



Bereaved Parents of the USA Anne Arundel County Chapter

February 2008

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

Wintersun

There are those days in winter
When your world is frozen
Into a vision of eternal ice,
When earth and air are strangers to each other,
When sound and color seem forever gone.

There are those days in winter
When you feel like dying,
When life itself surrenders you to anguish,
To total mourning and to endless grief.

And then it happens: from the bitter sky,
A timid sun strides to his silent battle
Against the gray and hostile universe -
It changes ice to roses, sky to song.

And then it happens that your heart recalls
Some distant joy, a gladness from the past,
A slender light at first, then larger, braver,
Until your mind returns to hope and peace.

Let memories be beauty in your life,
Like song and roses in the winter sun.

Sascha Wagner

From her book "Wintersun: Thoughts of Comfort
and Understanding for Healing from Grief"

February is the month that is surrounded by images of love as we approach its most recognized holiday - Valentine's Day. There's Cupid with his wings and arrow, lace-covered cards, boxes of candy, bunches of flowers, and of course the most universally recognized image of love - the heart. Which makes me think to ask you, my fellow bereaved friends, how is your heart? Broken, many of us would say after the death of our child. There can be no greater love than that of a parent for their child and the emotional pain of losing them may feel like more than we can bear. Yet, we do. We are forced to live our lives carrying the pain of an emotionally broken heart, maybe without giving our health a second thought. That's exactly why I want you to consider this question - how is your heart? Are you feeling pain in your chest or anywhere else in your body? If you haven't done so already, you should make it a priority to get a medical checkup after suffering the loss of your child. The stress of grief can cause subtle and sometimes more profound health problems that should not be ignored by a bereaved parent of any age. Take care of yourself and make an appointment with your doctor today.

Carole Gilmour

Anne Arundel County Chapter, MD/BPUSA



IN THIS ISSUE:

Telephone Friends.....	Page 2
Meeting Information.....	Page 2
Chapter Contacts and Information.....	Page 2
Acknowledgements and Thanks.....	Page 3
We Can Use the Help.....	Page 3

Other Resources.....	Page 3
Articles and Poems.....	Page 4, 8, 9
Sibling Page.....	Page 5
Our Children Remembered.....	Pages 6, 7
Upcoming Meetings.....	Page 10
Inclement Weather Policy.....	Pages 3, 10



The printing and mailing of this newsletter
has been donated by
Kathy Franklin in memory of her son **Tanager Rú Ricci**
and by
Rachel Hand in memory of her son **Adrian Bernard Andrew Ortega**



**Anne Arundel County Chapter
of Bereaved Parents of the USA**
P.O. Box 6280
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-0280
24 hour Message Line: 443.572.7872

Website: www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

This newsletter is published monthly
Copyright 2008 All Rights Reserved

Editor

Carole Gilmour
410.544.4774
bpaaeditor@comcast.net

Chapter Leader

Dave Alexander
410.544.3634
dralex@sdaalex.com

Mailings & Thank You notes: Barbara Bessling
Treasurer: Fran Palmer
Hospitality: Carol Tomaszewski
Programs: Paul Balasic
Jane Schindler
Librarian: Kathy Franklin

It is our sincere hope that you will find comfort somewhere in this newsletter. It is our intention to offer you hope in knowing that you are not alone. We encourage you to write about your feelings and share your feelings with others who understand.



**Submissions for March newsletter
due to editor by February 1**

Telephone Friends Sometimes we may have the need to talk to someone who can understand our pain. If you feel the need to talk, have questions to ask, or had a difficult day, these people will welcome your call and are willing to listen to you.



Bob Bramhall 410.867.4956 Daughter (19), drunk driver; men's grief.

Marie Dyke Daughter (17), single parent, only child; car accident.

Sandy Platts 410.721.6457 Infant death.

Tia Stinnett 410.360.1341. Miscarriages and infant death.

Janet Tyler 410.969.7597. Daughter (5), and brother (33); car accident.

REPRINT POLICY: Material in this Newsletter of the Anne Arundel County Chapter/ BPUSA, may be copied only 1) if the article is copied in its entirety, 2) if the person writing the article is identified as noted in the Newsletter 3) if it is clearly stated that it was taken from the Newsletter of the Anne Arundel County Chapter/ BPUSA, and 4) if our website is cited in the credits. This material is to be used and given to help persons with the grieving process and may not be sold or become a part of something being sold for profit unless first obtaining the permission of the author of the article and/or the editor of this Newsletter. The editor of the newsletter is Carole Gilmour, PO Box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401-0280.

