



What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?

by Trevor Romain

free spirit
PUBLISHING®

© 2014 Free Spirit Publishing. All rights reserved.

A Parent Council Selection

What on Earth Do You Do When Someone Dies?

by Trevor Romain

Edited by Elizabeth Verdick

free spirit
PUBLISHING®



Text and illustrations copyright © 1999 by Trevor Romain

All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. Unless otherwise noted, no part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without express written permission of the publisher, except for brief quotations or critical reviews. For more information, go to www.freespirit.com/company/permissions.cfm.

Free Spirit, Free Spirit Publishing, and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Free Spirit Publishing Inc. A complete listing of our logos and trademarks is available at www.freespirit.com.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Romain, Trevor.

What on earth do you do when someone dies? / by Trevor Romain ; edited by Elizabeth Verdick.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

Summary: Describes the overwhelming emotions involved in dealing with the death of a loved one and discusses how to cope with such a situation.

ISBN 1-57542-055-4

1. Grief in children—Juvenile literature. 2. Bereavement in children—Juvenile literature. 3. Adjustment (Psychology) in children—Juvenile literature. [1. Death. 2. Grief.] I. Verdick, Elizabeth. II. Title.

BF723.G75R65 1999

155.9'37—dc21

98-47611

CIP

AC

Free Spirit Publishing does not have control over or assume responsibility for author or third-party websites and their content.

The names and characters Skye and Jack are trademarks of The Trevor Romain Company.

Reading Level Grade 3

Interest Level Ages 5–10

Fountas & Pinnell Guided Reading Level P

25 24 23 22 21 20

Printed in the United States of America

S18860614

Free Spirit Publishing Inc.

Minneapolis, MN

(612) 338-2068

help4kids@freespirit.com

www.freespirit.com



Printed on recycled paper

including 30%
post-consumer waste

Free Spirit Publishing is a member of the Green Press Initiative, and we're committed to printing our books on recycled paper containing a minimum of 30% post-consumer waste (PCW). For every ton of books printed on 30% PCW recycled paper, we save 5.1 trees, 2,100 gallons of water, 114 gallons of oil, 18 pounds of air pollution, 1,230 kilowatt hours of energy, and .9 cubic yards of landfill space. At Free Spirit it's our goal to nurture not only young people, but nature too!



Free Spirit offers competitive pricing.

Contact edsales@freespirit.com for pricing information on multiple quantity purchases.

I would like to thank the following experts who read my book and helped me understand how children cope with grief:

William C. Kroen, Ph.D., LMHC

Thomas S. Greenspon, Ph.D.,
Licensed Psychologist

Harry Rauch, M.D.,
Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

Debi Sharp, LSW

I greatly appreciated your helpful comments and feedback.

Contents

Introduction	6
Why do people have to die?	8
Am I going to die, too?	10
Who can I talk to?	12
What is it like to die?	14
Why am I hurting so much?	16
Is it okay to cry?	22
Is the death my fault?	24
What if I just want to be left alone?	28
What can I do if I'm angry?	30
Will I ever feel better?	32

Is it still okay to have fun?	36
Where has the person gone?	38
What happens to the person's body?	40
How do we honor the person who died? ...	46
What is a funeral or memorial service?	48
How can I say good-bye?	58
What happens to me now?	64
Where else can I go for help?	70
About the author/illustrator	72

Introduction

In November of 1997 my dad, Jac Romain, died. I was so shocked that all I could say was . . . wow. I couldn't sleep. My stomach hurt, and I didn't want to eat. The whole world seemed different to me. When someone you love dies, it's normal to feel shocked, sad, confused, worried, scared, or a lot of other painful feelings.

I decided to write this book in honor of my dad, who taught me to write and draw and care about other people. After his death, writing helped me sort out my feelings and remember all of the ways my dad was special. It gave me a way to feel more peaceful inside.

I also wrote this book to honor the kids I work with at the Brackenridge Hospital in my hometown. They have cancer, and I visit the hospital

to talk with them and make them laugh. Over the years, some of the kids I've made friends with have lost their battle against cancer. Although I was very saddened by their deaths, I can't help but smile when I think about all the good times we had.

Most of all, I wrote this book for you. If you've lost a loved one or someone you cared about, I hope my book answers the questions you have. I hope it gives you the words and strength you need during this painful time in your life. And I hope you believe me when I say that you won't always feel as sad and hurt and confused as you do now. Maybe not right away, but in the coming weeks or months, *you will feel better.*

Trevor Romain

Why do people have to die?

When we're born, we experience life. When our life ends, we experience death. Death happens to all living things on earth.

Some people die when they're really old. Others die when they get very, very sick with an illness like cancer or heart disease. Still others die from being badly hurt in an accident. No matter how someone dies, family and friends of that person feel sad and upset.



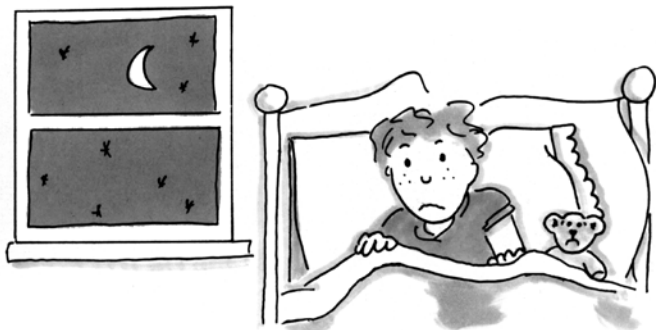


My 14-year-old friend Vicki, who had cancer, was very wise for her age. One time, we were talking about dying, and she told me something important. She said that people don't talk about death very often, which makes it harder to understand. And when you don't understand something, you're more likely to be afraid of it. Instead of being scared, talk to someone you love about what's on your mind.

Am I going to die, too?

If someone close to you has died, you may be afraid that you're going to die. It may help to know that most people live for a long, long time, and you probably will, too.

You may also wonder if other people you love or care about are going to die. It's natural to worry like this. In fact, these kinds of fears can keep you awake all night.



It's like worrying about a monster in your closet. It can be scarier to lie in bed alone thinking about the monster than to open the closet and see what's really there. The best way to deal with something you're afraid of is to face it. How? Talk about it. Let somebody know that you feel frightened.



Who can I talk to?

The adults in your life may be so upset about the death that they forget to talk to you about how you're doing. But the more you discuss the death, the less scary it becomes. If you're wondering who you can talk to, here are some ideas:

- your mom, dad, or another family member
- a neighbor or friend of the family
- someone at your place of worship
- your teacher or principal
- a counselor or youth group leader



This is what you can say:

- "I'm scared and confused. What can I do?"
- "I really miss him."
- "I'm sad that I can't talk to her anymore."
- "I'm so lonely, I need some extra love."
- "I need a hug."

