



# NEWSLETTER

SPONSORED BY  
JOURNEY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

April 2019, VOL. 25, ISSUE 2  
(608) 280-2435

## Remembrance Issue

### EXCERPT FROM HEALING AFTER LOSS



by Martha Whitmore Hickman

If we didn't love them, we wouldn't care so much.  
 At first the grief is so consuming, it may be hard to look ahead and foresee rejoicing — that we have been privileged to share life with this person.  
 Even when death is premature and the circumstances are terrible, we can know that down the road, our gratitude for the life of the person will far outstrip the terrible grief that first seems to take up the whole landscape of our lives. A friend whose son died by suicide told me that an important milestone in her healing was the making of two lists: one, of the bad things about her experience with this son; and another, of the good things. Needless to say, the list of good things was by far the longer list.

It will take time before the scale, tipped initially with the primary weight of grief, rebalances itself and our joy in the person's life again takes preeminence. But if the relationship has been one of joy and mutual appreciation, this will happen.

I am grateful, from the bottom of my heart, that I have shared the life of my loved one. And I trust that someday my happiness as I remember our life together will outweigh the grief I feel now.

from Solano County TCF newsletter, Nov. 2003

“There are those who help you forget and those who help you remember.”  
 — Unknown

### HIS MEMORY

by Barbara Rubel, author of “But I Didn't Say Goodbye”  
 His memory raises my voice and silences it at the same time.  
 His memory is the smile on my lips.  
 His memory rolls down my cheek.  
 His memory quickens my heartbeat as it aches to find the answers  
 that once beat within my chest. Forever silenced.  
 His memory raises my voice and silences it at the same time.



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Thank you to those who have shared your Remembrances for this issue. We respect the privacy and confidentiality of this information. Since names, dates and messages would be available to anyone accessing this Newsletter online through Journey Mental Health Website this section will not be included in the online version of the Newsletter. Requests can be made for a written form of the Remembrance Issue.

## PLEASE ASK

*By Barbara Taylor Hudson*

Someone asked me about you today.  
It's been so long since anyone has done that.

It felt so good to talk about you,  
to share my memories of you,  
to simply say your name out loud.

She asked me if I minded talking about  
what happened to you...

Or would it be too painful to speak of it.  
I told her I think of it every day.

And speaking about it helps me to release  
the tormented thoughts whirling around in my head.

She said she never realized the pain  
would last this long...

She apologized for not asking sooner.  
I told her, "Thanks for asking."

I don't know if it was curiosity or concern that made  
her ask,  
But I told her, "Please do it again sometime...Soon."

*Reprinted from Obelisk, Nov. 2003*

Sharing tales of those we've lost is how we keep from  
really losing them.

— *Mitch Albom, For One More Day*

# EXCERPT FROM A GIFT OF HOPE



By Robert L. Veniga

Human pain works its way out of our consciousness over time. There is a season of sadness. A season of anger. A season of tranquility. A season of hope. But seasons do not follow one another in a lockstep manner. At least not for those in crisis.

The winters and springs of one's life are all jumbled together in a puzzling array. One day we feel as though the dark clouds have lifted, but the next day they have returned. One moment we can smile, but a few hours later the tears emerge. It is true, that as we take two steps forward in our journey, we may take

one or more steps backward. But when one has faith that the spring thaw will arrive, the winter winds seem to lose some of their punch.

*from Mayday, SOS Newsletter, Survivors of Suicide, Aurora, IL, May, 1995*

Hope is activated when we can say to ourselves:  
"I am willing to trust, to wait without demanding answers, and to contribute myself to the most positive use of the present."

— Unknown

# MY MEMORY LIBRARY



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Imagine if I was given one moment,  
just a single slice of my past.  
I could hold it close forever, and that moment would always last.

I'd put the moment in a safe,  
within my hearts abode.  
I could open it when I wanted,  
and only I would know the code.

I could choose a time of laughing,  
a time of happiness and fun.  
I could choose a time that tried me,  
through everything I've done.