MEETING INFORMATION

Next Meeting: February 7, 2008

Doors open at 7:15 P.M. Meeting begins at 7:30 P.M.
(Meetings usually held on 1st Thursday of each month.)

Calvary United Methodist Church
301 Rowe Boulevard
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**** Please park in lower lot behind church ****

If there is **inclement weather** on a meeting night, our meeting is cancelled if Phase 1 of the Snow Emergency Plan is in effect that same day at 5:00 P.M. You can also check our Chapter website for last minute information on possible cancellations.



Refreshments at our monthly meetings are donated by Chapter members. To make a contribution, please see the sign-up sheet on the refreshment table (drinks, ice, and paper products are provided). For information contact Carol Tomaszewski at 410.519.8448.



At every monthly meeting we display materials from our **lending library** that are offered to help you understand and deal with your grief. Most of our materials have been donated in memory of a child. You are welcome to borrow them and when you are finished, please return them at our next **monthly meeting** or mail them to our **post office box** listed above.

By any chance, do you have one of our lost treasures? Our lending library is missing 14 audio cassettes and 190 books. Please look around your home, car or office and if you find you're finished with an item you can return it in one of two ways - bring it to our next **monthly meeting** or drop it in the mail addressed to our **post office box** listed above.



We gratefully acknowledge the following donations:

James L. Alexander in memory of his nephew James William Henry Alexander
Denise and Russ Calo in memory of their son Russell Joseph Calo, Jr.
Kathy Franklin in memory of her son Tanager Rú Ricci
Aimée Kilian in memory of her son Stephen William Kilian
Mike Milord in memory of his son Daniel "Dan" Michael Milord
Ken Smith in memory of his niece Tracy Ann Fotino



..and many thanks to Bob Bramhall for adding his name to our Chapter list of "Telephone Friends" found on page 2 of this newsletter.

Donations are gratefully accepted to offset the cost of: printing and mailing our Chapter's monthly newsletter; maintenance of our website; and our annual events -- Memory Walk, Service of Remembrance, Conference of Hope and Healing; as well as books and other materials for our Chapter's library.

We Can Always Use the Help!

There are dozens of tasks that go into running our Chapter and special events, from helping set up the chairs ... to greeting new members when they first come in the door ... to facilitating sharing groups ... to identifying potential articles and poems for the newsletter ... to mailing out invitations to one of our events ... to working on public relations.... We can always use the help.

If you feel you are now in a place in your grief journey where you can help and give back to the Chapter in little or large ways, please contact our Chapter leader, Dave Alexander at 410.544.3634.



Most of us find that when we reach a point of giving back to those who come after us, we gain far more than we give.

Other Resources:

G.R.A.S.P. (Grief Recovery After A Substance Passing)

Provides help, compassion and understanding for families or individuals who have had a loved one die as a result of drugs. Website: www.grasphelp.com or contact founders Pat or Russ Wittberger at 843.705.2217; email is mom@jennysjourney.org

T.A.P.S. (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors)

Non-profit Veteran Service Organization offering hope, healing, comfort and care to American Armed Forces families facing the death of a loved one. Magazine; grief camps for kids; online forums and chats. Website: www.taps.org or call 800.858.TAPS.

M.A.D.D. (Mothers Against Drunk Driving)

Provides emotional support, professional referrals, publications, information about criminal justice system, drunk driving and victims' rights laws, etc. Contact Jan Withers at 301.627.1743.

S.O.S. (Survivors of Suicide)

Meets first Tuesday of each month at Severna Park Methodist Church located at 731 Benfield Road in Severna Park, Maryland (21146). For more information call 410.987.2129.

Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc. (formerly known as The Stephanie Roper Committee for Victims of Violent Crime)

For more information please call 410.234.9885 or go to their website, www.mdcrimevictims.org. Located at 14750 Main Street, Suite 1B in Upper Marlboro, Maryland (20772).

