

Flowers of Forgiveness

For so long, I'd wanted to apologize to my best friend. But she died before I got the chance. What now?

By Haven Conner, Chattanooga, Tennessee
May, 09

I never see a daisy without thinking of Barbara. We were sorority sisters in college. After her engagement, we searched for a silverware pattern—with daisies. As her bridesmaid I carried the same yellow and white flowers up the aisle, and daisies were everywhere at the reception.

Barbara and I talked every day. But then a terrible thing happened. I let an argument between our husbands drive a wedge between us. We stopped talking regularly, quit celebrating birthdays together. Suddenly we weren't friends anymore. I kept putting off calling her to make things right, but the regret never left me.

Then I learned that Barbara had died, at age 38.

I agonized over what had been left unsaid. One afternoon I slumped in a chair in my backyard, where we had held Barbara's wedding reception. Oh, God, I prayed, I'll never forgive myself for not telling Barbara how sorry I am and how much I loved her.

Tell her now, God seemed to say.

I poured my heart out, just like we used to do. "You were the best friend I ever had," I said. "I'm so sorry." Somehow I felt she had heard me. I got up, trimmed some wayward branches, even mowed the grass. That night I went to bed with a lighter heart. I only wished I had reached out to Barbara when she could still respond.

Next morning, in a corner of the yard, sprouting up from the freshly mowed lawn was an unexpected bouquet—a foot-high clump of yellow and white daisies.