

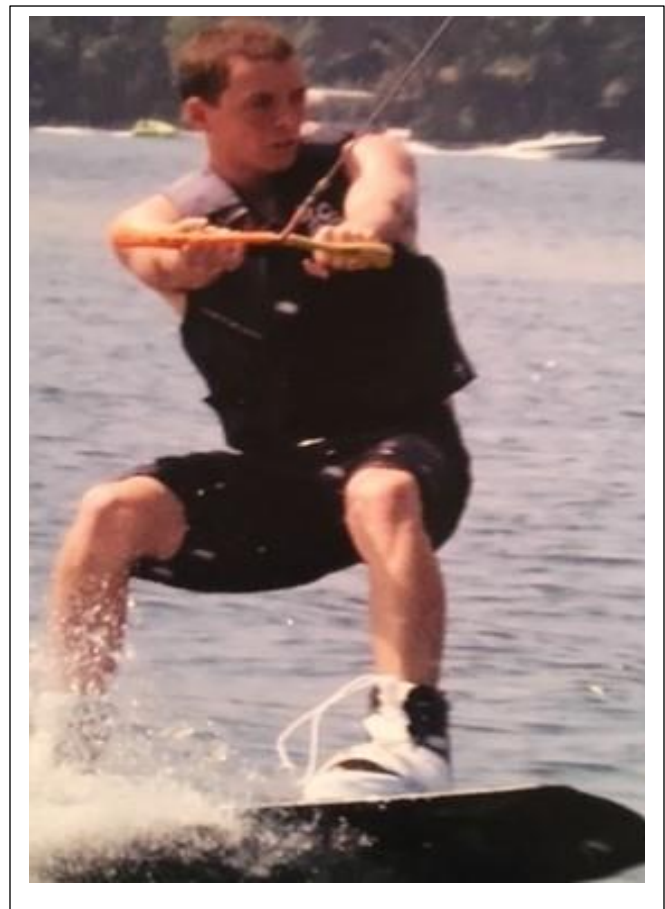


# Bereaved Parents of the USA

## Anne Arundel County Chapter

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This issue is lovingly offered as an homage to all the mothers and fathers who are grieving the loss of a child.



***William Kyle Regan***  
***July 19, 1988 – July 20, 2016***

I go through the pictures I have saved and remember the moments when they were taken, along with the fun that was occurring at the time. Love always, Dad.

## Our Chapter Column

**Our Chapter Column** is where you will find articles.... poems...lyrics...thoughts, submitted by our chapter members, in memory of their loved ones. If you are doing any type of writing, I hope you will consider sharing your efforts with others in this forum. It is often hard to believe that someone else could feel the intense depth of pain that comes with the loss of our child, and extremely comforting to know that we are not alone.

Please consider submitting something to be printed in this column to:  
[belcherirene@gmail.com](mailto:belcherirene@gmail.com), or mail to PO Box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401.

Newsletter article submission deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication.

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Hey Kyle,

You know you are in my heart every day. I go through the pictures that I have saved and remember the moments when they were taken, along with the fun that was occurring at the time. I found a picture of you when we were in Ireland and we were in a boat going to an island. You had had a seizure and it had left you in a tired state, as seizures always did, but you played through; you did not let that stop you from enjoying life.

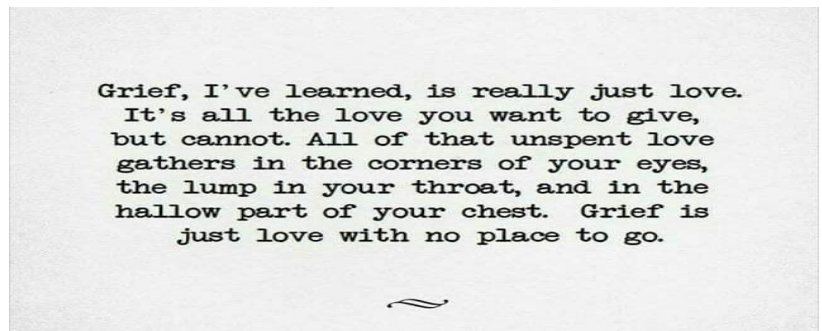
There are times that I struggle to comprehend life and life without you. It hurts knowing that I cannot hug you again. I do relish the times we had. Your sister, brother and I talk about you saying things such as, "Well, Kyle would have had that movie in his collection already". We look for signs which show us that you are with us. I would ask you Kyle, to give your brother some additional signs as he makes his journey in TX.