Office of Cemetery Oversight, Advisory Council on Cemetery Operations (Division of Labor, Licensing and Regulation)

Monitors individuals, partnerships, corporations and limited liability companies operating cemeteries or providing burial goods and services to consumers in the State of Maryland. Located at 500 N. Calvert Street in Baltimore, Maryland (21202). For more information call 410.230.6229 or toll free 888.218.5925. Email cemet@dllr.state.md.us. For more information (including an online complaint form) go to website, <http://www.dllr.state.md.us/license.occpof/cemetery.htm>

Bereaved Parents of the USA (BPUSA)

National Headquarters
Call 708.748.7866 or go to www.bereavedparentsusa.org

LISTEN WITH YOUR HEART

Memories are a treasure
 Time cannot take away...
 So may you be surrounded
 By happy ones today.
 May all the love and tenderness
 Of golden years well spent
 Come back today to fill your heart
 With beauty and content...
 And may you walk down Memory Lane
 And meet the child you love.
 For while you cannot see them
 They'll be watching from above...
 And if you trust your dreaming
 Your faith will make it true...
 And if you listen with your heart...
 They'll come and talk with you.
 So for their sake be happy
 And show them that their love...
 Has proven strong and big enough
 to reach down from above.
 And you will never walk alone
 When memory's door swings wide
 For you'll find that your beloved child
 is always at your side.

Helen Steiner Rice

POTHOLES

Margaret Gerner
 St. Louis Chapter/BPUSA
 from *A JOURNEY TOGETHER*,
www.bereavedparentsusa.org



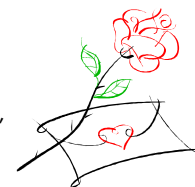
Peanuts, the cartoon character, is walking blissfully along when, all of a sudden, he takes a somersault. In the last box of the strip he says, "...and suddenly, you're reminded of a lost love." It's like that for many of us. I was having my hair cut at the beauty shop one morning when I heard a little boy behind me telling a tall tale about fighting Indians. Suddenly I was jolted with the memory of how my six year-old son, Arthur, used to tell about the Indians he killed in the back yard. Twenty six years have passed since Arthur was killed, but that memory was like a knife through my heart.

Every time I hear the song "Betty Davis Eyes" the same thing happens. My granddaughter, Emily, has been dead for 15 years but, when I hear it, in my mind's eye I can see her dancing to that song. It hurts. I call these experiences "potholes of grief." We can be years beyond our painful grief when, suddenly, something will remind us of him or her. A song on the radio, a place we hadn't been in years or something someone says will bring our loved one back so vividly to us. Occasionally, there are pleasant memories that bring us a feeling of warmth, but many times they hurt. Fortunately the pain doesn't last long, although, for a time, it can seem like we're back to square one in our grief.

The best way I've found to deal with potholes of grief is just to let them happen and try not to fight them. They are a sign that your loved one is still in your heart and, no matter how much time passes, you will always miss him or her. Potholes are bumpy but shallow places in a normally smooth road. So it is with potholes of grief. They are bumpy painful places in our lives that come after we've resolved our grief.

THE HOLIDAY OF LOVE

Valentine's Day is a day of remembering our loved ones with small gifts and great feelings. When your child was living, did you often remember him/her on Valentine's Day with a card or a balloon, perhaps a gift of candy or something special that was wanted? So, why stop that tradition?



Remember your child with love on this special day; a single rose left at a grave; a special holiday balloon to float around the house, reminding you each time you look; a special photo in a nice frame to sit on the mantle. These are ideas in an article from an old Bereavement Magazine.

It seems like a pretty good idea too! What a better way to celebrate the "Holiday of Love" than by enjoying fond memories of your child. Try making his/her favorite dinner and treating the family. Use special photos scattered around the table to talk about some fun facts about him/her. It's important to show the others in the family how much they are also loved so don't forget some small Valentine's gifts for them too!

Just because our hearts are broken, we don't need to ignore the "Holiday of Love".

Art Rogers
 Hinsdale, IL/BPUSA
 from *A JOURNEY TOGETHER*,
www.bereavedparentsusa.org



SIBLING PAGE



Heartroom

When I first took
the measure of my heart,
I could not see,
The light was dim.
A friend held the lamp
while I looked in.

There was room
for someone's sorrow
and another person's pain
And plenty of room
for other people's tears,
that fell like rain.

The depth of my compassion
Everyone could see.
But none of it really mattered
until there was room in my heart
For me.

