



Bereaved Parents of the USA Anne Arundel County Chapter

MAY 2015

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Grief in Spring?

By John Pete

If Spring makes you feel better and to feel new hope, that is a good, positive and nurturing thing. But it may not be true for everyone, and no one should feel they have to hide their true feelings. It is perfectly normal to experience new heightened grief and/or grief-related anxiety in Spring, just as it is in other seasons of the year. Although warmer, sunnier months can be nurturing and inspire new hopefulness, grief does not suddenly go away just because seasons change.

Spring generally brings a sudden flurry of change and things begin to move faster all around us. There is rebirth and renewal in nature as flowers and trees bloom and everything turns green again, and people quickly begin to flock to their favorite warm-weather activities. Try to take time to sit down make some plans that can nurture you and help you cope with your losses and grief.

A helpful way to respond to one's anxiousness about spring and summer is to remind yourself that YOU are in control and that the warmer months offer unique opportunities for nurturing activities such as travel, planting gardens, nature walks, photography, family gatherings, star-gazing, and many other things.

And if it helps, take comfort in the belief that your precious loved ones are with you wherever you are and whatever you are doing.

Learn about the author on page 2.



Sponsorship of this newsletter has been made by the following family:

Tawny and Kevin Stitely
In memory of their daughter
Tori Stitely
May 21, 1985 - November 26, 2012

I'm missing you, that will not change
Some days it seems like a million years since you left us
and other times it was just yesterday

I'm thinking of you, that will not change
You are my inspiration
Your radiance shines through like a bright shimmering star

I'm loving you, that will not change
No pain, no sadness in Heaven
One day we'll be together again

I'm missing you, thinking of you, loving you forever and ever...

Love, Mom and Dad



About John Pete (from page 1)

John Pete is a Certified Grief Counselor and Founder of GriefStreets.Com (formerly mygriefspace.net), an online peer-support community for people grieving the loss of a loved one. He has appeared on the "Grieving The Healing Heart" radio program and is published in the 2011 book, "Open To Hope, Inspirational Stories of Healing After Loss," and "Grieving the Sudden Death of a Loved One" (2012, DVD). John writes a grief, loss and spiritual blog at: <http://www.johnpete.com>. Join the Facebook Peer Grief Support Group: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/mygriefspace>.

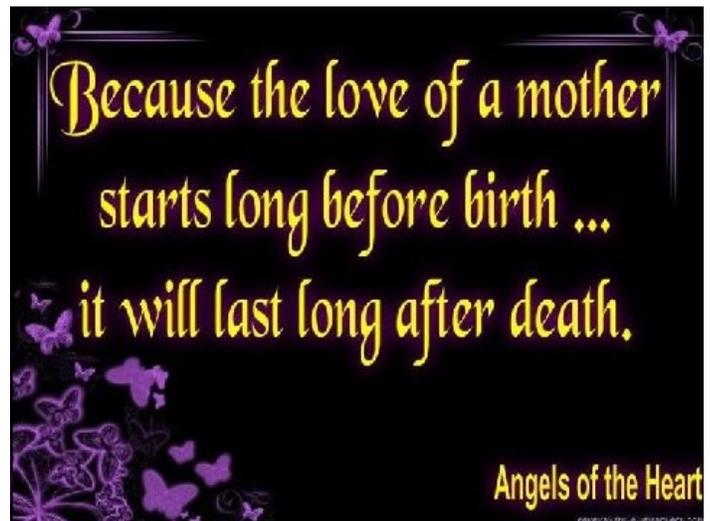
Mother's Day is Sunday, May 10, 2015

"The Bereaved Mother –
She has experienced the unimaginable and yet she is still able to walk."

Anticipating Mother's Day

As Mother's Day approaches, I think of our newly bereaved parents who will be facing their first or possibly second Mother's Day without their child. I remember my first Mother's Day without my son. It was, quite frankly, a sad day for me. But I got through it and a few days later, I got through his birthday as well. In our first year of grief each milestone seems to mark distance from our children.....we count that distance in minutes, hours, days, weeks and months.

How we spend Mother's Day is strictly a unique decision made by each parent, each Mother. There are no rules. While we all walk this grief road together, we each walk it in our unique way. No two people grieve in the same way, because no two people are alike. Several years ago I wrote an article about Mother's Day. Some of you have seen it and some of you won't remember reading it. I hope it gives each of you some measure of peace this week and on Sunday.



Anticipating Mother's Day

Before we lost our children to death, Mother's Day was a happy time. We each reflect back on Mother's Days past.....gifts, cards, special memories and one day set aside to acknowledge the best in our relationship with our treasured children.

With the death of our child, this dynamic was forever transfigured. Now, instead of looking forward to this day, we grasp at anything that will keep our minds away from it. Yet the anxiety still creeps into our minds and hearts; our stomachs churn and tears fill our eyes at the most inopportune moments. The dreadful countdown begins in late April and lasts for nearly three weeks.

This is the eighth Mother's Day I have endured since the death of my son. Each year I have the same,

desperate anxiety, yet each year the day is a bit easier to handle. Each year the anticipation is far worse than the day itself.... "borrowing trouble" as my dad would say. Since my son is my only child, I do not have the comfort of other children nor do I have the need to put on a happy face. Instead, I am able to choose what I will do without feeling the burden of guilt.

While my first Mother's Day was filled with tears, subsequent Mother's Days have been more subdued.

The choice to embrace or ignore Mother's Day is yours alone. Many bereaved mothers adopt a new perspective which honors their child and still gives normalcy to their family. Mother's Day is bittersweet for us. The pain is part of the love that we will feel for our children for eternity. We wouldn't trade one treasured moment for a cosmic reduction of our pain.

Some of us plan the day carefully. Some of us just "go with the flow." Some of us weep; some of us work. Some of us read, some of us revel in this special moment set aside just for mothers. Each of us makes a choice that is based on our own truth.

The day itself is not nearly as overwhelming as the buildup of anxiety and sadness which precedes it. I have found this to be true of all holidays, birthdays, death anniversaries and special occasions. I am trying to live in the moment. When the moment of Mother's Day happens, I will decide what I should do. I refuse to let others pressure me. I refuse to become maudlin over greeting card commercials and heart-grabbing point-of-purchase marketing efforts. I will not be manipulated by the agenda of others.

But on Mother's Day, as on each day of the year, I will think of my son, remembering the child he was and the man he became. I will honor his life by doing the best I can with what is left of my life. I will remain in the moment and treasure my memories. And for this mother, that is enough.

Annette Mennen Baldwin

In memory of my son, Todd Mennen

You Are Not Gone

By Joyce P. Hale

Although I cannot see your face

Or hear your voice so clear,

I feel that you are watching...

I sense your presence near.

I think of you out of the blue

When sunshine showers me...

Oh no, you've never gone away

From heart and memory.

I look for you to come around;

I hear you call my name.

You come to mind so vividly

As breezes stir the lane.

I know you walk along my side

When I am all alone...

They say you crossed the river wide –

But I know you are not gone.



Next Meeting: Thursday, May 7, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.

Chapter Leader Carol Tomaszewski will speak briefly about planning for Mother's Day.

Calvary United Methodist Church • 301 Rowe Boulevard • Annapolis, MD 21401
Sharing groups, a key part of each Chapter meeting, will be held as desired for first-time attendees, and the newly and non-newly bereaved. **Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month beginning at 7:30 p.m. and are open to anyone grieving the death of a child. Come around to the back of the church -- there is parking and an entrance directly into our meeting room. Doors open at 7:15 p.m.**

We are a self-help support organization dedicated to assisting parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child. We provide information and education to extended family and friends. Our greatest strength as bereaved families is the unity we find in shared experiences which can lead us out of isolation, give us a place to "belong," and offer us hope that together – we can make it.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT OUR CHAPTER MEETINGS: Our Chapter gathers one evening a month to address topics and offer support to those who are mourning the death of a child. Our meetings last for approximately 2 hours. Sometimes we schedule a 30-minute presentation at the beginning of our meeting. When the speaker or panel has concluded the presentation, we introduce ourselves and say our child's name. We then take a short break before dividing into sharing groups. Sharing groups are facilitated by fellow Chapter members and are completely confidential. During this time, the issues that are discussed—particularly for the newly bereaved—focus on the issues facing participants today.



Submissions for the May newsletter are due to the Newsletter Team by May 10th.
Send an email to: newsletter@aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org.