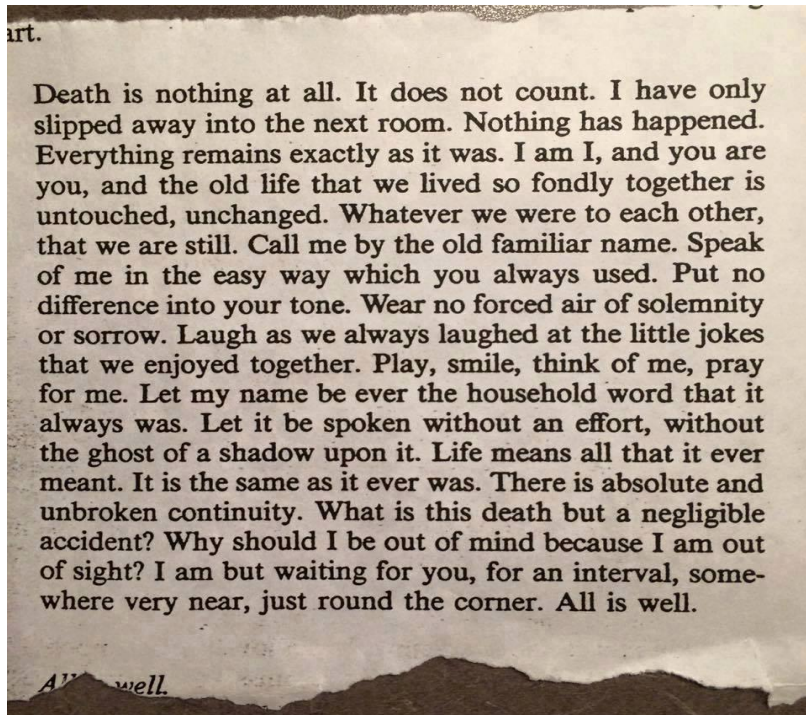
We celebrate you every day Kyle and this will continue until the end of time.

Love always,

Dad

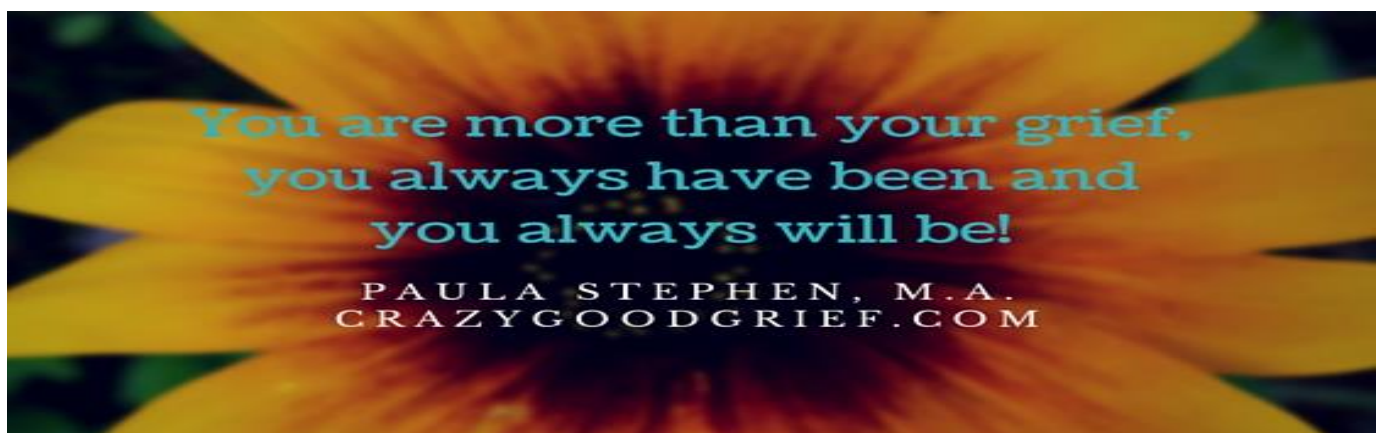
In loving memory of William Kyle Regan





THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT CAN BE SEEN ONLY THROUGH EYES THAT HAVE CRIED.

SAINT OSCAR ROMERO



This might be your first Mother's Day without your loved one, or you might be like me and have a few under your belt. Either way I suspect you are feeling that familiar lump in your throat and/or that knot in your stomach. I get it, I have it too.

This is my invitation for you...

I invite you to feel GRIEF fully, be with it, inspect GRIEF, but most of all - Don't shy away! Get to know GRIEF, make friends with it, invite it in, pull up an extra chair at the table, ask it questions, turn it inside out and upside down. Become so familiar with it that every time GRIEF comes to visit you know just the type of beverage to get out to host its presence.

And most of all always leave a seat open at the table because GRIEF does not let you know when it's coming. GRIEF arrives uninvited but expecting your full attention.

Then be prepared for GRIEF to surprise you and show up dressed up as something else. As you love it and make friends with it, GRIEF is going to get angry and lash out and it might try and pull you down deeper. But hold your ground with loving kindness and compassion towards yourself and let GRIEF know that you welcome it as a **part** of your whole – your whole life experience – but be very clear that it is **NOT** your entire life's experience. Not even close!