P.G. White, August 1994
First published in **Changes** magazine
and posted on his website
"The Sibling Connection"
<http://www.counselingstlouis.net/>

WHO AM I NOW? Traci Morlock, Bereaved Sibling, St. Louis, MO/BPUSA

Who am I now that my sibling has died? I have asked myself that question many times over the last four years. When I think of my brother, Sean, I think of how things used to be. I also think of all the things that he will miss. For example, my husband or my children will never know Sean. Sean will never have children. There are just so many things that he will miss.

I began to question who I was about a month after Sean died. He and I shared a great love of music. When I think of music, I think of Sean. As first, every song I heard made me cry. After a while though, I began to try to find a deeper meaning in the songs. I know that a lot of teenagers and young adults identify important times in their lives by music. I am one of those people.

Now I am trying to figure out what place the music has in my life. After Sean died, music took on new meaning for me. The music I sing and listen to is my special connection to my brother. The song, "Because You Loved Me" by Celine Dion was especially powerful for me.

I came to realize that through simply loving and supporting me, my brother had helped to shape the person that I was becoming and who I want to become. I have realized now that my life's direction has taken a slight detour. I have had to reroute my image of myself. When I see music, I see my brother and I hope that will never change. When I saw myself in the past, I saw Sean by my side. That picture has now been altered. The biggest part of the question, "Who am I now?" is also "Am I still a sister?" The answer to that is a simple yes! Sean will always be my brother and I will be his sister.

Forever.



INTERNET RESOURCES FOR BEREAVED SIBLINGS

[SOLOS-Sibs](http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/SOLOS-sibs) An e-mail support group for adults who have lost a brother or sister to suicide at any age. Discussion revolves around mutual grief support and sibling survivor issues. Go to <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/SOLOS-sibs>

[Mourning Our Brothers and Sisters \(MOBS\)](http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/M_O_B_S_) Online support for bereaved adult siblings. It offers the opportunity to connect with others who may understand what it's like to be a surviving sibling. Go to http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/M_O_B_S_

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Please remember the following families this month.

Bethany Anne Balasic
Daughter of Paul and Claudia Balasic
February 13, 1981 - April 5, 1996

Michael Allen Barker
Son of Diane and Seth Barker
January 18, 1990 - February 10, 1999

Susan Lawrence Barr
Daughter of Bryant and Missy Lawrence
July 14, 1961 - February 16, 1991

Alex Blake
Son of Bob and Veronica Blake
February 1, 1982 - September 25, 2004

Darius JoVan Brown
Son of Victoria and Robert Brown
February 1, 1992 - May 30, 2004

David Norton Cann
Son of Ruth Cann
August 21, 1956 - February 4, 2004

Elizabeth Caitlyn Carr
Daughter of Sandy and Bill Carr
July 13, 1989 - February 24, 2003

Owen F. Carr IV
Son of Peggy Carr
June 29, 1978 - February 18, 2003

Chrystal M. Clifford
Timothy's fiancée of Marilyn Mabe
July 16, 1978 - February 17, 2001

Ashlea Marie Cranston
Daughter of Thomas and Mary Cranston
July 4, 1985 - February 24, 1986

Kevin Michael Crine
Son of John and Jean Crine
January 30, 1974 - February 8, 2006

Robert Michael Davidson
Son of Donna and Kevin Davidson
August 17, 1981 - February 21, 2004

Thomas Barnard Doyle
Son of Timothy and Kathleen Doyle
February 19, 1999 - February 2, 2007

Tyler Dudley
Son of Julie Cremen
December 29, 2000 - February 23, 2001

Zachary Jay Forman
Son of Marge Forman
February 11, 1977 - April 10, 2005

Melissa Ireland Frainie
Daughter of Kathy and George Ireland
December 12, 1971 - February 12, 2007

Katie Fritz
Daughter of Carol Fritz
October 29, 1977 - February 27, 1993

Christopher Joseph Galdi
Son of Kathy Galdi
November 14, 1985 - February 20, 2003

Kimberly Judith Gardner
Daughter of Joan F. Gardner
February 6, 1968 - August 16, 1992

Steven Joseph Garvey
Son of Mark and Cheryl Sylce
January 21, 1985 - February 1, 1985

Lee Robert Hayden
Son of Terri Hayden-Molton
Grandson of Mary M. Senier
November 12, 1979 - February 19, 1990

Michael Thompson Heany
Son of Frank and Jean Heany
February 7, 1973 - December 23, 2004

