

If we didn't laugh, we'd cry", my mother used to say and when I read of the "conversation" Jules Radford had with a friend on Facebook Messenger, I remembered my mother's words. Jules tragically lost her beautiful 13 month old son. Billy-Joe when he died very suddenly of septicaemia, on the 5th November 2015. The following conversation between Jules and a friend, only a year after Billy-Joe died, is the kind of conversation I am sure we can all identify with, when talking with those we know or knew, who didn't, - and still don't - "get it".

FRIEND: Hi Jules, how are you? Was thinking about you the other day, so thought I'd drop a message. Hope you are keeping well x

ME: Hello. Lovely to hear from you. How are you? It would have been my son's 2nd birthday last Saturday, so that was a difficult day, but on the whole we are coping better. Xxx

FRIEND: Awww yeah, I was thinking how you've been. The last time I text you was around Christmas. It must be so hard. I hope things get easier for you, stay strong. I strongly believe that God only puts those through difficult times only if He knows you can cope. How's work? Xx

ME: I haven't been able to return to work since Billy-Joe died. In child-loss terms, 10 months is still very early days, and the grief is still very raw. Xxx

FRIEND: Awww yeah, it's going to be difficult to work. You've had a lot going on! Yeah, 10 months isn't long at all. Stay strong Jules. I remember how you suddenly got married and fell pregnant, it all happened so quickly. Your problems are temporary, don't forget that. Before you know it everything will sort itself out and you'll be back to your cheerful self. I'm okay. Still single, lol. When things settle we will meet up for a curry or something? Xx

ME: I don't think I'll ever be the 'old Jules' again - some things change everything, and this is one of them. I'm sure the right person is out there for you. I have no doubt that you will be very happily married one day. xxx

FRIEND: Awww Jules, please don't say that. I want to see the old Jules. I know it's hard, and to be honest you're dealing with it so well. At least you and Neil are both aware that Billy-Joe is in a much better place and he's at peace. Xx

ME: I know it's hard for people to understand, but the loss of a child is about as bad as it gets. He was my everything, and a huge part of me died with him. We wish with all our hearts that Billy-Joe was alive, healthy and at home with us. We believe that was the best place for him.

Can I hear a collective sigh as you all read this?