Explain to GRIEF that although its density and weight are unbearable at times, it is only a small piece of all the incredible memories and experiences that make up your life. Let it know that it is welcome at the table because it is very important to understanding the entire texture of your life. But also let GRIEF know that it is not allowed to come in and scare away all the other beautiful parts that make you an effervescent, shining being. Nor is GRIEF allowed to take joy, happiness, and zest for living hostage.

***You will not allow this behavior in your one and only beautiful, sacred and imperfect life.***

And if GRIEF will not listen then you have the right to ask it to leave. Let GRIEF know it's not welcome if it can't share space with all that you desire from life. It was never invited to a part of your life, but you welcome it as long as it can co-exist with the continuing of your pursuit of the life you deserve.

Perhaps you've let GRIEF run rough shot for much too long and it's time for you to take back your position as chairman of the board, leader of the band, queen of all you survey, president of your country, whatever your title, it's time you take back the power and re-establish balance. Perhaps the thought of launching a coup on GRIEF is overwhelming and you don't know where to start.

Let me remind you that you have an army of soldiers ready to support you in reclaiming balance in your life. Your army is full of all the parts of you that have been neglected, that don't feel like they are enough and possibly feel like that don't deserve any more than what GRIEF offers. **This is all wrong! You are more than your grief, you always have been and you always will be!**

You have an army of joyful memories, dreams that once came to life, dreams that are waiting to come to life (they are doing the happy dance right now at the thought of being born into your life!), bucket list wishes, and more that want you to bring GRIEF along for all these things, but don't want you to let it rule the kingdom anymore.

GRIEF will always be here. The goal is not to sentence to a remote island you can never access or keep it from showing up. The goal is to love GRIEF as deeply as you love all the other parts of you, allow it a voice – but to let GRIEF take you hostage or to savagely attack all the incredible, beautiful memories and parts of your life that are meant to shine bright, is a travesty.

My invitation to you this month of May is to begin to integrate your grief into the totality of who you are, honor the dreams that have come to life and grant freedom to those dreams just waiting for you to swing open the prison door.

Remember GRIEF is the form love takes when our beloved is not longer on earth – quit fighting it and go back to loving it.

Let "GRIEF" become 'grief'.

Paula Stephen, M.A.

**HARDSHIPS OFTEN PREPARE ORDINARY PEOPLE FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY DESTINY.**

C.S. LEWIS

**Here are my Top 4 Tips on how to handle Mother's Day after losing a child**

1. Grief is a dynamic process, what worked last year might not work this year and what works this year will change next. Leave yourself open to new ways of approaching where you are. Also, if you have a tough year, don't get attached to thinking, "that's how it going to be for the rest of my life!". Accept it as simply being a tough year and look to find ways to improve it.
2. There is no right or wrong way to do this. You are the only one who can determine what you need. You are as individual as the relationship you had with your loved one. Honor your uniqueness.
3. Know that it's not just 'the day' that makes it hard. Often, it's the days leading up to and following it that weigh on us. The anticipation and the letdown can be very exhausting. Set aside 10 minutes to check in with your self – How's your energy, your mood, your body, your emotional state?
4. Don't be afraid to feel like you're moving forward – We don't HAVE to stay stuck; we can choose happiness... **If for no other reason than you, of all people, deserve it!**

Paula Stephen, M.A

**Ways to cope – wisdom from other bereaved moms on Mother's Day.**

*In all my grief on the first Mothers' Day without my daughter, I forgot to call my own mother. Just before bed that night four years ago, I remembered that I still had a mother. A mother who was worried about me. A mother who had lost a granddaughter and was grieving herself. So I guess my tip for newly bereaved mothers would be to call your mom. If your mother is no longer alive, do something in her honor and be happy she didn't have to go through what you are going through. And then be good to yourself. Because that's what your kid would be doing on this day. Be kind to yourself FOR your son or daughter who died. ~Robin B*

*I have been walking this road for 23 years. Our son, Marc ,was 18 when complications from a 4 month battle with lymphoma ended his life. I would suggest to someone just starting, to make their child's favorite desert and then eating it in his or her honor. Memories are so very important now, as this is all we have to keep our children alive in our hearts. And memories of those living years must not be overshadowed by the actual time of illness and death. There are more good memories than that. It also feels good to be doing something in remembrance of them. I have been serving cherry cheese cake for 22 Mother's Days now and will continue the tradition. ~Linda*