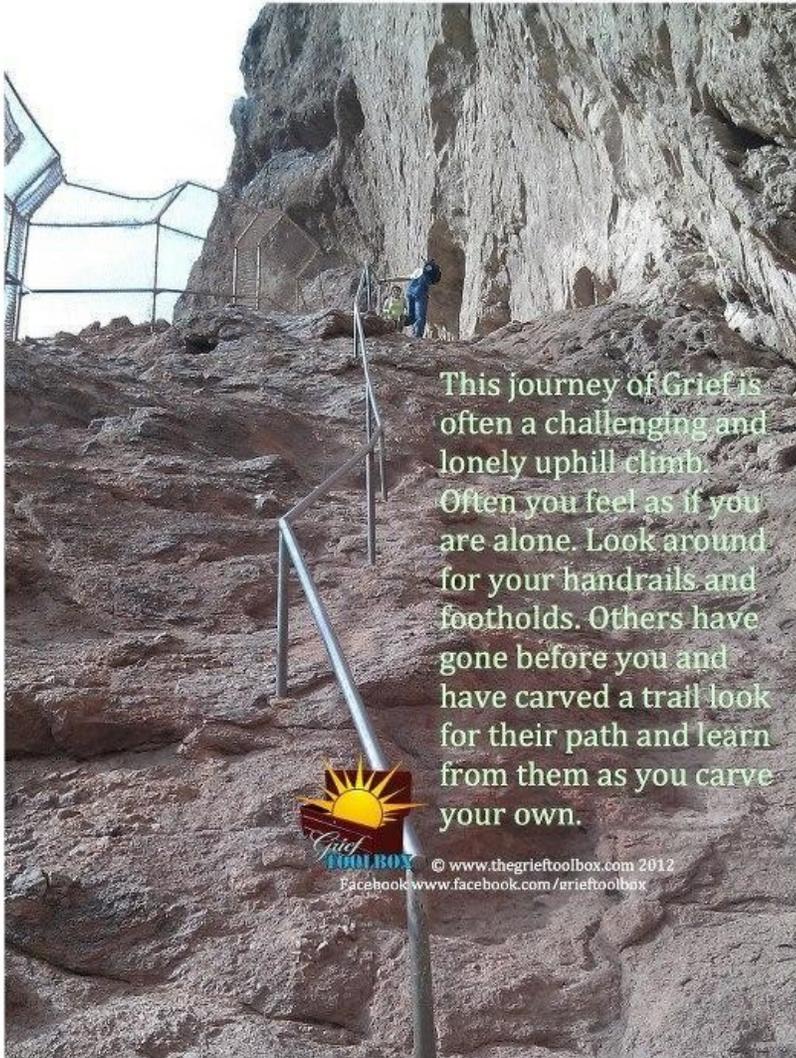
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Do You Use Amazon.com?

If you enter Amazon through our Chapter's website (www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org), the Chapter will earn a commission of 5% on your purchases. Using the link does not increase your cost (and information about your purchase is not shared with the Chapter). It's an easy way to support our Chapter's activities. Go to the Chapter's home page, click on the butterflies on the welcome page, and scroll down the first page to the bottom where there is an Amazon.com graphic that takes you to Amazon's site. Entering Amazon's site through the Chapter's website credits the Chapter with the 5% commission on any purchases that follow. Thanks in advance for your help!

Would you like to sponsor the Chapter's newsletter or website (www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org) for one month in memory of your child? It's a wonderful way to honor your child's memory – to say his or her name for all the world to hear -- while providing financial support to the Chapter and its many activities offered to all those mourning the loss of a child. Newsletter sponsorship is \$75 and website sponsorship is \$25. Just send an email to Mary Redmiles (mary.redmiles@gmail.com) or call her at 410-721-6671, or sign up at a monthly meeting. Say Their Names!!! And help the Chapter, too!

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About the Artist

On June 14th, 1999 my son Noah Thomas Emory Lord age 4 and a half died following complications of a tonsillectomy. That first day it was impossible to imagine taking my next breath much less taking the first steps on what was going to be a continuous walk through grief. On this journey I have cried an ocean of tears, screamed myself hoarse and felt pain so intense that it seemed unbearable. There are no magic words or process that take will take away the pain of grief. Calendars and clocks have no place in the grieving processes, what we all need are a set of tools that we can pick up and decide how and when to use them to re-build our lives. It was this realization that inspired The Grief Toolbox. The Grief Toolbox is both a resource and community for those who grieve and those who work to help them. With a desire to help the bereaved I have been involved with the New Jersey, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire chapters of the Compassionate Friends, a national support group for bereaved parents. Currently I serve on the National Board of Directors of the Compassionate Friends. I have a passion to serve the bereaved and a desire to help the people who work with them. If you are interested in joining The Grief Toolbox community or to have me present or run motivational workshops please contact me at glen@thegrieftoolbox.com. Together we can bring hope to the bereaved.

Monday, May 25, 2015 is Memorial Day

Memorial Day

by Sascha Wagner

For each grave

Where a soldier lies

At his rest

For each prayer

That is said today

Out of love

For each sigh

Of remembering

Someone who died

Let us also give thought to

The mothers and fathers

The brothers and sisters

The friends and the lovers

Whom death left behind.



Our Children Remembered

Jordan Edward Ambrozewicz
Son of Steven and Beverly
Ambrozewicz
May 27, 1993 - May 10, 1995

Dora Baldwin
Daughter of Aurelia Ferraro
December 11, 1964 - May 2, 2012

Donald Gordon Barrett
Son of Kathy and Don Barrett
May 14, 1976 - May 3, 2002

Paul Shane Brough
Son of Theresa and Steve Bleemke
May 18, 1982 - April 4, 2003

Pamela Grace Clair
Daughter of Doris and Charles Clair
June 3, 1954 - May 11, 1984

Michelle Marie Dyke
Daughter of Marie Dyke
May 19, 1975 - November 10, 1992

Joseph Fredrick Errichiello Jr.
Son of Susan and Joe Errichiello
April 6, 1979 - May 29, 2004

Tracy Ann Fotino
Niece of Kenneth Smith
May 14, 1971 - August 25, 2000

Andrew Thomas "Drew" Gawthrop
Son of Brenda Gawthrop
May 25, 1990 - August 12, 2002

Matthew Gordon Haines
Son of Gordon and Peggy Haines
May 3, 1977 - July 4, 1996

Jennifer Lynn Hamilton
Daughter of Kathleen and Donald
McGlew
May 2, 1980 - January 7, 1999

Kenneth "Chuckie" Jones
Son of Suzzelle Reid
July 13, 1976 - May 26, 2010

Brian Keith Jones
Son of Leroy and Jeanne Jones
May 22, 1974 - May 22, 1974

Jerry Mason Jr.
Son of Mary and Jerry Mason
May 6, 1968 - March 23, 2005

Graham Kendall Miller
Son of Ken and Abby Miller
February 3, 1981 - May 4, 1999

Daniel "Dan" Michael Milord
Son of Mike Milord
July 15, 1982 - May 5, 2004

Sydney Elaine Patronik
Daughter of Holly and Michael
Patronik
March 26, 2002 - May 11, 2002

Samantha Ann Rankin
Daughter of Vickie and Bart Rankin
November 19, 1988 - May 31, 2010

Wendy Dawn Saunders
Daughter of Ronald and Aljuana
Saunders
May 20, 1972 - May 14, 1998

James Benjamin Scheff
Son of James and Gail Scheff
May 9, 1979 - June 1, 2012

Michelle Inez Scott
Daughter of Charlotte and Donald
Scott
February 1, 1969 - May 1, 1987

Brandon Michael Sisler
Son of Laura Sisler
May 7, 1993 - October 15,
2011

Abigail Helen "Abbey" Sku-
letich
Daughter of John and Glenda
Skuletich
March 9, 1984 - May 12,
1992

Tori Danielle Stitely
Daughter of Tawny and Kevin
Stitely
May 21, 1985 - November 26,
2012

Christopher Lewis Strader
Son of Lewis and Peggy
Strader
May 27, 1979 - June 21, 1997

Tenoch Bennett Sweeney
Son of Richard Sweeney
March 30, 2011 - May 21,
2011

Russell "Rusty" Joseph Tarr
Son of Lorraine A. Tarr
December 22, 1963 - May 12,
1994

Carole Anne Wilford
Sister of Aljuana Saunders
January 7, 1944 - May 4,
1998

Matthew Tyler Williams
Son of Marta and Chuck
Williams
May 8, 1986 - January 13,
2011

This is for all the caterpillars that never became butterflies. All the butterflies that never caught the wind in their wings. And all the hearts that had hopes and dreams of a wondrous flight together.

