

What If I Hadn't Gone?

By Patricia E. Brockett, Oregon, USA

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I almost talked myself out of going that evening. I knew that a night of remembrance might help me cope with the loss of my mother, but I also knew that the evening would bring tears as I continued to grieve and mourn her passing.

As the hour for the night of remembrance drew near, I found myself getting ready to go despite my earlier hesitations. I had decided that being there would be good for me.

The night of remembrance, which honored several people who had recently passed away, was held by the funeral home that handled my mother's burial arrangements. Other than the funeral home director and his family, I knew none of the people in the room. During the evening, each deceased person's name was read, and a family representative lit a small candle in memory of that person.

After the service, I stood up to make my way to the refreshments. Those who had sat behind me had all left except for a frail lady attached to a breathing apparatus sitting beside her walker. I felt her sadness and pain. I also felt that I needed to give her a hug.

I did not know how she would feel about a stranger giving her a hug, but I followed this simple prompting. I came up to her with my arms outstretched. She reached both her arms toward me and pulled me down to her. She kissed my cheek and said, "Thank you for knowing I needed a hug. You are an angel." We then visited for a few moments.

This experience cemented in my mind and soul the reason I needed to be there. Would someone else have given this woman a hug that evening if I had not gone? I will never know, but I do know that I was prompted to hug her, and because I did so, we were both richly blessed. ■