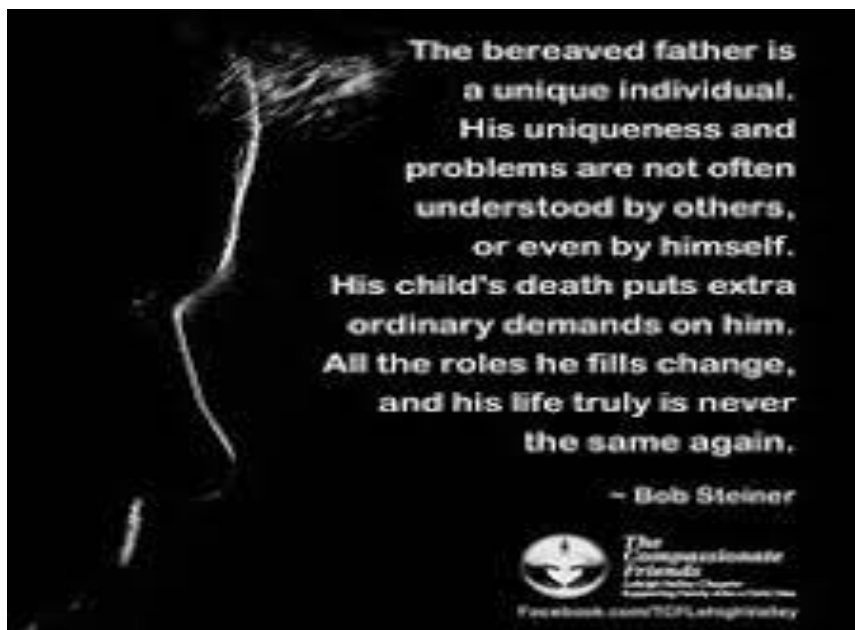
*Give yourself permission and grace to NOT celebrate if it doesn't feel right. Mother's Day for a bereaved mother is not the time to bow to the expectations of others. ~Amy*

*Make time for grief. If I don't do this and just keep pushing it off. The grief will seek me out and make itself known with no warning and usually at the most inopportune times. It is ok to be.... angry, happy, sad, frustrated, depressed, fatigued, passionate, etc. Grief takes so many different shapes and sizes. No two are the same. ~Jenna*

*This will be my second Mother's Day without my son and only child, Alex, who passed away March 22, 2014. I did find last year I had a lot of dread leading up to the day, but the day dawned bright and beautiful and I stayed in my yard and enjoyed nature and visits from several of his friends. I plan on spending the day at home planting flowers and being outside with my dogs if weather permits. I find this time of year very healing and flowers are uplifting. I will most likely have some visits from friends of his and my husband will cook me dinner when he gets home. it's hard to believe it is my second Mother's Day, but I know I am in a better place now. Stronger and much less fragile than last year.*

Robyn

*Becoming Bigger  
than our Pain  
Thru Love & Courage*



### Fathers

I came across a young man ~ just sitting in the park....  
He seemed to be so lost inside ~ his spirit seemed so dark.  
I felt such sorrow in his eyes and thought as I drew near ~  
that maybe he had something that he wanted me to hear.

I sat beside him on the bench and slowly took my time....  
I waited for the moment that I thought was 'his' and 'mine' ~  
And then I gently said "hello" ~ he managed a slight smile....  
I felt that he would start to talk so...I sat with him awhile.

I asked him how his day was; and I hoped that all was well ~  
Then I noticed in his tired eyes..small tears began to swell.

"Thank you for your greeting, but my thoughts are lost somehow;  
I lost my infant child last night and I can't cope right now.  
I feel I need to hide this pain; and try to stay so strong.  
A husband needs to be the one to help when things go wrong."

