



## BOS Monthly Letter of Hope

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### Moving Forward vs. Moving On

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A phrase that is used all too often to anyone who is grieving the loss of a loved one is “you need to move on” or “it’s time for you to move on.” As a parent who has suffered the loss of a child, that phrase isn’t comforting at all and to be quite honest with you it does more harm than good. That phrase alone can send one back to a place that she or he was trying desperately to leave. I’ll never forget the time those words were spoken to me. Although I knew it wasn’t the intent or desire of the individual who made the statement to push the knife a little further into my heart, the fact remains that hearing those words deepened my pain.

You see “moving on” means to leave something or someone behind and to release it from your life completely. When I think about moving on, I’m reminded of the times I physically moved from one place of residence to another. Sometimes, that move required a few days, maybe a week to get adjusted to my new surroundings. Then, there were other times when the move was exciting and a welcome change that made me feel good about the move. However, generally to hear “it’s time for you to move on” reminds me of the times I’ve told myself that after I received a bad grade, after the break-up of a past relationship or after I left a job that was no longer fulfilling. So, to have someone say to me, after my son passed away that I needed to “move on,” was not something I wanted to hear. In my mind, I was thinking “how do I move on after carrying my son for nine months; after 21 hours of labor; and after having him as a part of my life for 26 years, 4 months and 28 days?”

Then, one day I heard someone say something that I found very comforting and enlightening. They said, “I like moving forward rather than moving on.” As soon as I heard that, my soul said “yes” that’s it, moving forward! When I think about “moving forward” after the passing of my son, I think about carrying my son with me everywhere I go because he is a part of me and will forever be attached to my life and in my heart. Every right decision I made in my life, from the age of 21 to the present, has been because of Lamont. Although my son is not physically with me, I have the peace and assurance that our love forever remains true, alive and intact. Moving forward after the passing of my son, has given me a heart and desire to educate people on what is and what is not comforting to say to a person who is grieving the loss of a loved one, especially to a parent who is grieving the loss a child. Moving forward after the passing of my son, means that now that I have been comforted I have chosen to comfort other parents who are moving through the grieving process. Moving forward after the passing of my son, has caused me to step into my purpose of helping other parents who have suffered the loss of a child by developing a support group called “Bridge of Support.”

So, as you are walking on this new path in life, if someone tells you to “move on,” don’t hold it against them and by all means don’t let it take you to a place of despair. Just smile and explain to them that you prefer the phrase “moving forward” because you are taking the love and memories of your child with you as you “move forward” and begin your journey in healing.