Thomas "Tommy" Michael Howard
Son of Thomas and Donna Howard
May 27, 1984 - February 10, 2000

Sandrine J. Ingulia
Daughter of Michele Ingulia
January 17, 1965 - February 14, 2003

Chrystal Lynn Isaacs
Daughter of Tish and Darrel Isaacs
April 12, 1984 - February 1, 2003

Traykia Melisa Jones
Daughter of Rochelle Kennedy
February 19, 1988 - May 11, 2004

Charles William Kelm
Son of Kathy Kelm
July 17, 1974 - February 26, 1995

Timothy J. Mabe
Son of Marilyn Mabe
October 29, 1977 - February 18, 2001

Ethan Matthew MacPherson
Son of Kim and Scott MacPherson
January 22, 1994 - February 13, 1995

Kyle Patrick McDonough
Son of Judy McDonough
February 25, 1982 - May 15, 2005

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

Jolene Dawn McKenna
Daughter of Charlene Kvech
February 8, 1967 - November 22, 1971

Richard McKinney Jr.
Son of Richard and Ellen McKinney
March 6, 1975 - February 19, 1998

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

Jennifer Margaret Neafsey
Daughter of Beth Neafsey
March 20, 1969 - February 25, 1984

Jonathan Michael Noon
Son of John Noon
February 3, 1982 - April 18, 2004

John David "JD" Openshaw
Son of David and Lily Openshaw
November 9, 1994 - February 21, 1997

Adrian Bernard Andrew Ortega
Son of Rachael Hand
August 28, 1964 - February 17, 2005

Brian James Para
Son of Joan Para
February 19, 1970 - March 19, 1991

Mackenzie Jean Payne
Daughter of Karyn and Eric Payne
February 2, 2003 - February 2, 2003

Jackson Platts
Son of Sandy and Jeff Platts
February 7, 1998 - February 10, 1998

Tanager Rú Ricci
Son of Kathy Franklin
October 19, 1977 - February 16, 2004

Zachary James Rich
Son of Peter and Tracy Rich
February 25, 1999 - February 11, 2001

Christopher J. Rogers
Son of Louise G. Rogers
February 21, 1990 - November 4, 2003

David C. Schmier
Son of Gordon and Virginia Schmier
June 26, 1964 - February 10, 1992

Donna Jean Shrodes
Daughter of Lydia Shrodes
February 5, 1974 - May 23, 2002

Frank Spencer Spurr
Brother of Terri Tuono
January 27, 1966 - February 1, 2002

Roderick "Rod" William Stallings
Son of Robin Stallings
February 7, 1967 - September 14, 1996

William Henry Stevens
Son of Peg and Lou Stevens
February 26, 1965 - November 28, 2003

David William Tomaszewski
Son of Richard and Carol Tomaszewski
September 4, 1974 - February 6, 2001

Timothy Allen Umbel
Son of Richard and Mary Ann Umbel
Brother of Christina and Dawn Umbel
February 16, 1982 - September 15, 2002

Anthony Gerald Villella
Son of Judy Villella
July 3, 1987 - February 10, 2007

Justin James Watts
Son of Jan and Jim Watts
February 15, 1985 - January 14, 2006

Evyn Bryce Wygal
Son of Pam and Bill Wygal
February 15, 1991 - February 24, 1994

Note: If your child's name appears in the printed version of our newsletter but does not appear in this online version, it is because we have not received explicit permission from you to list it online. If you would like your child's name to also appear in future online editions of the newsletter, please send an email to dralex@sdalex.com



Why should I be out of mind
because I am out of sight?
I am waiting for you, for an interval,
Somewhere very near,
Just around the corner.
All is well.

Henry Scott Holland
from his sermon, "Death is Nothing At All"

MY HEART HAS NO STEPS

I married into a family that was going through the process of grief. I often feel like an interloper at meetings of bereaved parents because I



“technically” don’t belong. When I married Beverley she had experienced the death of her oldest daughter. Her marriage was one of many that could not handle the added pressure of the death of a child. This is written for the “Step” parents in the group, but there are also a few things that apply to natural parents. The title exists because several people have heard me say that my heart has no steps. I’ll explain.