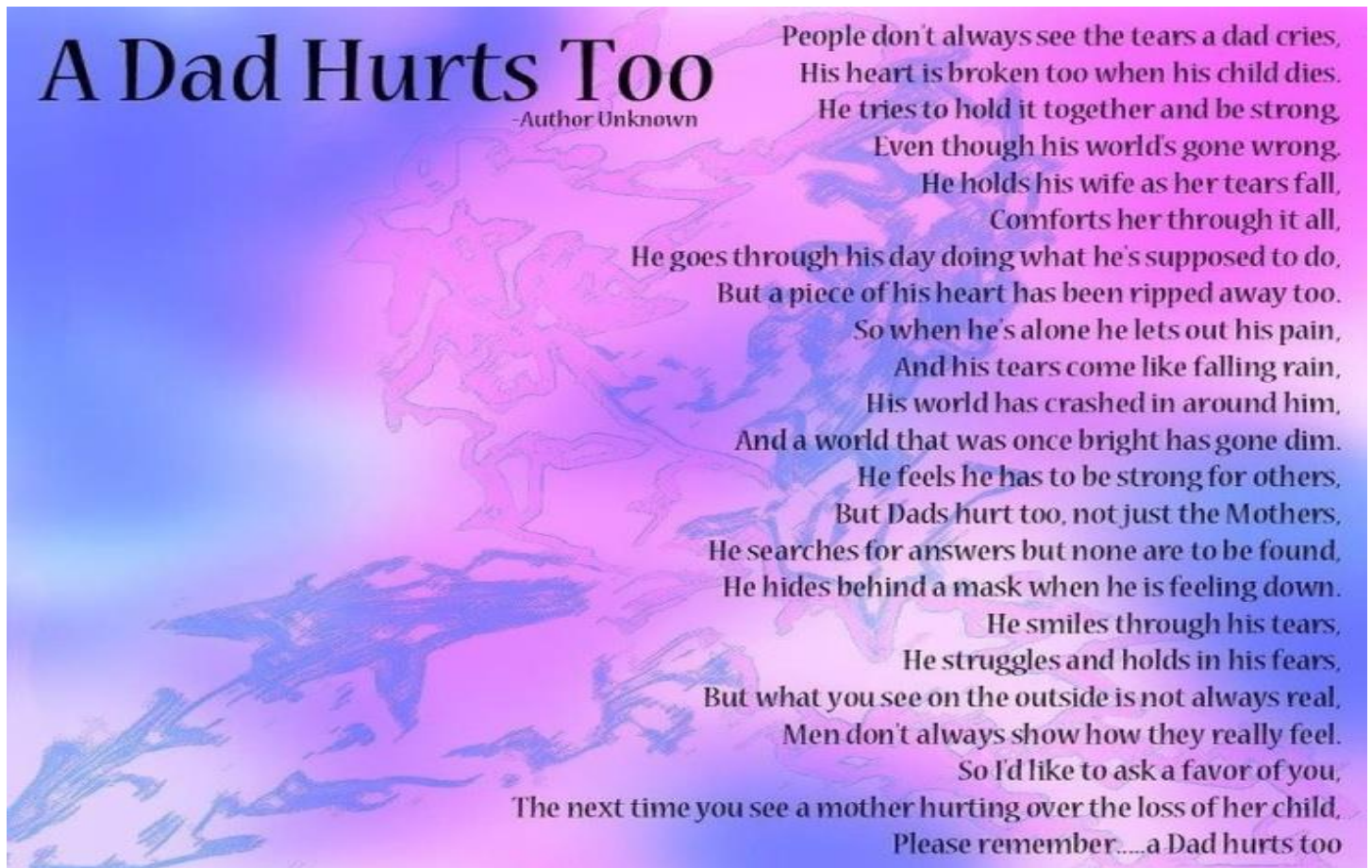
My heart just broke to watch him try so hard to understand;  
Just how he could be weak in grief and still remain a 'man'.  
I knew right then that God had planned for me to see him there ~  
I, too, had lost a baby ~ and I was meant to share.

I told him how my wife had grieved so freely and so strong....  
But, I felt that I couldn't cry; and weakness would be wrong.  
Young man, I said ~ with silent pain ~ I lost a child once, too;  
And I can reassure you that there's something you MUST do.

A father needs to grieve his child just as the mother can...  
The 'grief' is no less powerful ... because you are the man.  
Take all the time you need to use ~ and grieve just as you need ~  
Your heart is so as broken and emotions must be free'ed.

His took a slight glance upward; then he reached out for my hand ~  
He needed someone that day who could really understand.  
I'm proud that God had used me ~ and it helped me just the same...  
No loss is without sorrow.... but, the love is worth the pain.

Diane Ranker Riesen



I would say to those who mourn ...

Look upon each day that comes as a challenge, as a test of courage.

The pain will come in waves, some days worse than others, for no apparent reason.

Accept the pain.

Do not suppress it.

Never attempt to hide grief.

Daphne du Maurier





## Dealing with Father's Day after Losing a Child

June 13, 2014 04:55 by [Marti Wormuth, MA](#) *[About the Author]*



Many people have lost a parent, but very few people have had to deal with the pain of losing a child. It can be a really difficult thing to go through if you're a parent, and sometimes, the pain that fathers deal with during it is left behind. Both mothers and fathers have to work through the heartache, albeit differently, so it's important to take a look at that pain and see what we can do in order to help our way through it.

Father's Day is coming up, and this day can be incredibly painful and heartbreaking for fathers who have lost a child in some way, shape or form. Whether you've dealt with losing a baby to a miscarriage or stillbirth, or you're working through the loss of a teenager in an accident, or an adult child to some sort of disease, days like Father's Day can make it hurt that much more. In this article, we're going to explore a movie that was put out about the pain of losing a child and we're going to talk about how you can work through your grief on Father's Day.

So, this brings us to the main question - how does a father who has lost a child cope with Father's Day? What should be done in order to get through this painful, yet important day in your life? Here are some things that can help you work through the pain in a healthy, compassionate, and helpful manner.

**Remember, it is still your day.** Even if you don't have any other children, *you are still a father*. Don't forget that. Don't think that you're any less of a dad because you lost your child - even though you may have just been a father for a few brief moments, you are still a father and it is still your day. Father's Day is your day and you deserve to be recognized for it. You are a wonderful man who has taken time out of your life to love someone more fully than you have ever loved anyone, except perhaps your spouse. That alone is worth being recognized, and if you can bring yourself to do it, celebrate if you can. You are still wonderful, and you are still loved, and that's important to remember.

