving, it often doesn't matter whether you are alone or with other people. To be lonely is to feel isolated, misunderstood or abandoned. It may occur when there are gaps in your life or you feel that no one is truly responsive to your deep need for support and caring.

It may help to understand where the roots of your feelings of loneliness lay so that you can address at least some of them. You will probably recognize a number of reasons for your particular feelings of loneliness in the following list.

#### **Loneliness can be...**

- wanting a relationship with someone who is no longer available
- not having someone to love and care for, who loves you in return
- not having the presence of another person in the same house
- missing the depth of a relationship and the sharing of past and present experiences
- longing for a previous lifestyle or activities once enjoyed
- unhappiness about not having another person to share the workload or carry out tasks
- a feeling of “not belonging”; being the third person, having different social status, losing access to certain groups
- the result of rifts or changes in relationships with long time friends; the inability to make new friends
- not having a person who speaks the same “language” as you do

#### **Suggestions...**

- admit to being lonely, to yourself and others
- express your feelings
- accept that you cannot change the past, but you can remember and build on it
- take care of yourself spiritually, inner strength and nourishment are important
- accept your limitations, do what feels right for you at the time
- remember you have strengths and abilities, use them
- keep your curiosity alive
- don't take yourself too seriously, laugh when you can
- reach out to new and old friends, support groups, family members

*Ultimately, loneliness is the pain of feeling that there is no depth which speaks to your depth, no one who responds to your deepest needs and highest aspiration. It is an inescapable part of being human.*