

Hannah Westman

Professor Chris

College Writing and Critical Reading

04 February 2025

## Losing Important Family Members

Around 40,000 people (about twice the seating capacity of Madison Square Garden) die yearly because of car crashes, and 984 from trisomy 18 in the US. There is a one in two thousand chance that you will give birth to a baby with trisomy 18. Some say that losing a family member you have never met is not that big of a deal. They also say that losing an important person due to an accident that causes many people to die is not that big of a deal. People may think the grief should go away over time, but the truth is, even though it has been about twenty-one years for my brother and about two years for my aunt, it is still hard and impacts me daily. So, next time you think about telling someone to just get over it, put yourself in their shoes, and then decide not to say anything about it. Overall, I just know that grief is difficult to cope with, and my grief lasted a long time and is still affecting me to this day. Also, you never know what is happening in other people's lives, so be nice always.

Have you ever thought about what your relationship would be like with a loved one who has passed away? Well, this is a personal story about what I think my relationship with my brother, who has passed, would be like. I will start by giving you some background information on his condition, trisomy 18: "Edwards syndrome (Trisomy 18) is a genetic condition where three cells attach to chromosome 18, causing growth delays that can be life-threatening."

(Cleveland Clinic). My brother and I would have a great relationship even though he would be mentally disabled. I believe that our relationship would also be eye-opening for me to see how it is for others who have a disabled sibling. Although I think our relationship would be great, I know my parents' relationship with him would be awesome. I know this because they still grieve about him daily, even though they do not show it. My mom lost her baby, so I know it must be hard on her, and it must affect her daily life.

In addition, I say that losing a family member before I even existed is still super tough on me, and it still hurts even though I never got to meet him. The loss of my brother profoundly impacts my daily life, shaping my emotional well-being, routines, and perspective on relationships. It hurts me because I think about how our relationship could have been, and also because I see my mom cry and grieve over the fact that she also never got to meet him. Another reason it is hard on me is because I think about when I am ready to start a family and if I will or will not have a stillborn. A stillborn, for those who do not know, is a baby who dies after 28 weeks (about 6 and a half months) of pregnancy, but before or during birth. Anyway, I pray that I do not have one because of how hard it was on my parents, and I want my child to live their whole life to the fullest. Finally, it is so tough on me because I think about all of the memories he and I would have, but we missed out on them and all of the inside jokes we could have had together. It all just breaks my heart.

Additionally, I say that losing an important person to a common cause still hurts badly, especially because it could have been prevented. I lost my aunt two years ago in August, and it was one of the hardest things ever. She was on a five-mile run with her husband, and he had a work meeting, so she took a different route home. She continued her route, and she came to a

crosswalk. She looked both ways, and then she started walking across the street when a car came out of nowhere and did not see her. The driver said this was “because of the sun glare,” and my aunt got launched into the air, losing her phone, earbuds, and the diamond in her wedding ring also flew out, and they still have not found it. Then the ambulance came and took her to the hospital. We went and visited her as a family, and she ended up dying a few nights later. This was so difficult for me, knowing that we did not visit this side of my family that much because they live a few hours away, but aside from that, she was my favorite aunt, and I lost her. I still lie in my bed and cry for hours upon hours because of how much I miss her. It also breaks me because my uncle is struggling without her, and so are my cousins. It is so sad because I cannot imagine losing my mom. Although I lost my aunt to a common cause, it abuses my mental health because it could have easily been prevented.

Furthermore, I say the feeling of losing someone never goes away, and it comes back. It can also hurt more than ever before. Right after my aunt got hit, my mom called me and we went to visit her. This was the point where I was in shock. I did not know what to think about the whole situation. I just did not feel real at all. Then, when it all hit me, it was at her funeral. My cousin's whole lacrosse team came to support him, and it was the sweetest thing in the entire world. It was the saddest day of my life. I had to walk in front of everyone and say bye to her ashes. Then, a week or so later, I found myself crying every night thinking about her and just wanting a hug from her. It is just so hard thinking about it, like I will never be able to hug her, talk to her, or even see her ever again. When I think about her, I can just visualize her in the hospital bed with tubes and the ventilator keeping her alive. She was not mentally, but physically, there.

There is a girl that I know, and her mom died, so I am going to share a story about her. She lost her mom due to cancer, which is also a common cause of death, and it still hurt her like hell. A lot of people tell her to get over it or say, "Stop talking about your mom, we get it," but I know that they do not, because no matter what, you cannot understand someone else's pain. I think to myself every time this conversation happens, "If you lost your mom, would you not be sad about it forever? Not having a mom would be so hard." Sometimes I do not keep it to myself, and I just blurt it out. Most people need to mature and realize that she is not using it as an excuse. She definitely just misses her mom just like I miss my aunt and brother because losing a loved one is so hard. So, just remember that you never know who people have lost and or how they lost them, but the important thing is that you treat them with kindness, and if they want to open up and talk to you about things you listen to and do not judge them.