**Make time for your partner or spouse as well.** Even if they are not male, Father's Day can bring heartbreaking feelings to your spouse as well, like Mother's Day may have done for you. Spend some alone time with them, work through some of your feelings, just hold each other or do something quiet together. It's good for you to walk together through these difficult days, and it's important for you to remember each other when the going gets tough. Both of you are hurting, but you will both need the strength of the other to continue to move forward and work through your feelings. Love can help many things and help to strengthen you through many types of pain - don't take it for granted.

**Be patient and gentle with yourself - it's okay to hurt.** If you cry on Father's Day, it's okay. Actually, it's healthy. Let yourself cry. Allow yourself to feel, allow yourself to remember. It's not a bad thing, and it's a part of the whole healing process. Grief is not something that we go through once and then forget about it; grieving is something that we may have to go through again and again and again in different ways. That's not to say that we're stuck in a cycle of grief forever, but that moments of grief may come up at times, even years after your child has passed away. So be patient with yourself. Don't do any of this "I have to be a man" business. Allow yourself to cry and feel the pain that you feel - it's normal, it's healthy, and it can help you to become stronger in the end.

**If you have other children, focus on them too.** Father's Day and Mother's Day is as much for the kids as it is for the parent that is being celebrated. If you have other children, then give them some extra love today. They may be thinking about the loss as well, because Father's Day and Mother's Day have a way of bringing out that grief for everyone that is involved. Do something fun with them, like going to the movies or playing mini-golf. Let them love on you today too, because children are incredibly perceptive, even if they are older children. They will know that something is going on with you today, and they will do everything that they can to help you, even if it's something as simple as making a cute little card or taking you out to dinner. They can really help you to get through your day, too, because your children are precious and, even though they may remind you of the child you have lost, their support will help you remember why you're so special as a dad. Pass the love around!

**Recognize those in your life that you see as fathers.** Is your father (or your father in law) still living? Chances are, they are struggling with today too - obviously, it doesn't have the same impact that it has on your immediate family, but they still feel the pain that you are going through. Obviously, you want to make sure that you put some focus on them today but let them walk with you too. They may have some words of wisdom that can help you out, or they can just be fun to be around for the day. On top of that, if you have father figures (from your place of worship, work, or other associations), make sure you give them a shout out today as well - they're just as much dads as you are, even if there's no biological connection. The reason I say this is because it really helps you to work through your pain if you're loving on other people.

**Talk about it.** Last but not least, don't avoid it. Please, don't avoid the topic all together. Don't forget about Father's Day and act like it doesn't exist at all. If you can and want to, go and put flowers on your child's grave, or just take a visit there. It may hurt, but the more that you talk about it and talk through it, the better it will be for everyone involved and it will help make the next time this comes around that much easier to work through in a healthy way.

**Some Last Thoughts** If you are a father that is dealing with the pain of losing a child on Father's Day, we stand with you on this day. I know that it can be hard to lose someone that is so dear to you, and it may be hard to remember that they're gone on such a day. But Father's Day is a day for you as well, and we sincerely hope that you are able to work through your grief. If it's gotten to be too much to bear, please go seek out help from a mental health professional. We've got plenty of resources here and we can make sure that you get someone who can help you walk through the pain. *You are not alone.*

And if you know a father that has lost a child, make sure that you stand beside them on this day. It can be really hard to know what to do, but *just be there*. It's a very difficult day for a number of people, and the love and support of friends and family can play a crucial role in helping these grieving fathers to get through what may be the most difficult day of the year. You don't have to do anything out of the ordinary - just be there for them and show that you support them in a healthy manner. Let them know that you're there and let them know that you think they're pretty awesome.

**I hope that you have a wonderful Father's Day, no matter what your situation may be.**



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### Sorrow

In this sad world of ours, sorrow comes to all,  
and it often comes with bitter agony.  
Perfect relief is not possible,  
except with time.  
You cannot now believe that you will ever feel better.  
But this is not true.  
You are sure to be happy again.  
Knowing this,  
truly believing it,  
will make you less miserable now.  
I have had enough experience to make this statement.

**Abraham Lincoln**

Our revered, martyred 16<sup>th</sup> President of the country, commonly known as Honest Abe, knew the unspeakable sorrow of losing not one, but two of his children.

In 1851 Honest Abe endured the agony of burying Edward Baker Lincoln who is believed to have succumbed to Tuberculosis at the tender age of three.

William Wallace Lincoln referred to in many historical accounts as, “The favorite of both Mary Todd and Abraham Lincoln” died due to typhoid fever at the age of 13. After Abraham Lincoln’s assassination in April of 1865, “Willie” was exhumed to be buried next to his father in Springfield, Illinois.

The above-quoted poem is among many of his beautiful poems and verses which reveal his deep-seated sorrow and simultaneous hope and faith in a promising tomorrow.