Donations may be made to offset the costs of our local Chapter's events and communications. We gratefully acknowledge the following donations made recently:

Kenneth Smith in memory of his niece Tracy Fotino
William and Deborah Kissinger in memory of Paul Burash

Book Review

By Mary Redmiles, Tommy's Mom

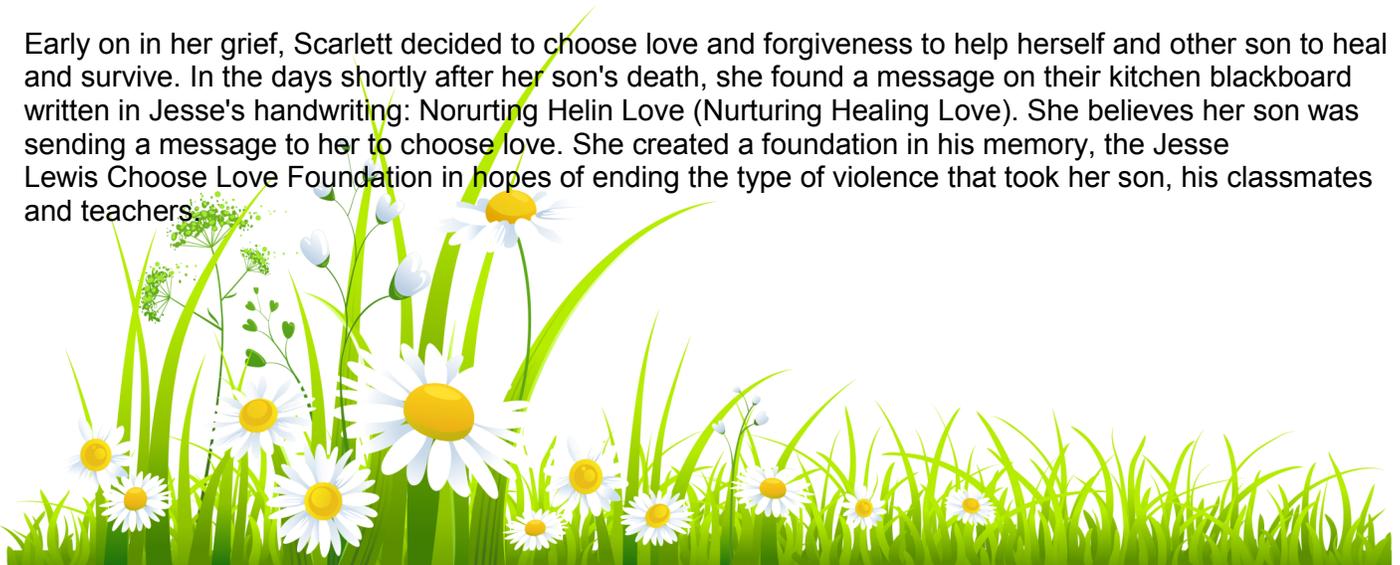
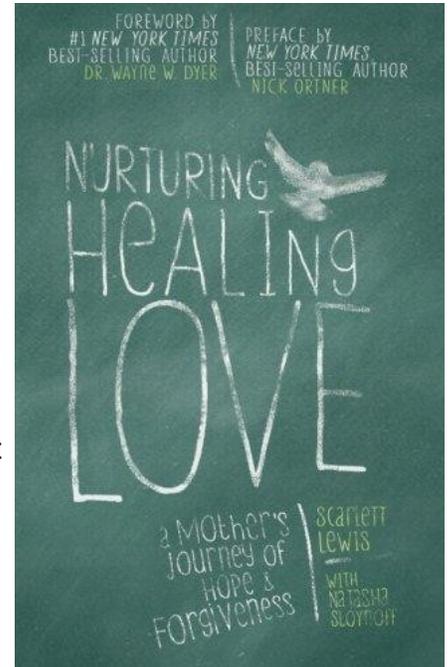
Nurturing Healing Love: A Mother's Journey of Hope and Forgiveness

By Scarlett Lewis

Nurturing Healing Love: A Mother's Journey of Hope and Forgiveness is a book written by bereaved parent Scarlett Lewis. Her son, Jesse is one of 20 people killed at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut on December 14, 2012. He was 6 years old. From the moment Jesse was born, Scarlett had a very real, intense feeling that her son would not live a long life. She instantly began praying to God to keep him safe and with her for a very long time. Tragically her premonition became true that horrific day. She wrote this book just 6 months after the event that took her son's life.

Scarlett describes her son as a hero and a warrior. From a very young age Jesse designated himself the protector of their farm and family. For hours on end he would stand guard at their entrance gate, wearing his beloved army helmet, ready to take on any unwanted intruders. Scarlett is convinced he was put on this earth to protect his fellow classmates that day. The shooter entered Jesse's classroom and began randomly shooting. At one point the shooter needed to reload and Jesse stood near his teacher and yelled for the other students to run for it now! At that point 10-12 of his classmates ran into the hall to safety. The shooter then shot the teacher and Jesse. An incredibly courageous act for a 6 year old.

Early on in her grief, Scarlett decided to choose love and forgiveness to help herself and other son to heal and survive. In the days shortly after her son's death, she found a message on their kitchen blackboard written in Jesse's handwriting: *Norurting Helin Love* (*Nurturing Healing Love*). She believes her son was sending a message to her to choose love. She created a foundation in his memory, the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Foundation in hopes of ending the type of violence that took her son, his classmates and teachers.



The Most Powerful Thing You Can Say to Another Mom

by Denise Stirk 3/19/15

A few weeks ago, one of my dearest friends lost her 21-month-old daughter forever when the sweet baby girl died unexpectedly and suddenly. My friend and I live on opposite sides of the country, so I took a trip to visit her for this past weekend. Admittedly, I was a nervous wreck about what I was going to say to her and her husband. How was I going to find the words to comfort them? How would I avoid saying the wrong things? I wanted to find perfect words, and, as I am a writer, words happen to be one of the few ways I truly know how to express myself.



Except I was at a complete loss over her loss. Having two healthy children at home, I felt I couldn't truly relate to her pain, so how on earth was I going to be able to comfort her during a situation that I have very little experience in? Armed with a pocket full of Bible verses and a slough of rehearsed things to say, I walked into her home and could never in a million years have foreseen the life-altering and powerful words that would be spoken between us during our time together. Except the words came from her, to me.

From her. To me.

That's right. My friend, who at this point is proving to be one of the strongest people I know, said something during her time of grief that will forever hold a spot in my heart. It was a phrase so simple, yet it has hit a chord deep inside of me. As she was describing the events leading up to the death of her daughter, she tried to express to me her complete heartbreak as she held her sweet child in the hospital during the minutes and hours after she died. Describing the time only as her worst nightmare, she said to me with tears rolling down her face, "You're a mom, you know."

You're a mom, you know.

This phrase took my breath away — as well as any composure that I had managed to keep together up until then. Because it was at that point, with that phrase, that I was able to start to understand the magnitude of her sorrow. Sure, I was completely heartbroken for her before, as death is difficult for anyone. But I'll admit that I didn't fully understand my role as her friend or as a fellow mom. See, all this time I had been looking in the wrong places for the perfect thing to say to her while I should have just looked at our simplest bond: motherhood. And while I have not experienced the pain that comes along with losing a child, I do understand the joy that she once experienced from holding her child. And to lose that? There are no words...

Except maybe "I'm a mom, I know."

Losing a child is every mom's worst fear — no matter who you are or what kind of mom you choose to be. In the days since, I've been keeping this simple thought in mind when relating myself to other mommies. Sure, we all have our different ways of mothering and raising our families, but we do have one thing in common: our hearts are directly connected to our children. It makes the whole mommy wars thing seem, well, totally ridiculous.

You're a mom, you know.

So as I went with my own mom, who has recently been diagnosed with breast cancer, to her radiation treatment, I glanced over at the young mother of a small boy in the waiting room. He was maybe 3 years old (though it's hard to tell because he was so tiny). He sported a colorful Superman cape and a bland hospital mask as he sat cradled in his mom's arms. She said something quietly to him. My heart stopped. This mom ached for that mom. And the tears started to fall from my eyes despite me not knowing her one bit. Despite me only sitting in the waiting room for maybe 30 seconds. Despite my own mom sitting next to me about to have her own radiation treatment. This is crazy, I thought. I don't even know this woman.

But what I do know is that I'm a mom.

And later I was getting dinner at a takeout restaurant, and one of the employees was on the phone in the restroom. She was struggling to find a babysitter for her child while she finished her late shift. She was frantic. She was upset. She was mad. My heart skipped another beat, and the tears welled up in my eyes once again.

I know, I'm a mom.

As I went back to my mom's house, heartbroken over my friend's loss, my mother was trying to comfort me. Asking if I was OK. Me! She was the one going through radiation, I should be comforting her. And then it dawned on me as to why she was so worried about how I was doing.

She knows, she's a mom.

And on the plane on the ride home there was a new mom standing with her infant son nearly the whole four-and-a-half-hour flight because if she attempted to sit down, he wailed. She looked exhausted and frustrated. She checked her watch frequently, but she also kept on task all while kissing on his little bald head.

I know, I'm a mom.

