

Dr. Tesia D. Wells

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Final paper

Kyounghee Youn (Hanna)

Who is a significant person who can affect someone the most? Without a doubt, it is mother. A mother who bears a fetus for nine months has passion and love for her baby forever. That's why their attachment is significantly correlated and robust, and the effect on each other is forever. Their relationship is not affected only until the child lives with them; it is forever until the child becomes old. That's why the death of a mother is a tremendous event for children, whether anticipatory or unexpected.

While listening to Claire Bidwell Smith's lecture, I was thinking about my mother. My mother lost her mother when she was only three months old due to a disease. The speaker said the mother has three essential functions: nurturance, protection, and guidance. People need these roles to grow to be healthy people mentally, physically, and emotionally. These are basic and essential needs for children.

However, my mother spent only three months with her mother. The three months may not have been filled with attention for my mother because my grandmother was sick. So for only two months, my mother received her mother's love and care. This fact makes me sorrowful and filled with deep crying. She would not have even known of her mother after the 3 months as she was too young. She might acknowledge a mother's meaning when other friends had their mothers. But, she was too little to understand the fact.

According to *Greif and Loss across the lifespan*, for infants and toddlers it is hard to understand death, but caregivers' deaths negatively influence them. Also, for infants under 6 months, continuous care is an essential factor for development (Walter et al., 2022). I am sure my mother started to grieve when she realized she had no mother. Literally, from three months to seventy-eight years old, she has been grieving her mother's death. Whenever she meets circumstances that she doesn't know what to do as a teenage girl and mother, she might feel her mother's absence as a guide. Whenever she faced dangerous situations such as playing outside, getting into trouble at school, and being sick, she felt terrible because her mother was not there to be a protector. Also, she had no memory of her mother as a nurturer. She felt her mother's absence during her important moments like graduation, birthday, wedding, and other adversaries in her 78 years.

The saddest fact was that she had to experience was four stepmothers who had no interest in my mother. My grandfather wanted to have a son because back then the son represented the household. That's why he kept bringing women. My mother might have felt lonely and isolated because she was the only daughter, but he kept seeking a son. Stepmothers took my grandfather's attention from my mother, so my mother had a father, but she felt her father's absence.

Through all situations, she had to endure a feeling of unfairness. Every friend of hers has a mother, but her. It was hard for her to accept it as a child, but even until she is an adult. She did not do anything about her mother's death, but she had to deal with that without support and had to survive that situation. That was too harsh for a little girl.

Did she grieve enough? Can she grieve at that time in that environment? Now she is 78 years old. Some people think that aged people can handle everything because they went through many life events. I thought that, too, in the past. However, she was not. She still grieves her mother's death. I took a theoretical and individual foundation last semester. One of my papers was a family voyage, so I had to interview five of my family members with fifty questions so that I can know about them more personally and relationally. When I asked my mother about her childhood, she cried profoundly, telling me about her mother's absence. Her reaction was that of her mother passing away yesterday. I realize my mother has been grieving her mother's death for more than seventy years whenever something triggered her. As the speaker said, they spent much of it grieving a death, which is part of their life.

If I didn't take this class, I would think she was just sad when she thought about her mother, but now I can deeply understand my mother, and I feel sorry for her not having enough time to grieve her mother of death and receive enough support around people. There was no therapy or counseling at that time. Most people treated it like fate. So I felt she didn't have a comfort environment to grieve her mother; she must survive the situations pressing her grief toward her mother.

As the speaker said, the bereaved ones who lost their mother in adolescence and adulthood commonly fear failure and criticism, the need for control, difficulty in relationships and parenting, and anxiety. I found my mother had control issues and problems in relationships and parenting. I used to think my mother's personality was caused by her childhood, which had no mother. However, I can understand her more through the lens of grieving.

She always wanted to control each family member when I was with my family. If we didn't listen to her, she sometimes disciplined us with physical action. Also, she didn't regulate her negative emotions significantly, so sometimes she blurted out. She was strict with her and the other children and so diligent. One day we had time to talk about her past. She said she had no mother, so she didn't know what to do as a mother; she kept her children under her control not to hear other's criticism. If her children were to act wrong in front of others they would blame the parents. If she were to act wrong as a child the people around would blame it on the absence of her mother, she did not want to hear this and so that's why she was so strict with us.

In the relationship between mother and daughter, daughters learn empathy and compassion, communication skills, roles model, healthy friendships and secure attachment, emotional intelligence, and emotion regulation from mothers. My mother has empathy and compassion, it isn't learned from her mother, what she has been through in her life built up empathy and compassion toward others; also, she kept trying to be with her children when they were little, absence of her mother drove herself to stay with her children, even though she didn't know general skills for mothers. But in communication skills, emotional intelligence, and regulation, she lacked. For me, I learned from my mother's empathy and compassion which she

had, but I had issues with emotional intelligence and regulation like my mother. Fortunately, I have many chances to learn and support groups to experience those things.

I believe if my mother had enough social support and time to grieve her mother's death, her life and personality would be more peaceful, flexible, and enjoyable and that would affect my life. However, we cannot control death and the past. These are out of our hands. So we live in the present dealing with many issues.

The loss of her mother for three months as a baby is like nothing happened to her at that moment, but as she grows, she feels her mother's absence and loneliness, isolation, guilt, anger and helplessness. So to make her life to be normal like others around her, she had to fight against the negative words caused because she had no mother. So her life is like one person's struggle to overcome her mother's absence. That's why she was rigid, stubborn and non-negotiable.

I am the one who grew up with that mother. I resembled my mother's attitude. I had control issues and emotional regulation at the beginning of my marriage. Thankfully, I was with God and sisters in Christ. Those supports make me keep growing in Christ. I am not disappointed and blamed because of my mother's characteristics. Rather, I respect my mother, who had a tough childhood but went through it. She is a survivor, and my mother bore me for nine months and never gave up on raising me and my four siblings.

I don't know, and she doesn't know the purpose behind her mother passing away when she was three months. But what my mother and I know is God is our father, never dies or forsakes us. He uses his children for his purpose. All our sorrow God can use for his glory and for people to return to Him.

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Walter, C. A., M., M. C. J. L., & Koller, J. M. (2022). *Grief and loss across the lifespan: A biopsychosocial perspective*. Springer Publishing Company, LLC.