(The editors)



### We Don’t Recover From Grief, and that’s Okay

I need to tell you that, in the face of significant loss, we don’t “recover” from grief.

Yes, I’m using the royal “we” because you and I are all a part of this club.

I also need to tell you that that *not* recovering from grief doesn’t doom you to a life of despair. Let me reassure you, there are millions of people out there, right now, living normal and purposeful lives while also experiencing ongoing or, dare I say, unresolved grief.

All the things you’ve heard about getting over grief, going back to normal, and moving on – they are misrepresentations of what it means to love someone who has died. I’m sorry, I know us human-people appreciate things like closure and resolution, but this isn’t how grief goes.

This isn’t to say that “recovery” doesn’t have a place in grief – it’s simply ‘what’ we’re recovering from that needs to be redefined. To “recover” means to return to a normal state of health, mind, or strength, and as many would attest, when someone very significant dies, we never return to a pre-loss “normal”. The loss, the person who died, our grief – they all get integrated into our lives and they profoundly change how we live and experience the world.

What will, hopefully, return to a general baseline is the level of intense emotion, stress, and distress that a person experiences in the weeks and months following their loss. So perhaps we recover from the intense distress of grief, but we don’t recover from the grief itself.

Now you could say that I’m getting caught up in semantics, but sometimes semantics matter. Especially, when trying to describe an experience that, for so many, is unfamiliar and frightening. Grief is one of those experiences you can never fully understand until you experience it and, until that time, all a person has to go on is what they’ve observed and what they’ve been told.

The words we use to label and describe grief matter, and, in many ways, these words have been getting us into trouble for decades. In the context of grief, words like denial, detachment, unresolved, recovery, and acceptance (to name a few) could be interpreted many different ways and some of these interpretations offer false impressions and false promises.

Interestingly, when many of these words were first used by grief theorists starting in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, their intent was to help *describe* grief. I have no doubt that in the contexts in which they were working, these words and their operational definitions were useful and effective. It when these descriptions reach our broader society without explanation or nuance, or when they are misapplied by those who position themselves as experts – that they go terribly awry.

So, going back to the beginning, we don't recover from grief after the loss of someone significant. Grief is born when someone significant dies – and as long as that person remains significant – grief will remain.

normal, not dysfunctional. It's also not dysfunctional to experience unpleasant grief-related thoughts and emotions from time-to-time sometimes even years later. Humans are meant to experience both sides of the emotional spectrum – not just the warm and fuzzy half. As grieving people, this is especially true. Where there are things like love, appreciation, and fond memory, there will also be sadness, yearning, and pain. And though these experiences seem in opposition to one another, [we can experience them all at the same time.](#)

Sure, people may push you to stop feeling the pain, but this is misguided. If the pain exists, it makes sense, because there will never come a day when you won't wish for one more moment, one more conversation, one last hello, or one last goodbye. You learn to live with these wishes, and you learn to accept that they won't come true – not here on Earth – but you don't stop wishing for them.

And let me reassure you, experiencing pain doesn't negate the potential for healing. With [constructive coping](#) and maybe a little support, the intensity of your distress will lessen and your healing will evolve over time. Though there will be many ups and downs, you should eventually reach a place where you're having just as many good days as bad...and then perhaps more good days than bad...until one day you may find that your bad grief days are few and far between.

But the grief, it's always there, like an old injury that aches when it rains. And though this prospect may be scary in the early days of grief, I think in time you'll find that you wouldn't have it any other way. Grief is an [expression of love](#) – these things grow from the same seed. Grief becomes a part of how we love a person despite their physical absence; it helps connect us to memories of the past; it bonds us with others through our shared humanity, and it helps provide perspective on our immense capacity for finding strength and wisdom in the most difficult of times.

Eleanor Haley & Litsa Williams

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**The lord sends us those we need in the end.**

A grieving mother with PTSD fell into a hole and couldn't get out. When a family member walked by the grieving mother called out for help, but the family member yelled back, "Suck it up, dig deep and drive on," then threw her a shovel. The grieving mother did as she was told and dug that hole deeper.

A friend went by and the grieving mother called out for help again. The friend told her "use the tools your family has given you", then threw her a bucket. The grieving mother used the tools and she dug the hole deeper still and filled the bucket.

A psychiatrist walked by. The grieving mother called, "Help! I can't get out!" so the psychiatrist gave her some drugs and said, "Take this. It will relieve the pain and you will forget about the hole." The grieving mother said "thanks" and followed his advice, but when the pills ran out, she was still in the hole.

A well-known psychologist rode by and heard the grieving mothers' cries for help. He stopped and asked, "How did you get there? Were you born there? Did your parents put you there? Tell me about yourself, it will alleviate your sense of loneliness." So the grieving mother talked with him for an hour, then the psychologist had to leave, but he said he'd be back next week. The grieving mother thanked him, but she was still in the hole.