See, it's a thread that unites us all. Helicopter moms. Free-range moms. Breastfeeding moms. Formula-feeding moms. Rich moms. Poor moms. Moms of sick kids. Moms of healthy kids. Moms. The crazy, heart-stopping love that we feel for our children runs deep through each and every one of us as moms.

And this knowledge is painful at times. It's why every sappy commercial brings us to tears. It's why we can't watch the news. It's why we get in the car and cry after we drop our kids off to their first day of school. It's why food allergies are terrifying. It's why our hearts ache when we hear about miscarriage or fertility problems. It's why we are up at night worrying about our teens. It's why the thought of our children eventually leaving the nest makes us weep into our coffee. It's why the death of another mother's child is so utterly heartbreaking . . .

It's also why we should always provide a blanket of support to all fellow moms. Not only to those who are suffering through the unimaginable pain of losing a child, but also to those mamas going through plain ol' rough times . . . and even those moms who are just having one of those days. Hug her, and if you are struggling to find the right words, all you may really need to say is, "I know, I'm a mom."

But you probably already know this. After all, you're a mom.

Being the Mother of a Child Who Died – On Mother's Day

Claire McCarthy, M.D.

Pediatrician, Boston Children's Hospital, Harvard Medical School

Posted in the Huffington Post: 05/12/2012

I am the mother of a child who died. And that makes Mother's Day very hard. Recently I was talking to a mother whose child had just died. "What about Mother's Day?" she asked, through tears. It was hard to know what to say, because it's a terrible day for those of us who have lost a child. Other days of the year you can maybe make it a few hours without thinking about your loss; other days of the year you can pretend that you are an ordinary person and that life is normal. But not on Mother's Day.

On Mother's Day it's in your face that your child is gone forever. On Mother's Day you can't pretend you are ordinary or that life is normal. All the hoopla, all the Hallmark hype, the handmade cards and flowers and family gatherings, make it almost excruciating.

Our town has a Mother's Day road race for which I am eternally grateful -- especially because, in a demonstration of grace's existence, the start and finish are next to the cemetery where my son is buried. On my way I can visit his grave and say what I need to say and look yet again at the name we chose for him carved into stone. At the end of the race, they give all the mothers a flower; on my way home, I go back to the grave and lay my flower there. And then I move forward with the day.

See, that's the real challenge after losing a child: moving forward. It's almost impossible to envision in that moment of loss; how can life continue after something so horrible? But life does continue, whether we like it or not. There are chores to do and bills to pay; morning comes, again and again. So you pick yourself up and you live, but you are never the same.

At first, we are different because of our raw sadness. But over time, the sadness moves from our skin into our bones. It becomes less visible, but no less who we are. It changes into a wisdom, one we'd give up in a heartbeat to have our child back. We who have lost children understand life's fragility and beauty. We who have lost children understand that so many things just aren't important. All that is important is those we love. All that is important is each other. Nothing else.

It can feel very lonely, being the parent of a child who died. Especially on Mother's Day or Father's Day. We feel so different from those around us, all those happy people with children the same age our child was, or would have been. But over the years, I've come to understand that I'm not alone at all.

There is a wonderful Buddhist story about a woman whose son gets sick and dies. She goes to the Buddha to ask him to bring her son back to life; I will, he says, if you bring me some mustard seed from the home of a family that has not known loss. She goes from house to house but can find no family that has not lost someone dear to them. She buries her son and goes to the Buddha and says: I understand now.

That is what I understand now. It doesn't make me miss my son any less, or Mother's Day any easier. But it helps me make sense of it; loss is part of life. There are no guarantees, ever. Our children, and all those we love, are gifts to us for however long we have them.

I understand now too that we are together in this, all of us, in joy and in loss. It's the connections we make with each other that matter -- it's the connections we make that give life value and help us face each morning. As G.K. Chesterton wrote, "We are all in the same boat in a stormy sea, and we owe each other a terrible loyalty."

Years ago, I chose words to say each time I go to my son's grave. It

Continued on next page

makes it easier to have a ritual. And over the years, the words have come to mean more to me. They aren't just about grief anymore. They are about who I am, what I have learned, and what I can give.

"I will always love you, " I say. "And I will always be your mother."



I Sent You a Kiss Today

By: Darcie D. Sims, Ph.D., CHT, CT, GMS

I sent you a kiss today. Did you get it? I sent it by air mail. I kissed my fingers and then opened them to the breeze and watched it go. I tucked in some hugs and well wishes, too. Did you get them?

I thought of you today. Did you know that? Could you feel my arms around you? My thoughts caressing your shoulders, my mind trying to reach yours.

I spoke to you today. Did you hear me? I spoke to you of everyday things. I talked about how the clouds moved across the sky, sending shadows whisking over the lawn that I had just raked. I told you how pretty it looked as the leaves swirled gently in the breeze. Do you remember the times we lay together in the grass and just watched the clouds make shapes in the sky? I told you about my remembering that today, too.

I talked to you about how the sun sparkles on the water in the pond and how the wind chime has the loveliest tones. I wonder if you can hear them? I told you about my day, the mundane little things that kept me busy. I ironed and dusted and vacuumed and moved some things around...mostly just re-arranging things. I cleaned the blinds and polished the silver...just regular things-nothing special, except I thought of you as I did them.

I told you about my Big Project and how far it seems to the end. I keep thinking of new ways to get it finished and that just makes the whole thing take longer...but of course, you know that about me, don't you?

I watched you today. Did you see me, too? I watched a puppy scamper across the yard, tugging its young owner. I watched a brand new driver trying to fit into a parallel parking space and I laughed, remembering. Do you remember things? I saw an old lady and an even older man holding hands as they crossed the street and the look they shared reminded me of us. That secret sharing of something just between them...I

Continued on next page

missed you today. Do you miss me?

I planned the menu for the family dinner today and I asked you what you wanted. Do you still like mashed potatoes and butter, green bean casserole and cranberry relish? I baked two pies and saved some dough for you, so you could pat it out and fill it with strawberry jam and then bake it, making a little "patty pan pie" just for you. Do you still do that, sometimes?

I counted the chairs and called a neighbor because I have to borrow 2 more. Or I guess two people could stand or maybe they won't come. I washed 3 loads of laundry and ironed the tablecloth and put the napkin rings out. I wished you were here to help, like you used to. You always put the napkins in the rings just so and made them look so special.

I wore your sweater today. I hope you don't mind. It turned cool and the breeze turned into a wind and I had to take the wind chime in. The last bits of summer are gone now, packed away until the next time around.

I found your blanket today, tucked way down in the cedar chest. I was looking for the afghan to put over the back of the rocking chair and there it was...waiting for me. So I hugged it and wrapped myself in it like you used to do. It was only for a moment, but I thought I heard you in the next room so I went to look. It was only the timer on the dryer downstairs. But, for a moment, I thought it was you.

I saw you today...in a hundred places in the house, the yard, across the street, waiting in line at the bank and walking just ahead of me at the grocery store. Why didn't you turn around? Didn't you know I was there?

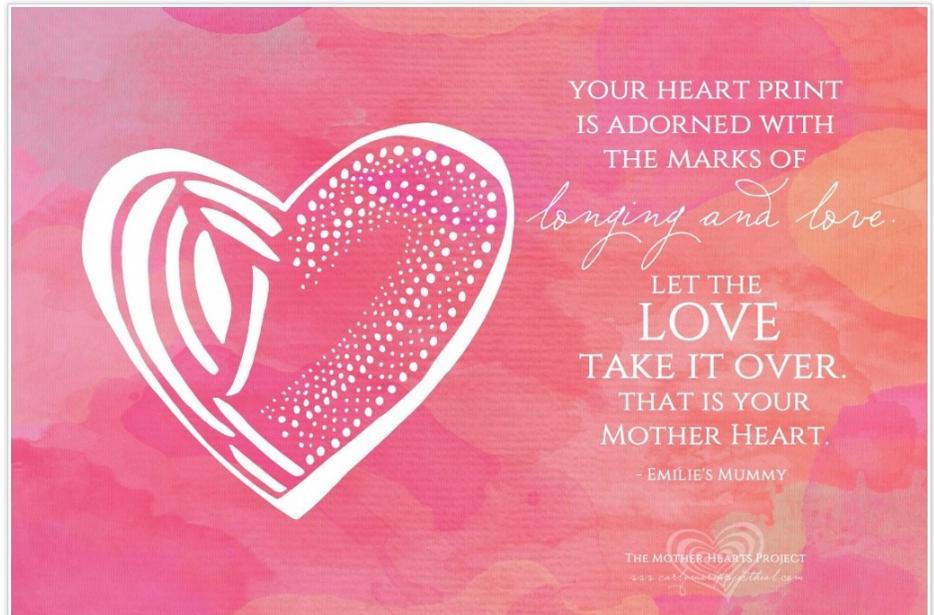
I sang to you today. I'm still not very good, but the choir master says I am "enthusiastic". Maybe it will be my ticket of admission...enthusiasm should be worth something somewhere.

