

**A River Runs Through It**  
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Grief has a way of damming up inside and cutting us off from everything and everyone we care about until we can no longer receive or give joy. We block out the good in our lives and focus solely on the bad. We stop reaching out to others, and eventually they stop reaching out to us. Once the river of humanity stops flowing through our lives, we stagnate in depression.

How do we get things flowing again? It's not easy, because it requires that we give up something, maybe even a part of ourselves. Having already suffered a tremendous loss, who can blame us for not wanting to give up something more?

Yet, giving up and giving back is the first step to unblocking the dam keeping us from the good things in life. For me, this meant turning my son's bedroom into a guestroom. It was a painful decision, but the room was tearing me apart. Sometimes, I would leave the door ajar, trying to pretend everything was okay. At other times, I slammed the door shut, unable to stand the empty silence.

Though it was difficult to strip the walls and furnishings from the room and start afresh, it was a necessary part of the healing process. Our newly decorated guestroom has since provided comfort to a young mother nursing a sick son, sheltered a troubled friend, and nurtured various family members in need of special care. The flow of humanity is a much more fitting tribute to my son than an empty room, for he loved people, and would have the first to give up his room to a friend in need.

Where are the dams in your life? What are you holding on to? Is it the pain? The loneliness? Are you holding on to your loved one's possessions? Let go of the anger and bitterness; let the river flow.