Weird Is Normal When Teenagers Grieve
Teens grieve differently from adults and often get lost in the shuffle after the death of a loved one. Weird Is Normal When Teenagers Grieve is unique because it is a self-help book for grieving teens written by an actively grieving teen. Author Jenny Lee Wheeler lost her father to cancer when she was fourteen and validates for her peers that they have the right to grieve in their own way and according to their own timetable, that their grief attacks might be different from those of adults around them, and that they aren't going crazy if they see signs from their loved one. Dr. Heidi Horsley writes in the Foreword, "Teen grief is often overlooked and unacknowledged. Jenny's journey will strike a note with teenagers everywhere who have experienced the loss of someone they love. She gives sound advice and lets them know they are not alone."
Thank heavens there finally is a book that addresses the special situation of teenagers who have lost a parent, sibling, friend, or other beloved relative. This wonderful book is so authentically and poignantly well written, The author expresses so well the unique state teens who grieve are in and gives them hope - not that they will have their loved one back, of course, but that the things they feel and express or don’t express are normal and that they will eventually forge a new life for themselves. Unfortunately, Jenny is so compelling as an author because she IS a teenager who lost her beloved father when she was only 14 years old. She is not some ivory tower theoretical adult expert pontificating from an academic perspective. She has lived it and knows what the process is truly about - what helped her may likely help other teens. I am keeping at least three copies of this book on hand, in the event I can help a teen or a parent of a teen who finds themselves in Jenny’s shoes. This is a very special book.

Written by a very articulate 16-year-old, this book discusses parent death from the perspective of a girl who was between the first and second anniversary of her loss. The book emphasizes that everyone has their own path. A moderate reader would be fine with the text. “At a glance” summarizes the content at the end of each chapter. The four parts and chapters are:

Grieving is Normal
1. My Path of Grief
2. Everyone Grieves
3. Share Your Feelings; Show Your Grief
4. Your Feelings are Your Feelings

Grieving is Weird
5. Grief Attacks: Everyone Has Them
6. From Teenagers to Adults

On the Healing Road to Peace
7. Talk About It
8. Remembering Your Loved One
9. Signs of Continued Love
10. Opening Yourself to Signs

Afterword: How Laughter Helped Our Family.

This book should be in all grief libraries. I bought this book originally for a project in my Master’s level program. This is a great book for teenagers that are grieving. Being a teenager is tough enough and to add grieving on top of that adds to the confusion of those years. Wheeler does a great job of breaking down the many different emotions and behaviors we experience while grieving. She even mentions her own experiences when she was a teenager experiencing grief. I highly recommend this if you know a teenager that needs a little help while grieving.

This is a very good book written by a wise beyond her years, young lady. She is in touch with her peers and seems right on target in her advice and her experience was handled with dignity and respect. Her Father and Mother did a fine job raising her.

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