I dreamed of you today and for just a little while, we were one again. Hand in hand, arm in arm; head to head, heart to heart, lives wrapped around and through each other, like two peas in a pod, two puppies in a basket, two people in love. I haven't stopped loving you...have you stopped loving me? I hope not.

I'll be ok. I am ok. It's just that sometimes, I want you here, right here with me, not just in my thoughts, my dreams, my prayers, my me. I want you here....

And then, you are. I only have to touch my heart to feel yours beating. I only have to whisper your name to hear mine spoken. I only have to count my blessings, count the moments we had, to know I am rich beyond any man's measure. We were and still are and that's all I need. It wasn't enough and it will never be enough, but it was something and for that, I am forever thankful...today, tomorrow and always.

I sent you a kiss today...and you sent one back. Thanks...for the little while.



It Gets Harder Every Year, But This is the Worst

20 years on from Oklahoma City bombing, mother of the lifeless little girl in THAT photo on the day her daughter would have turned 21

From The Daily Mail Online



**It is 20 years since the worst case of homegrown terrorism in US history
Timothy McVeigh killed 168 people with bomb in Oklahoma City in 1995
Terror was encapsulated by photo of a firefighter carrying a lifeless baby
That baby was Baylee Almon, who had turned one the day before
Nearing what would have been her 21st birthday, her mother Aren Almon-Kok tells DailyMail.com
how she marks Baylee's birthday every year
But says she will never get over the pain of seeing that photograph
She is still in touch with the firefighter who was pictured with the baby**

By Mia De Graaf for Dailymail.com
Published April 16, 2015

Baylee Almon should be gearing up for her first legal drink on Saturday.

Probably at college, probably able to drive, she should be toasting the next phase of her life with her mother, stepfather, brother, sister and cousins at home in leafy Choctaw, Oklahoma.

But no, she was one of 19 toddlers killed in a daycare center on April 19, 1995, in the worst case of homegrown terrorism America has ever seen, the day after her first birthday.

The Oklahoma City bombing, planted by veteran US Army soldier Timothy McVeigh, killed 168 American people.

One photograph encapsulated the terror: a firefighter emerging from the burning wreckage cradling the lifeless body of Baylee Almon.



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Her 23-year-old single mother saw the picture on the front page of the local paper the next day. A day later, it had swept the world.

Two decades on, the shock is still raw.

'It gets harder every year,' Aren Almon-Kok told DailyMail.com from her home on the outskirts of Oklahoma City, where she lives with her husband and two children.

'People say "it'll get easier" or "you'll find closure". I don't think it does, and I don't think I will.

'I had to see Baylee dead every day. No one should ever have to see that.

'You learn to deal with it differently, but every year the milestones are worse.

'Sixteen was hard. Twenty-one is the worst. Everything I missed, everything I didn't get to be part of. I'm trying not to think about it.'

As the 20-year anniversary approaches, many still feel betrayed and bemused by the attackers, who branded themselves patriots.

Unlike Dzakhar Tsarnaev and the 9/11 hijackers, Timothy McVeigh had fought for his country in the Gulf War. Parking a rented Ryder truck loaded with explosives outside the Alfred P Murrah building that morning was his way of attacking the 'tyrannical' federal government.

He told a court he wanted revenge for the 76 lives lost in a fire at the Waco barracks in Texas, exactly two years earlier, when the FBI ham-handedly tried to expel intruders.

He was executed in 2001, and his co-conspirator Terry Nichols, now 60, remains in jail serving 161 life sentences.

Even before investigators identified the American perpetrators, the country was struggling to understand the concept of terrorism in Oklahoma City.

When the building exploded at 9.01am, Mrs Almon-Kok thought it was construction work.

But word soon reached her office, and she spent the next two hours scouring hospitals for her only child.

Eventually, sitting in the crammed waiting room at St Anthony's Hospital, she was approached by a pediatrician and a priest who delivered the news.

She didn't know aspiring photojournalist Charles Porter had captured the moment Baylee was carried from the building, her pink socks stained red from the shards of glass, in a picture that would go on to win a Pulitzer Prize.

'I was very young at the time, I was 23,' she said. 'My parents saw the picture on the paper the next morning and tried to hide it from me. I came downstairs looking for something to read and they said "we didn't get any mail today".'

'I knew that was ridiculous, we always got the paper. So I went looking around for it and, yes, as soon as I saw it I said, "that's Baylee".'

'For some reason I thought I would know if my daughter was going to be on the front page. It was strange, it was horrible.'

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Aren Almon met Army veteran Stanley Kok through a friend soon after the attack. They married in 1997, and together they have two children: Bella, 17, and Brooks, 13.

Every year they throw a birthday party in Baylee's honor, with a cake and a family meal. Bella and Brooks know they are two of three siblings.

'My husband has been really great, he has always been supportive of what I've been through and to him, Baylee is part of our life together.

'My kids have always known that they have a sister and that she went to heaven, so they expect us to celebrate her birthday like we do theirs. 'For them, the picture is painful too. 'Bella did a paper at school the other day about commercials and how they use images. One of the photographs they were given was that picture. 'She just dealt with it the best way she can. That's her sister, she knows what happened. So to see that picture, that hurts.'

Nonetheless, the family has been the subject of scrutiny, anger and at times hatred in the wake of the attacks. With her child the 'face' of the tragedy, other grieving families felt Aren Almon and the firefighter, Chris Fields, stole the limelight from their loved ones who paled into oblivion. During the barrage of media attention, the pair grew a bond, which remains today - and it was erroneously assumed they had become romantically involved.

'We do still see each other, Chris and his wife have been very supportive, they are such good people. But they won't be coming to the ceremony, they keep themselves out of that stuff. 'That whole thing was difficult, and just something else you have to learn how to deal with.'

Consequently, Almon-Kok is apprehensive about this year's 20-year anniversary ceremony. 'We don't all have something in common just because we lost a child,' she explains.

'I know after the bombing the other families didn't like me, and I'm not looking forward to that.

'I have just always tried to represent myself the best way possible because when Baylee's looking down at me from heaven I want her to be proud of the things I have done.

'I didn't want any of this, to see Baylee dead everywhere every day, but that's just the way it happened.'

Between the ages of 23 and 43, Almon-Kok, has dedicated herself to ensuring daycare centers are fully secure.



Congressional bill number HR 4159, or 'Baylee's Law', became law in 2000 to ensure a standard of glass protection in public buildings.

McVeigh had enlisted his co-conspirators to build a car bomb that would shatter the windows of the building - a horrific detail that severely impacted the force of the explosion. It took weeks to find an attorney to represent Timothy McVeigh after he was coincidentally detained during a traffic stop 45 minutes after the attack. Eventually, Stephen Jones agreed to defend his actions 'to ensure he had a fair trial'.

Speaking this week, Jones conceded: 'We all remember what we were doing. It is the Pearl Harbor Day of Oklahoma. 'This was a scar and never-ending wrong that affected not only Oklahoma City and the people there but the nation at large,' he told Tulsa Rotary. Then-President Bill Clinton responded to the attack days later with one of his most famous speeches: 'The loss you feel must not paralyze your own lives.' Indeed, Oklahomans earned a reputation for compassion in the wake of the bombing - a sense of

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charity that came to be known as 'The Oklahoma Standard'.

On Sunday, in a ceremony held at 9.01am at the site of the attack, President Barack Obama and city officials will lead tributes to the city's resilience, and read out the names of the 168 people who lost their lives.

And the picture of Chris Fields holding Baylee will be shown. Though heart-wrenching for her, she says she is attempting to compartmentalize it. 'If I saw Baylee every time I looked at that photograph, I wouldn't be able to get past that. I wouldn't be able to carry on,' she said. 'To me, basically, I try to see that picture as something which represents everybody who died in that bombing. It's everybody's baby.'

When Grief Becomes a Disorder

By Dr. Sanjay Gupta

What is complicated grief, and how does it differ from depression?

People with complicated grief face an increased risk of hypertension, heart disease, substance abuse, and suicidal thoughts.

Grief over the death of a loved one is a natural emotional response to loss and an inevitable part of life. As universal as grief is, the grieving process is a very individual experience. How deeply or long a person grieves depends on many factors, and distinguishing between normal grief and a debilitating condition like complicated grief or [depression](#) can be difficult.

As M. Katherine Shear, MD, professor of psychiatry at the Columbia University School of Social Work, puts it: "Grief is not one thing. It is a shorthand word for a complex, time-varying experience that is unique for each person and each loss."

There is no timetable for the healing process. "In general, grief usually evolves over time from an acute form that tends to dominate a person's mind to an integrated form in which the core features of sadness and yearning are much more subdued," Dr. Shear says. When those feelings persist or intensify, the result may be a condition known as complicated grief or prolonged grief disorder (PGD). As much as 10 percent of all bereaved people experience [complicated grief](#).

