

LIFE TOUCHES LIFE

A MOTHER'S STORY OF STILLBIRTH AND HEALING

BY LORRAINE ASH
FOREWORD BY CHRISTIANE NORTHRUP, M.D.LIFE TOUCHES LIFE
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Within these pages, I found good and powerful medicine for anyone who is in the crucible of grief.... It will give you solace and hope. Ultimately, this book is a celebration of life with all its pain, poignancy, and mystery.

—CHRISTIANE NORTHRUP, M.D.,
Author, *The Wisdom of Menopause*

Unable to find answers when her only child, Victoria, was stillborn, Lorraine Ash came to write the book she longed for. It is a road map from pain and chaos to understanding and acceptance. Drawing on great thinkers, personal loves, and the wisdom in everyday events, Ash explains how she made it through this difficult emotional terrain and how her experiences led to richer ways of seeing, being, and loving in the world.

Although 26,000 babies are stillborn in the United States every year, stillbirth continues to be a taboo subject. *Life Touches Life* shatters the silence that has hidden a bane as old as humankind.

Lorraine Ash met that silence head-on when, after a trouble-free pregnancy, her daughter was stillborn on what was to be her date of birth. After a C-section, Ash fought a fever that raged at 104 degrees and she almost succumbed to the silent B-strep infection that had robbed her daughter of life.

Awed by the experience, which was to change her forever, Ash sought solace and perspective in all the old places and found little relief. In *Life Touches Life* she tears down the walls of misunderstanding that isolated her in her hour—indeed years—of need. “Shattering the silence is essential if mothers are to integrate their loss into their daily lives,” Ash writes. “A child who only existed inside her mother can continue to spiritually exist there and the two can remain close.”

Ash describes the inner changes she faced after the stillbirth of her daughter and delves into spiritual questions that shook her soul: Why did God let this happen? Is there justice in the world? What does this death mean in terms of what to believe and how to move forward?

Ash also reveals the erratic social landscape she encountered and what it felt like to be faced with people who emotionally misunderstood her loss and gave her little, if any, time for recovery. A mother facing stillbirth is often urged to “get over it already and have another child.” Ash observes, “People offer a grieving mother platitudes that trivialize her pain.”

It’s a long road to a new life but Ash reassures her readers that it is a wondrous road and that recovery is possible. The message of *Life Touches Life* is this: Hope is ahead. Hope is here. For every hurtful word or action a stillbirth mother bears, there is something of uncommon beauty right down the road—something she may never have seen or understood before. Epiphanies emerge from the stuff of everyday experience. Soon all these things become a new emotional landscape for the stillbirth mother as she sets out on the journey of the rest of her life. *Life Touches Life* is for those mothers, fathers, and everyone else who wants to understand their pain and love them well.



Lorraine Ash

THE AUTHOR

Lorraine Ash has been a newspaper journalist since 1982, currently working for the *Daily Record* in New Jersey. Her feature articles and series, particularly on health and women’s issues, have won national, state, and regional awards. She explores the themes of stillbirth, childlessness, midlife, and mortality in published essays.

Ash also volunteers as a peer grief counselor, working one-on-one with stillbirth mothers. She lives in Allendale, New Jersey.

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