



## Never the Same

*by Larry Uglow*

In our attempts to make sense of the world, we develop something I refer to as world views. Our world views are the ways we believe the world should work.

For example, when I look to buy a new car, I am attracted to the sports cars. However, the world view I have, which includes my kids, makes a sports car impractical. Therefore, I wind up buying a car like my dad, a car I said I would never own.

Children have world views too, which typically include their moms and dads. When they do something good, they hope mom and dad will find out and when they do something bad, they hope mom and dad won't find out. Parents are such a big part of a child's world view, their reactions, both positive and negative, are thought about.

A world view I believe to be universal is old people should die before young people. A problem with this world view is the definition of old. Children in grade school think people in high school are old, people in high school think 30- and 40-year-olds are old, and 80-year-olds tell me about someone who lived to be 104.

It is hard to agree who is old enough to die, but we probably all agree an infant is not old enough.

When an infant dies, our world view, which includes the infant, stops working and we grieve. Expectant parents foresee their child far into the future. When the infant dies, the parents grieve just as if the infant had lived all those years.

After the loss of a child, others may want us to be ourselves again and may try to include us in things we always used to enjoy. As you may have discovered, this can be difficult. Often, we do not have the same energy or interests. If trying to become "your old self" again is frustrating, do not push it.

A goal, instead, could be to become a new person. In other words, become a person who looks at the world differently, who has a new world view. Your child's death will reorganize what is important to you and you may have different priorities from before. This new person will not forget their child, but give their child's life even more meaning by valuing relationships even more than before.