Complicated grief is marked by "broad changes to all personal relationships, a sense of meaninglessness, a prolonged yearning or searching for the deceased, and a sense of rupture in personal beliefs," according to the American Psychological Association.

People with complicated grief often experience chronic sleep disturbances and disruptions in their daily routine. [Studies](#) have found that they are at increased risk for hypertension, heart disease, substance abuse, and suicidal thoughts. They may "try to avoid confronting the intense pain associated with the loss and this, paradoxically, ends up increasing the pain and interfering with the natural adaptive process," says Shear, who is director of Columbia's [Center for Complicated Grief](#).

While complicated grief may resemble depression and the conditions do often overlap, they are not the same. "One reason for the confusion about grief and depression being the same is that the word depression also means sadness," Shear says. "You might say to a friend, 'Are you feeling depressed about [something]?' intending to ask if your friend is sad. That is very different from meeting criteria for...major depressive disorder."

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“Depression is marked by persistent low mood,” says Richard Bryant, PhD, a professor at the School of Psychology at University of New South Wales in Sydney. “Depressed people do not have the central problem of missing the deceased and the associated emotional pain. Across many studies, this comes out as a distinct factor in distinguishing the two conditions, although often people can have both.”

To encourage timely diagnosis and treatment of grief-associated disorders, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) made a significant change in the current edition of its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-5). Published in 2013, the DSM-5 eliminated the “bereavement exclusion” that major depressive disorder should not be diagnosed within two months of a [loved one's death](#), even if the patient met the criteria for depression.

The APA said the exclusion was removed, in part, because “bereavement is recognized as a severe psychosocial stressor that can precipitate a major depressive episode.” David Kupfer, MD, a University of Pittsburgh psychiatrist who chaired the DSM-5 task force, explained the change to [the New York Times](#), saying: “If these things go on and get worse over time and begin to impair someone's day to day function, we don't want to use the excuse, ‘It's bereavement — they'll get over it.’ ”

Not all experts who treat grief agree. “We're so focused on [healing](#) as quickly as we can and being happy. Grief has to unfold over time,” says Joanne Cacciatore, PhD, associate professor of social work at Arizona State University and a traumatic grief counselor. “We shouldn't need to diagnose something that's one of the most common human experiences.”

Allen Frances, MD, professor emeritus at Duke who was chair of the task force on the earlier DSM-4, believes “DSM-5 is medicalizing the expected and probably necessary process of mourning that people go through.” Most people, Dr. Frances says, “get better with time and natural healing and resilience.”

But Shear stresses the importance of spotting signs of depression in a bereaved individual. “[Losing a loved one](#) does not protect people from depression,” she says. “Loss is a severe stressor, so it is associated with the onset or worsening of depression in some people.”

Regarding complicated grief therapy, Bryant believes “psychological rather than pharmacological treatments are best.” In a study published last year in JAMA Psychiatry, Bryant and his colleagues found that [exposure therapy](#), in which the bereaved relives the death of a loved one, combined with cognitive behavioral therapy can be very effective in treating survivors with PGD.

“This approach often involves revisiting memories of the deceased, processing these emotions, but also working on developing future strategies for coping,” Bryant says.

“We feel like talking about death will make it worse, because they might cry, but that's okay,” says Cacciatore, who founded the [MISS Foundation](#) to provide support for families grieving the loss of a child. “It's important for people to understand they don't need to try and fix and change their grief. There's no cure and no pill for it.”



Chapter Notes: Upcoming Meetings & Announcements

Angel Gown Project

Once again Nancy DIMauro (June Erickson's cousin) has completed ANOTHER group of angel gowns. Her recent donation is pictured below. We will add these to last month's gowns for delivery to AACC Medical Center's NICU soon. How can we ever thank you enough Nancy!



Newsletter Submissions – by May 10, 2015

If anyone has a story to tell, a poem to share, a bereavement book they read, an upcoming grief conference, a photo they took of an event, or an article they thought was particularly helpful in their grief journey, please pass them on to others through our Newsletter. These personal submissions will make the newsletter more interesting for everyone. NOTE: All submissions should be made by the 10th of each month for the following month's newsletter. That includes those sponsoring the newsletter in memory of their child. Sponsorship submissions should include a photo, poem/saying, parents' name, child's full name, birthday and angel date. Please email all of these directly to JuneErickson@aol.com.

May Chapter Meeting – Thursday May 7, 2015

7:30 p.m. at Calvary United Methodist Church, 301 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis MD
Chapter Leader Carol Tomaszewski will speak briefly about planning for Mother's Day.

Mother's Day Gathering for Parents with No Surviving Children

– 1 p.m. Sunday, May 10, 2015

Each year the Compassionate Friends of Reston, Virginia have a gathering/luncheon for parents who have lost an only child or all their children. The gathering this year begins at 1 p.m. at Alfio's, 4515 Willard Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD. www.alfios.com. We have a private room for this occasion. If anyone is interested

Chapter Notes: Upcoming Meetings & Announcements

in attending, please contact June Erickson for further details at JuneErickson@aol.com or call 410-451-8637.

Core Group Meeting – Tuesday, May 12, 2015

7:00 p.m. at Calvary United Methodist Church, 301 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis, MD. Please come join us. Enter through the front of the church and find room number on electronic board. Topics to be discussed: Chapter positions open, Newsletter, Outreach, Spring Activity, Angel Gowns and Tu-Tus

Remembrance Service Planning Committee – May 16, 2016

1 p.m. - The Remembrance Service in December is the largest attended annual event of our Chapter. Anyone who can help out, please contact June Erickson at JuneErickson@aol.com.

June Chapter Meeting – Thursday, June 4, 2015

7:00 p.m. at Calvary United Methodist Church, 301, Rowe Blvd., Annapolis, MD
Susan Coale will be here to discuss loss through substance abuse. She is a clinical specialist with Chesapeake Life Center.

The Compassionate Friends National Conference – July 10 - 12, 2015

The 38th TCF National Conference, “Hope Shines Bright ... Deep in the Heart”, is the theme of next year’s event. The 2015 Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas. Visit their website at ---> http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News/Events/Conferences/National_Conferences.aspx

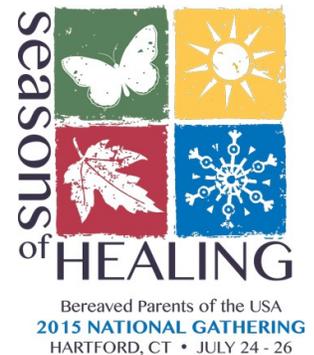


Bereaved Parents of the USA National Gathering - July 24 - 26, 2015

Sheraton Hartford Hotel at Bradley Airport, Hartford, Connecticut

In Loving Memory Conference – April 7 to April 10, 2016

This four-day conference is for bereaved parents who have lost their only child or all their children. Glen and Linda Nielsen have organized ‘Now Childless’ conferences for 12 years. Due to previous health problems, they had to quit planning these for the last few years, but they are ready to start again. Their tax exempt status has been reinstated and the first conference in 14 years will be held at the Hyatt Fairfax Hotel in Fairfax, VA. Further details of this conference will be put on their website soon. Mark your calendars now as this is the **ONLY GATHERING** that focuses **ENTIRELY** on the needs of parents who have no surviving children. Kay Bevington, from Alive Alone will be participating, as will many other speakers and workshops to be announced. (See brochure on the last page of this newsletter.)



Connect With Us on Facebook

We are on Facebook. It is a closed group where we can continue our discussions in private. Your other Facebook friends will not be able to see what you post there, and you will not be able to share postings by others. You have to join Facebook first before you can become a member. Please go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BPUSAAAC/> and ask to join. You will be approved within 24 hours. If you have any questions or problems, please contact June Erickson at JuneErickson@aol.com.



Resources

Hospice of the Chesapeake Life Center

90 Richie Highway
Pasadena, MD 21122
410-987-2129

Toll Free: 888-501-7077

Website: <http://chesapeakelifecenter.org/programs-and-services/groups>

1) Child Loss Group

Monthly support group for parents experiencing the loss of a son or daughter of any age.

2) Suicide Grievors

Monthly Support Group with a professional facilitator for those 18 years and over who are grieving the death of a loved one by suicide. Please call 410-987-2129 for further information.

3) Support Group for those Grieving a Loss Due to Substance Abuse

This monthly drop-in/open support group is designed for those who have lost a loved one due to substance abuse and will address issues common to this particular type of loss.

4) Perinatal Scrap-N-Share Group

This group is designed for individuals or couples coping with a difficult pregnancy diagnosis or infant loss. Participants can make a scrapbook, collage, or shadow box or just come for support with others who have experienced a similar loss. Group meets bi-monthly in the evening.