Beverley – the bereaved mother I came to love: Beverley was in the process of grieving the death of Debbie when we first started seeing each other. She still is in that process. I am moving through the process with her, even though Debbie died before I was on the scene. I have had to learn a lot about what is going on. Living with a grieving wife you love is a good way to gain knowledge of what grief is about. We share this, along with everything else in our lives. It has given me the opportunity, on way too many occasions, to put grieving parents and grandparents in touch with Bereaved Parents.

Debbie – is Beverley’s oldest daughter: I never met her. I watched all of the video that was available, including the old 8mm silent home movies and looked at all of the pictures that were available. I have talked with her friends. I have talked with her aunts and uncles in an effort to try to understand more about her and her relationship with her mother. That is my choice, and I think it is a responsibility as Beverley’s husband to prepare myself as much as possible for my role of trying to comfort her on the worst days of her grief.

Kim – the daughter I did meet: If I ever introduce Kim to you, I will introduce her as my daughter. My heart has no steps. I believe we have a pretty good relationship. That is a miracle, considering the circumstances surrounding her when I entered her life. I worry about her. I want only the best in life for her. I will do all I can to protect her. In the purest sense, I love her.

We are family. The longer we go the tighter we bond. I now have four children. (I know. They are all adults now. Just humor me. Okay?) Kim and her husband (my son-in-law) have given me three beautiful grandchildren. Watch us together and you will be convinced that there is a real familial bond. This relationship does not replace my natural children. I have as much love for them as ever.

One of the things I had to overcome (I am still working on this) is my propensity as the male of the species to fix everything so there is no more problem. Guys, we **CAN’T** fix it. We must do all we can in support of our wife. Actually, whichever spouse is being stronger at any given moment wants to make everything better for the other. We feel like a failure when we cannot make the hurt go away. I know I have to be sensitive to things that others know nothing about. A song, a date or other stimulus may trigger the grief in my wife and the mood can change quickly. I finally learned to ask her if her mood was because of something I did or didn’t do, or something I said or didn’t say. I also ask if there is something I can do to help her at that time. Sometimes she just needs to experience her grief with a minimum of distraction. Searching is my responsibility and honest answers are her responsibility.

I can do things to soften some of the bumps I know are coming. Little things do mean a lot. It is easy to send a card or flower to her on dates that I know are important to her. I once bought a flower and placed it on Debbie’s grave on her birthday. I knew Beverley would have a difficult time getting there because of her workload. She tearfully related that she would fail to get to the cemetery. When I told her I had attended to the grave she received some relief. Don’t give up looking for big things to do to help, but be particularly sensitive to the little things. They show up quite often and are just as effective.

Remember to flatten out any steps in your heart. The love you experience will be worth the effort.

David Hurley
from *A JOURNEY TOGETHER*,
www.bereavedparentsusa.org



Abraham Lincoln and his wife Mary suffered the loss of two sons before the president's own untimely death in 1865. Second son Edward died at four years of age and third second son, Willie, died at 11 years of age. (A third son, "Tad", died at the age of 18 in 1871; leaving first born son, Robert, as their sole surviving child.) Historians note that among Lincoln's most beautiful writings is a letter of condolence composed to a close family friend who was the grieving the loss of her father. One can imagine that his experience as a bereaved father moved him to express these words of comfort, "In this sad world of ours, sorrow comes to all...it comes with bitterest agony....Perfect relief is not possible except with time. You cannot now realize that you will ever feel better...And yet (this) is a mistake. You are sure to be happy again. To know this, which is certainly true, will make you some less miserable now. I have experienced enough to know what I say; and you need only to believe it..."*.

*from the Abraham Lincoln Research Site created by Roger Norton
<http://members.aol.com/RVSNorton/Lincoln2.html>

Strong Bodies, Strong Minds

Dear Readers:

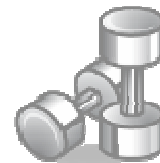
Some people exercise for the fitness of their body. Some people pray to improve the health of their soul. Some people meditate for the well being of their body and soul. We, as Bereaved Parents, try to restore the damage to bodies and souls caused by the loss of a child. In the use of the poem, "Say My Name", we preserve the memory of our children while restoring our own physical and mental health.

I am currently using a technique which utilizes all the principles above that I would like to share with you. Instead of counting repetitions while exercising, I use prayers instead. For a 20 count repetition I recite the Lord's Prayer, for a 10 count repetition I recite the Hail Mary. At the end of the Hail Mary, I add a remembrance for my lost child.

