Letter to My Grandson, by Daniel Gottlieb

Change is difficult for all of us. Â The older we get, the more change we face. Â All change involves loss, and whenever we lose something, we ache to have it back. Â Everything I have lost in my life -- big things and little things -- I've wanted back at first.

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So because we know that all change is loss and all loss is change, your mom and dad worried about how you would react when it was time to
give your beloved pacifier -- your "binky".
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Now that you're four, you no longer have your binky; you have nothing to protect you from your anxiety. Â That's why transitions are hard. Â Those transitional objects give us the illusion of security. Â When they are gone, we are left with the insecurity that's been there all along.
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Sam, almost everything we become attached to we'll eventually lose; our possessions, our loved ones, and even our youth and health. Â Yes, each loss is a blow. Â But it's also an opportunity. Â There's an old Sufi saying: "When the heart weeps for what it's lost, the soul rejoices for what it's gained."
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As much as anyone who loves you would like to rescue you from your pain and give the binky right back to you, that wouldn't be a good idea. Â Each stage of growth involves loss. Â Without it, you can't have the gain.
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So when you feel the pain of loss, please don't grab at something to take away the pain. Â Just have faith that pain, like everything else, is transitional. Â Through it, you will learn about your ability to deal with adversity. Â You will learn about how you manage stress. Â You will feel pride. Â On the other side of pain, you will learn something about who you are.
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A friend of mine recently told me she had so many difficulties in her life that she felt like she was living in a nightmare and didn't know what to do. Â I told her to find the bus station and wait for the bus! Â She looked at me like I was crazy. Â I explained that all emotions are temporary, and we can wait for them to pass as though we were waiting for a bus. Â We can wait with frustration, anger or feelings of victimhood, but that won't make the bus come any faster. Â We could wait with patience and relaxation, but that wouldn't make the bus come faster either! Â We just have to have faith that it's coming. Â
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--Daniel Gottlieb, in _Letters to Sam_

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