5) Career-Aged Widow and Widowers Support Group

Groups for career-aged adults who are grieving the death of a spouse or a life partner.

Grief Counseling

Website: <http://www.chesapeakelifecenter.org/programs-and-services/ind-counseling>

Complementary Therapies

Website: <http://www.chesapeakelifecenter.org/programs-and-services/complementary-therapies>

Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center

Website: <http://www.mdcrimevictims.org> or call 410-234-9885

Suicide Support Group

Meets the first Tuesday of each month in Severna Park, MD. Call 410-647-2550

MIS Support Group

(miscarriage, infant death or stillbirth)

Meets the first Monday of each month in Edgewater, MD. Call 443-481-6114

Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP)

Website: www.grasphelp.com or call 843-705-2217

The Compassionate Friends of Prince George's County

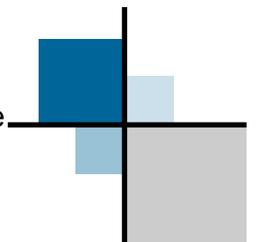
Meetings are on the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., United Parish of Bowie, 2515 Mitchellville Road, Bowie, MD

The Compassionate Friends, Reston Satellite Group

(for parents with no surviving children)

North County Government Center, Reston District Police Station, 12000 Bowman Towne Drive,

Reston, VA. Meetings on the second Saturday of each month from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.



Resources

Gilchrist Grief Services

Registration is required for all services - Online at gilchristhospice.org/grief_registration
 For Hunt Valley, Gilchrist Center, Forest Hill and Dundalk events call 443-849-8251 or email GHC_bereavement@gilchristhospice.org
 For Howard County events call 443-539-4086 or email GHC_bereavement@gilchristhospice.org

Hunt Valley:

11311 McCormick Road, Suite 350
 Hunt Valley, MD 21031
 Support Groups:

Widowed Persons/Life Partner Support Group (all Ages) evening

Tuesdays - TBA

Widowed Persons/Life Partner Support Group (all Ages) daytime

Adults with Parental Loss

Widowed Persons/Life Partner Support Group (ages 50 & under)

Workshops:

Craft Night: 6:30-8pm, Monthly

A social time of friendship, fun and creativity
 Select Thursdays

In Forest Hill:

Hooper House
 2007 Klein Plaza Drive
 Forest Hill, MD 21050

In Towson:

Gilchrist Center - 555 W. Towsontown Blvd.
 Towson, MD 21204
 Support Groups:

Mother's Grief: 3-4:30pm, Monthly

For mothers who have lost adult children

In Columbia:

5537 Twin Knolls Road, Suite 434
 Columbia, MD 21045
 Support Groups:

Men's Support Group: Monthly

For men who have lost a spouse/significant other

Widowed Persons/Life Partner Support Group (all ages) morning

Thursdays, TBA

Adults with Parental Loss Widowed Persons/Life Partner Support Group (all ages) evening

In Dundalk:

Mosaic Community Services in the Dundalk Professional Building, near the intersection of Dundalk Avenue and Center Place.
 40 S. Dundalk Ave, Dundalk, MD 21222

Mental Health Crisis Hotline Numbers

Maryland Hotline – Call 800-422-0009

Anne Arundel County Suicide Hotline – Call 911 (emergency) or 410-768-5522

Baltimore City – Call 410-931-2214

Baltimore County – Call 410-752-7272

Calvert County – Call 800-422-0009

Charles County – Call 800-422-0009

Frederick County – Call 301-662-2252

Howard County – Call 410-531-6677

Montgomery County – Call 240-777-4000

Prince Georges County Suicide Hotline – Call 911 (emergency) or 301-864-7130 / 301-429-2185

St. Mary's County – Call 800-422-0009

Veterans Hotline – Call 800-273-8255



Web Resources

WEEKLY WEB-RADIO SHOWS - To access the weekly "Open to Hope Show" on Thursdays at noon, go to <http://www.opentohope.com>. This show deals with the different aspects of grief. You can also pick up archives of this show at this site or go to <http://www.thegriefblog.com>. For archives of "Healing the Broken Heart" go to <http://www.voiceAmerica.com>

American Association of Retired People - AARP- A grief and loss program includes online articles, publications, support groups, and discussion boards on coping with the loss of a loved one. Website: http://aarp.org/families/grief_loss

American Foundation For Suicide Prevention - Dedicated to advancing knowledge of suicide and the ability to prevent it. Phone: 1-888-333-2377 Fax: 1-212-363-3500

Website: <http://www.afsp.org> E-mail inquiry@afsp.org Address: 120 Wall St., 22nd Floor, New York, NY 10005

Adult Sibling Grief - A support & resource community for surviving adult siblings.

Website: <http://www.adultsiblinggrief.com> E-mail author@adultsiblinggrief.com

Alive Alone - Designed to benefit bereaved parents whose only child or all children have died by providing a self-help network and publications to promote communication and healing, to assist in resolving their grief, and a means to reinvest their lives for a positive future.

E-mail alivalon@bright.net Address: 1112 Champaign Drive, Van Wert, Ohio 45891

Bereaved Parents of the USA-BPUSA - Offers support, care, and compassion for bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents. Phone: 708-748-7866 Website: <http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org>

Address: PO Box 95, Park Forest, Ill. 60466

Break The Silence - Impatient safety for those in crisis or at risk for self-harm and suicide.

Website: <http://www.break-the-silence.org> E-mail BTSSaaveALife@aol.com Phone: 1800-Suicide (1-800-784-2433)

Address: 821 Landis St., Scranton, PA 18504

Center for Loss of Multiple Birth – CLIMB - By and for parents who have experienced the death of one or more children during a multitude pregnancy, birth, and through childhood. Phone: 907-222-5321

Website: <http://www.climb-support.org> E-mail: climb@pobox.alaska.net

Address: PO Box 91377, Anchorage, AK 99509

Children's Bereavement Support Group - Support group for children 7-14 who are bereaving the loss of a parent, grandparent, sibling or friend. Meets the first and third Thursday of each month from 5-6PM in the Cory Building, 599 Route 37 West in Toms River, Phone: 1-732-505-KIDS.

Comfort Zone Camp - For siblings and children (age 7-17) coping with loss of a sibling or parent.

Phone: 1-804-337-3430 Fax: 1-804-377-3433 Website: <http://www.comfortzonecamp.org>

E-mail: info@comfortzonecamp.org Address: 4906 Cutshaw Ave. 2nd Floor, Richmond, Va 23230

Web Resources

Compassion Connection - Contains articles and readings for all who have suffered a loss.

Website: <http://www.compassionconnection.org>

Good Grief Resources - Connects the bereaved and their caregivers with as many bereavement support resources as possible in one efficient and easy-to-use web directory. Website: <http://goodgriefresources.com>

GriefHaven - Provides loving support, hope, and hands-on for those who have lost a child, brother, or sister, or grandchild, and also provide education to professionals and others seeking to help bereaved family members rebuild their lives. Phone: 1-310-459-1789 Website: <http://griefhaven.org>

E-mail: hope@griefHaven.org

Address: The Erika Whitmore Godwin Foundation 15332 Antioch St. #147, Pacific Palisades, Ca 90272

GriefNet - offers e-mail support groups for the bereaved including parents, siblings and grandparents. It also offers a wide variety of bereavement related content including a comprehensive resource guide of bereavement organizations Website: <http://www.griefnet.org> Address: PO Box 3272 Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3272

and a sister website for bereaved children (**KIDSAID**) Website: <http://www.kidsaid.com>

Grief Speaks - Lisa Athan is a grief specialist who facilitates workshops and training programs on grief. Phone: 973-912-0177 Website: <http://www.griefspeaks.com> E-mail: lisa@Griefspeaks.com

Grief Work Center - Barbara Rivel is a grief speaker who specializes in helping those who have to deal with suicide and homicide and in general death, dying and bereavement issues by providing compassion during a time of need. Phone: 732-422-0400 Website: <http://www.griefworkcenter.com> E-mail: griefwork@aol.com

GROWW - Grief recovery online offers wide variety of grief and bereavement resources. Phone: 800-854-3402 Website: <http://www.groww.org>

Hospice Foundation of America - Includes information about hospice care and programs including bereavement support for families using hospice. Phone: 1-800-854-3402 Website: <http://www.hospicefoundation.org>

Mothers Against Drunk Driving - MADD- Phone: 1-800 GET MADD (1-800-438-6233) or 1-877-MADD HELP (1-877-623-3435) Fax: 1-972-869-2206/7 Website National: <http://www.madd.org> Website Local: <http://www.madd.org/nj>

Address National: 511 E. John Carpenter Frwy. Suite 700, Irving, Texas 75062

New Jersey Chapter: P.O. Box 5085, Trenton, NJ 08638 Phone: 1-609-585-7233

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

Web Resources

Mothers In Sympathy and Support-M.I.S.S - Provides immediate and ongoing support to grieving families, empowerment through community volunteerism opportunities, public policy and legislative education, and programs to reduce infant and toddler death through research and education.