After I say, "Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death", I then recite, "and pray for our Matthew in heaven". In this way I am asking God for His love and protection for my child who I can no longer see or protect. With this prayer during exercise, I am saying my son's name in remembrance each morning.

May God provide strength to you and your family utilizing this or any method to give you peace.

Sincerely,
Bob Katz
Anne Arundel Chapter, MD/BPUSA
January 2008



Sooner or Later



Seven years ago, I walked with my son, Dave, to the car. He said, "I love ya' Mom. I'll call you tomorrow." ...And he left.

Seven very long years ago. Or rather, seven very short years ago. It sometimes seems like it was just yesterday.

I have tried reading books on grief, with the thought that I'd learn more and be able to deal with things better. But that didn't work for me. More and more I have been reading those "take me away" books. Romance, adventure, who-dun-its...pure fiction. With these books I don't have to face the reality of my loss.

Usually the authors I read don't write about death and losing a loved one. And if they do, they don't seem to have a clue what it's really like to survive and face your grief day after day.

But recently I read a novel by Nora Roberts, BRAZEN VIRTUE, published in 1988, one of her earlier novels. She seems to understand. Following are several paragraphs ... a conversation between two bereaved people.

"I'm sorry. I'm really sorry." The tears started again, the ones she'd been able to hold off for days. "I don't want to do this."

"No." He understood that as well. "But sometimes it's better after you do."

"Everyone says they understand, but they don't." When he put his arms around her, she held on. "You don't know what it is to lose a part of yourself until it happens. There's nothing you can do to prepare for it, you know? And nothing you can do afterward, after you've handled all the details. That's the worst part, not being able to do anything. How long – how long did it take you to put it behind you?"

"I'll let you know when it happens." She nodded, letting her head rest against his shoulder for another minute. "All you can do is go on?"

"That's right. After a while you don't think about it every day. Then something happens in your life... You can go on. You don't forget, but you can go on."

She drew back to wipe the tears from her cheeks with both hands. "Thanks."

"You going to be okay?"

"Sooner or later."

We all cry.

Few understand.

We will never forget.

Our bereaved friends provide comfort..

And sooner or later we will be OK.

Carol Tomaszewski
Anne Arundel Chapter, MD/BPUSA
January 11, 2008

*Just as despair can come to one, only from other human beings,
hope, too, can be given to one, only by other human beings.*

-- Elie Weisel

Bereaved Parents of the USA Anne Arundel County Chapter

P.O. Box 6280

Annapolis, MD 21401-0280

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

NEXT MEETING FEBRUARY 7, 2008



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
DATED MATERIAL



If there is **inclement weather** on a meeting night, our meeting is cancelled if Phase 1 of the Snow Emergency Plan is in effect that same day at 5:00 P.M. You can also check our Chapter website for last minute information on possible cancellations. Go to: www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org



UPCOMING MEETING TOPICS:

Using Music in Dealing with Grief

Thursday, February 7, 2008

Some bereaved parents find music can be helpful in dealing with their grief. Paul Balasic will relate his experiences with music in his grief journey and talk about the role he believes music can play in the grief process. Members are urged to bring CDs or cassette tapes with music they have found particularly meaningful and helpful as they deal with their grief. We will use these as part of the discussion in some of our sharing groups.

Helping Our Surviving Children

Thursday, March 6, 2008

The surviving children in our families often have issues of their own. These issues can be vastly different depending on the age of the surviving child, his/her location in the order of the family, etc. Jane Schindler will talk about her experience in dealing with the issues faced by the siblings of deceased children and offer ideas on how we might help them.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT OUR MEETINGS

Each of our monthly meetings follows the same basic format. We open with a general session attended by all for the first half hour of the evening. We usually schedule a program with a speaker or panel to address a topic that may be of interest and value to families mourning the death of a child. After this talk, everyone in attendance is invited to introduce themselves and say their child's name if they are able. Then, after a short break, we divide into sharing groups.

We always have these sharing groups and - particularly for the newly bereaved - the issues that are discussed do not necessarily have to focus on a program's topic, unless it is relevant to the members in the sharing group. We try to cover a range of topics in our scheduled programs that we hope are of value to a broad range of our Chapter members. We appreciate your feedback and suggestions for future program topics. Please contact our Chapter's Program coordinators Paul Balasic or Jane Schindler.