



Maxence

Maxence Kang Paphassarang
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The middle of Thiph and Sufen's three children, Maxence was a happy, active, affectionate and loving child who brought much life to the family. Sufen tells how he died suddenly in his sleep during an afternoon nap, diagnosed later with H1N1 although he had shown no symptoms but a moderate fever, and how she found a natural healing system that transformed her life.

Written by Sufen Paphassarang, Maxence's mother

Chocolate was a household name in our family and I know no one who loved chocolate more than Maxence. There were times he would starve himself for days just so that I would give in to his request for chocolate: chocolate bread, chocolate biscuits, Nutella spreads, chocolate milk and chocolate cake... anything with chocolate. He constantly smelled of chocolate or had clothes stained with chocolate. His nickname eventually became "Chocolate".

It was a lovely Sunday afternoon. Julie, our youngest addition, was only three weeks old. It was our first family outing after I had given birth and we went for lunch at our favourite restaurant, Din Tai Fung, at the Paragon Mall. Quentin was five and Maxence was two years old at that time. My husband and I were both so proud of each of our children. The day was a lovely, memorable day. We thoroughly enjoyed spending time together—the five of us. I recall thinking to myself that our family was complete.

After lunch Maxence took a nap in the car on the way home. Upon arriving home, as I carried him out of the car I realized he was running a temperature, but detected no other symptoms. I took his temperature and it was 38.5 degrees Celsius. I gave him

paracetamol and his fever came down. He was still active and happy till the medicine wore off. After dinner and bath time, he started getting warm and tired so I gave him another dose of medicine and tucked him in my bed for the night.

At around 2 am he woke up and was very playful, despite running a fever. He tossed and turned in bed, pried my eyes open and kissed me all over my face in the hope that I would wake up to play with him. I gave him another dose of medicine and we both went back to sleep.

At 6:30 am Julie woke up and I went to her room to feed her. Shortly after, Maxence woke up and came into Julie's room and played with her toys. That morning nothing felt different. Despite running a fever and still showing no other symptoms, Maxence appeared very well and happy. He stayed home that day, watched TV, danced to Hi-5 and played with his favourite Thomas and Friends train set.

After lunch I put all the children in their respective beds to take a nap. As Maxence loves a back massage, I put him in his bed on his tummy and gave him a back massage till he fell asleep. I covered him with his blanket and left the room. Little did I know that was going to be the last time I would see him alive.

It was only after Quentin and Julie had both woken up from their naps that I decided to check on Maxence. Realizing it was over three hours since I had put him to bed, an unusually long nap for him. I thought he must have been really tired from the fever and medicine.

The moment I stepped into his room a deep sense of fear enveloped me. Seeing Maxence in the same position where the blanket was still nicely covering him alerted me that something was wrong. I turned him over to wake him up. His limbs were cold and he had no pulse. I commenced CPR, called the ambulance and called my husband to come home immediately. Although I continued with CPR, I knew he was gone and I would never get him back.

Maxence was pronounced dead at the hospital. An autopsy was done. A few days later we were informed that the cause of Maxence's death had been the H1N1 virus. We were all totally shocked as he had had no other signs and symptoms other than a moderate fever. The onset of the fever, till the time he passed, was less than 24 hours. It was all too sudden, none of us were prepared.

The grief hit everyone very hard; everything changed instantly. A couple had lost a child, a brother had lost his best friend and a baby felt the shift in the spirits of the family. It was a very difficult time especially with the demands of a newborn baby. Quentin and Julie helped my husband and I pull through; we had to keep going for their sake and they in turn gave us strength, love and laughter during the darkest times.

A few months after the first anniversary of Maxence's death, I became ill. I was diagnosed with Grave's disease—a form of hyperthyroidism. I instinctively knew that part of the reason I had fallen ill was the immense stress from the grieving process experienced from the death of Maxence. I refused the traditional approach of western medicine to deal with the disease and chose naturopathy instead. I discovered a natural health care approach called 'The BodyTalk System' which I found really expedited my healing process by addressing and working on releasing the grief which was one of the

major sources of breakdown in the overall balance of my body. Within nine months from the time I was diagnosed I had made a full recovery and am now totally free of the disease. I have emerged healthier, happier and more at peace.

As BodyTalk made such a difference to me, I decided to study the system and became a certified BodyTalk Practitioner. I have dedicated the name of my Clinic, 'Release', to the greatest gift of my life, Maxence.

You can shed tears

*You can shed tears that he is gone
Or you can smile because he lived*

*You can close your eyes and pray that he will come back
Or you can open your eyes and see all that he has left*

*Your heart can be empty because you can't see him
Or you can be full of the love that you shared*

*You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday
Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday*

*You can remember him and only that he is gone
Or you can cherish his memory and let it live on*

*You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back
Or you can do what he would want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on.*

– by David Harkins