Phone:1-623-979-1000 Website: <http://www.missfoundation.org> E-mail:info@missfoundation.org

Address: P.O. Box 53333, Peoria, Arizona 85385-5333

National Funeral Director's Association – NFDA - Provides many grief resources for coping with the death of a child within the family. Phone-800-228-6632 Website: <http://www.nfda.org> E-mail: nfda@nfda.org

Address: 13625 Bishops Drive, Brookfield, WI 53025

National SIDS Resource Center - Provides information service and technical assistance on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and related topics.

Phone for grief counseling: 1-800-221-7437 Information/resources 1-866-866-7437

Website: <http://www.sidscenter.org> E-mail: info@sidscenter.org

Address 2115 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Suite 601, Washington, DC 20007

Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep - When a baby or infant has died, Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep, through its nationwide network of professional photographers, will arrange a tasteful private setting at the hospital with no charges for service or pictures. Phone: 1-877-834-5667 Website: [http://](http://www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org)

www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org

E-mail: headquarters@nilmdts.org Address: 7800 S. Elati St. #111, Littleton, CO 80120

Parents of Murdered Children – POMC - To provide support and assistance to all survivors of homicide victims, while working to create a new world free of murder. Phone:1-513-721-5683 Fax:1-513-345-4489

Website: <http://www.pomc.com> E-mail: natipomc@aol.com

Address: National POMC 2200 East Eighth St. Suite 202 Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

SHARE - Support for those whose lives are touched by the tragic death of a baby through early pregnancy loss, stillbirth, or in the first few months of life.

Phone:1-800-821-6819 Fax:1-636-947-7486 Website:<http://www.nationalshareoffice.com>

Address: St. Joseph Health Center, 300 First Capitol Dr., St. Charles, MO 63301

SIDS - National SIDS Resource Center - Provides information service and technical assistance on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and related topics.

Phone for grief counseling: 1-800-221-7437 Information/resources 1-866-866-7437

Website: <http://www.sidscenter.org> E-mail: info@sidscenter.org

Address 2115 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Suite 601, Washington, DC 20007

SIDS Alliance - For those who lost a child through sudden infant death.

Phone:1-800-221-7437 Website: <http://www.sidsalliance.org> E-mail: njsids@yahoo.com

Web Resources

SIDS Network-Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Network - Offers latest information, as well as support, for those who have been touched by the tragedy of SIDS or other infant death. Website: <http://sids-network.org>

Spanish Resources (Los Amigos Campasivos) - For those needing assistance if Spanish you can go to www.compassionatefriends.org and go to En Espanol. For brochures go to resources (then go to available brochures and scroll down to bottom of page for brochures written in Spanish). Another webpage you can access is www.tcfatlanta.org/Spanish.html which offers a lot of information on their site and has additional links to other resources.

Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood – SUDC - Program offers support, information, advocacy, and research opportunities for those touched by the sudden and unexplained death of a child (over 12 months of age)

Phone: 1-800-620-SUDC or in NJ 1-201-996-5080 Fax: 1-202-996-5326

Website: <http://sudc.org> E-mail: info@sudc.org

Address: SUDC Program c/o The CJ Foundation for SIDS

Don Imus Pediatric Ctr. 30 Prospect Ave Hackensack, NJ 07601

Suicide Prevention (American Foundation For Suicide Prevention) - Dedicated to advancing knowledge of suicide and the ability to prevent it. Crisis: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) Phone: 1-888-333-2377 Phone: 1-363-3500 Fax: 1-212-363-6237.

Website: <http://www.afsp.org> E-mail inquiry@afsp.org Address: 120 Wall St., 22nd Floor, New York, NY 10005

Suicide Prevention (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) - Suicide hotline with free and confidential national network of crisis centers. Phone: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) In Spanish phone 1-888-628-9454

Website: <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Survivors of Suicide – SOS - To help those who have lost a loved one to suicide and to help resolve their grief and pain in their own personal way. Local chapter meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 at St. Dominics, Church Rd, in Brick. Phone: 1-732-899-8483 Contact-Dave Thelen

Website: <http://www.survivorsofsuicide.com>

Survivors of Suicide Awareness of Education - SAVE- A suicide prevention hotline.

Phone: 1-800-273-8255 Website: <http://www.save.org>

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors – TAPS - Made up of and provides services to, all those who have lost a loved one while serving in the Armed Forces.

Phone: 1-202-588-8277 Website: <http://www.taps.org> E-mail: info@taps.org

Address: 910 17th St. NW Suite 800, Washington, DC 20006

Web Resources

Trauma and Loss in Children (National Institute) - TLC-Dedicated to helping traumatized children and families restore a sense of safety and reduce the effects of trauma; information available about trauma, resources and training for professionals. Phone: 1-877-306-5356 Fax: 1-313-885-0390

Website: <http://www.tlcinstitute.org> Address: 900 Cook Road, Gross Pointe Woods, Michigan 48236

Twinless Twins - Serves in support of twins (and all multiple births) who suffer from the loss of companionship of their twin through death, estrangement, or in-utero loss.

Phone: 1-888-205-8962 Website: <http://www.twinlesstwins.org> E-mail: contact@twinlesstwins.com

“International Bereaved Mother’s Day” is May 3, 2015
This day was created in 2010 and it now falls
on the first Sunday of every May



www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org



In Loving Memory
 P.O. Box TBD
 Reston, Virginia 20195
<http://www.InLovingMemoryConference.org>

**Advance
 Registration
 Deadline
 February 13, 2016**

REGISTRATION MATERIALS will be on the above website as soon as a hotel contract is completed.
Please share this information with your local hospital(s), health care professionals, funeral homes, support groups, and newspaper(s) as soon as you see completed information on our website. Contact us if you would like a formal press release. Please assist us in getting this information to the news media and your local bereavement organizations.

IN LOVING MEMORY

**presents its sixth national conference for bereaved parents
 with no surviving children
 April 7 ~ April 10, 2016**

Hyatt Fairfax at Fair Lakes Hotel

LOCATION: IN FAIRFAX, VA - 12777 FAIR LAKES CIRCLE
 (703) 653-6101 YOU MAY LOOK AT PROPERTY AT HYATTFAIRFAX.COM

\$89.00 Room rate may be extended to 3 days before/after to see Cherry Blossoms. Free car parking @ the hotel, Free shuttle to major, enclosed shopping center-Fair Lakes Shopping Center w/Macy's etc. also within walking distance to another smaller shopping center.

Centering Corporation will have a bookstore so if you have published a book for now childless parents please let us know so we can have it included @ the bookstore.

Registration will be \$75.

You may pay by PayPal so your information will be secure and there will be a post office box if you wish to mail a check. Registration for conference and hotel room will be available once announced on the ILM website & next issue of *Alive Alone*.

IN LOVING MEMORY

In Loving Memory is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization explicitly for bereaved parents who are now childless. It was founded in 1992 by Glen and Linda Nielsen who invested all of their love and energy in their only child, Lisa, only to watch her succumb to brain cancer. The purpose of *In Loving Memory* is to provide conferences for bereaved parents where they find encouragement and relief from profound grief caused by the death of their child. For more information go to: www.InLovingMemoryConference.org

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

This gathering is planned around a series of workshops and informal sharing sessions to be of assistance to parents to learn coping skills to take back to their daily lives. Grandparents, support group chapter leaders, friends and the professionals, who assist parents in walking through their grief, are encouraged to attend. Special events and activities are planned with a view toward learning and commemoration. Free time has been built into each day to allow time to recharge and refocus in your own way.

Experienced and some new now childless bereaved parents will be presenting workshops with topics relating to our specific concerns e.g. How do I go on living without my child?, What am I going to do as I age with no children?, What do I do with my and my child's "stuff"?, How do I handle stepchildren?, I am truly alone, as I am single/widowed., How do I plan for a future?, How do I find a purpose for living?, I've had multiple losses and wonder how others have coped, How do I keep my child's memory alive forever? Etc.

There will be a Friday night candlelight service and several other special functions. More information will be on ILM and *Alive Alone* website within a few weeks. We will also feature pages in each of the forthcoming issues of *Alive Alone*.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Email Address **INLOVINGMEMORY1@VERIZON.NET** THAT IS A NUMBER 1 after MEMORY
WEBSITE [HTTP://WWW.INLOVINGMEMORYCONFERENCE.ORG](http://WWW.INLOVINGMEMORYCONFERENCE.ORG)
 should be completed by time you receive this newsletter

BPUSA/AA County Chapter
 P.O. Box 6280
 Annapolis, MD 21401-0280