I sat and thought about what moment,  
would always make me smile.  
One that would always push me,  
to walk that extra mile.

If I'm feeling sad and low,  
if I'm struggling with what to do.  
I can go and open my little safe,  
and watch my moment through.

There are moments I can think of,  
that would lift my spirits everytime.  
The moments when you picked me up,  
when the road was hard to climb.

For me to only pick one moment,  
to cherish, save and keep,  
Is proving really difficult,  
as I've gathered up a heap!

I've dug deep inside my heart,  
found the safe and looked inside,  
there was room for lots of moments,  
in fact hundreds if I tried.

I'm building my own little library,  
embedded in my heart,  
for all the moments spent with you,  
before you had to part.

I can open it up whenever I like,  
pick a moment and watch it through,  
My little library acts as a promise,  
I'll never ever forget you

*Source: In Memory Poem  
<http://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/my-memory-library#ixzz1zcdeerWz>*

I have been trying to make the best of grief  
and am just beginning to learn to allow it  
to make the best of me.

— Unknown

# FOREVER CHANGED



by Rhonda Wilson, Asheboro, North Carolina

Can you see the change in me? It may not be so obvious to you. I participate in family activities. I attend family reunions. I help plan holiday meals. You tell me you're glad to see that I don't cry anymore. I do cry. When everyone has gone — when it is safe — the tears fall. I cry in privacy so my family won't worry. I cry until I am exhausted and can finally sleep. I'm active in my church. I sing the hymns... I listen to the sermon. You tell me you admire my strength and my positive attitude.

But I'm not strong. I feel that I have lost control, and I panic when I think about tomorrow... next week... next month... next year. I go about the routine of my job. I complete my assigned tasks. I drink coffee and smile. You tell me you're glad to see I'm "over" the

death of my loved one. But I'm not "over" it. If I get over it, I will be the same as before my loved one died. I will never be the same. At times I think I am beginning to heal, but the pain of losing someone I loved so much has left a permanent scar on my heart.

I visit my neighbors. You tell me you're glad to see I'm holding up so well. But I'm not holding up well. Sometimes I want to lock my door and hide from the world. I spend time with friends. I appear calm and collected. I smile when appropriate. You tell me it's good to see me back to my "old self."

But I will never be back to my "old self." Death and grief have touched my life, and I am forever changed.

*Reprinted from Mayday Newsletter, Batavia, IL, May 2007*

# A LIST OF PROMISES



by Nancy A. Mower, TCF, Honolulu, HI

I will grieve as much and for as long as I feel like grieving, and that I will not let others put a timetable on my grief.

I will grieve in whatever way I feel like grieving, and I will ignore those who try to tell me what I should or should not be feeling and how I should or should not be behaving.

I will cry whenever and wherever I feel like crying and I will not hold back my tears just because someone else feels I should be "brave" or "getting better" or "healing by now."

I will talk about my child as often as I want to, and that I will not let others turn me off just because they can't deal with their own feelings. I will not expect family and friends to know how I feel, understanding that one who has not lost a child cannot possibly know how it feels.

I will not blame myself for my child's death, and I will constantly remind myself that I did the best job of parenting I could possibly have done. When feelings of guilt are overwhelming, I will remind myself that this is a normal part of the grief process and it will pass.

I will not be afraid or ashamed to seek professional help if I feel it is necessary.

I will try to eat, sleep and exercise every day in order to give my body strength it still needs to help me cope with my grief.

I will know that I am not losing my mind and I will remind myself that loss of memory, feelings of disorientation, lack of energy and a sense of vulnerability are all normal parts of the grief process.

I will let myself heal and not feel guilty about feeling better.

I will remind myself that the grief process is circuitous — that is, I will not make steady upward progress. And when I find myself slipping back into the old moods of despair and depression, I will tell myself that "slipping backward" is also a normal grief process and these moods, too, will pass.

I will try to be happy about something for some part of every day, knowing that at first I may have to force myself to think cheerful thoughts so eventually they can become a habit.

I will reach out at times and try to help someone else, knowing that helping others will help me to get over my depression.

Even though my child is dead, I will opt for life, knowing that is what my child would want me to do.

*Reprinted from The Compassionate Friends*

# A SINCERE THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS



Darlene Abrahamson  
Helen Agathen  
Barbara Alt  
Dawn Amoriello  
KK Anderson  
Linda Bargo —  
In memory of Dennis Gates  
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Robert & Evelyn Visser  
Lynn & Rita Weingarten  
Vicki Westrich —  
In memory of Dennis Gates  
for his dedication to SOS  
Kathy Witt  
Darlene Woldt

The following donations were received in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Julia Rieder who chose as her project to raise funds toward the next printing of our “Help After Suicide” brochure which provides helpful, supportive resource information to those who have experienced a suicide loss. It is made available to funeral services, law enforcement, religious organizations, the Medical Examiner’s office, hospitals, counselors and others who come into contact with loss survivors. We appreciate Julia’s generosity to SOS.

Kathleen Whelan  
Kelly Whalen  
Staci Rieder  
Laura Kassel  
Gina Pili  
Renee & Kelly Fitzgerald  
Carla & Anthony Staresinic  
Michael Ross  
Sherri & Aaron Gross  
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Laurie Fink  
Jennifer Garry  
Ingrid Harke

To make a tax deductible donation online by credit card, visit [www.journeymhc.org/donate](http://www.journeymhc.org/donate) and designate “Survivors of Suicide (SOS) Support Group” in the pull-down menu option.

To make a tax deductible donation by check, make it payable to Journey Mental Health Center with SOS in the memo line. Mail to:

Survivors of Suicide Support Group, c/o Journey Mental Health Center  
25 Kessel Court, Suite 105, Madison, WI 53711

## SOS SUPPORT GROUP PURPOSE

*To share experiences for living and coping beyond suicide loss*



## SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE SUPPORT GROUP SCHEDULE

*A self-help group for adults who are grieving the death of a loved one by suicide.*

**2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, 7 – 9 p.m.**

Hosted at Journey Mental Health Center, Kessel Ct., Madison WI 53711

**Due to a building issue in Building 49 we will be meeting across the parking lot in Building 25 on the lower level until further notice.**

There is free parking in front of this building and elevator access to the meeting room.

Please follow signage as you enter the building.

You will be greeted by one of the SOS team until 7:00.

**Please arrive by 6:50.** If necessary follow the call directions posted on the door by using a cell phone to alert the group if you need late entry.

APRIL						
		9				
		23				

MAY						
		14				
		28				

JUNE						
		11				
		25				

JULY						
		9				
		23				

### SOS 2019 SCHEDULE

April 9 & 23

May 14 & 28

June 11 & 25

July 9 & 23

August 13 & 27

September 10 & 24

October 8 & 22

November 12 & 26

December 10

### WEATHER THIS YEAR HAS BEEN A FACTOR IN CANCELLATION OF SOME SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

We regret that inclement, dangerous weather caused some support group meetings in 2019 to be cancelled. Safety of staff and participants is always our primary concern. We are hopeful that all regularly scheduled meetings can be held in the future.

If weather is dangerous, a determination of whether the group will meet will be made by 3 p.m. You may call Journey Mental Health Center main reception (608) 280-2700 to see if the Center is closed or Emergency Services reception for information (608) 280-2580.

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Sunday April 14** – U.W. Campus Out of the Darkness Walk; info at [suicidepreventionuw.org](http://suicidepreventionuw.org)

**SOS Confidential Email:** [sos@journeymhc.org](mailto:sos@journeymhc.org)

**SOS Confidential Voicemail:** (608) 280-2435

**24/7 Year 'Round Mental Health Crisis Line:** (608) 280-2600

**Journey Mental Health Center Website:** [www.journeymhc.org](http://www.journeymhc.org)

Select Programs & Services, Community-Based Services, Survivors of Suicide



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- By phone message to (608) 280-2435
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