Another Grieving Parent , just like her, happened to be passing by. The grieving mother with PTSD cried out, "Hey, help me. I'm stuck in this hole!" and right away the other Grieving parent jumped down in there with her. The grieving mother with PTSD started to panic and said, "What are you doing? Now we're both stuck down here!" But the other Grieving parent just smiled and replied, "It's okay, calm down, my fellow angel parent. I've been here before..... I know how to get out."

No matter what you're going through, you are never alone.

But don't be too proud to SHOUT OUT!, 'HELP I'm stuck in this hole .....

We all get stuck in a hole from time to time but all it takes is to ask your fellow grieving parents for help and we will be there even if we have to jump in that hole with you. 😊

Written by another grieving mother  
Submitted by Denise Crouse

Pain is often beyond words, but never beyond love.  
Sometimes you have to just stop talking & start hugging!

Sandy Brosam 1989~

♥ ♥ ♥ ðïë ♥ ♥ ♥



For some moments in life there are no words.

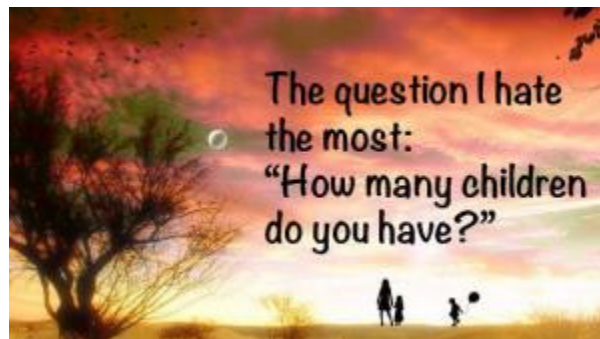


We adapt, we accept, but we never get over it!

I am often asked, when will the pain go away, my honest answer is never.

It changes intensity, like the waves in the ocean, as we all struggle to get to Grief Beach! Some days there are just no words to respond to life, I found so many quotes and poems on the web, here are some of my favorites. I did a mixture of inspirational and frustrated, as in all things there is a balance, some days are just ugly. Some days we have faith and move forward. A few of these talk about moving on, I prefer to say moving forward, as I have never “moved on” from my grief, I move forward on a daily basis, but they are still good images to share when talking is not an option.

Sandy Brosman



### Grief Helps Others

Grief knits two hearts in closer bonds than happiness ever can;  
and common sufferings are far stronger links than common joys.

Alphonse de Lamartine

### 10 Years Without Our Baby

4-5-96 to 4-5-06

It seems like a long time  
It seems like yesterday  
Nothing has changed  
Everything has changed  
The memories are painful  
The memories are sweet  
We see your smile and sparkling eyes  
We can't remember your sweet voice or touch  
The road had been rough  
The road has been long  
The road has had many twists and turns  
The hills are steep  
The valleys deep  
The detours were many  
We haven't moved at all  
Yet we are far along  
The pain of missing you is terrible  
The pain of missing you is finally bearable  
It is our burden which we embrace  
Sometimes we can't stop thinking about you  
Sometimes we can't start  
We cry when we think of you  
We smile when we think of you  
Sometimes it makes us crazy  
Sometimes it makes us very crazy  
We missed you then  
We miss you now  
We'll miss you always  
We loved you then  
We love you now  
We'll love you always  
It's been a long journey  
but we can now think of you  
and breath  
and smile  
You were a gift  
You still are  
XOXOXO

**Mom & Dad**

— Written by Paul & Claudia Balasic  
April 2006

In memory of Bethany Anne Balasic  
February 13, 1981 – April 5, 1996  
BPUSA/Anne Arundel County Chapter  
Annapolis,

**Daddy misses his little girl**





Basketball games in the fall

Field hockey & LAX are far away  
They bring no joy to me today



Seeing you run was such a joy  
Watching you grow my pride did show

But now you are gone, at least from this world  
But you will always be a part of my soul

My baby, my baby, my little girl  
Cute as a button  
Sharp as a tack  
Pretty as a picture  
Now gone, what a shock!

Written by Paul Balasic  
In memory of Bethany Anne Balasic  
February 13, 1981 – April 5, 1996



*I would give back all my tomorrows for a yesterday with you!*



## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

### “Introductory Facilitator, Co-facilitator, Greeter Training”

An introductory facilitator, co-facilitator, greeter training program will be offered during our **JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup>** monthly gathering. We want to introduce volunteers, who might be interested, to the role of sharing group facilitator, co-facilitator, or greeter. We will review the basics and provide information to improve or hone skills you may already possess to facilitate, co-facilitate or greet the newly bereaved. We will highlight what skills and information are most important to develop - **“the forest”**, and briefly address key detailed techniques, and aspects of providing support to members - **“the trees”**. For your convenience we plan to offer this first short session simultaneously with our **Thursday JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup>** monthly gathering.

Our training program will focus on the **“top of the road”** information to help grow your facilitation skills to help lighten the grief journey for the bereaved participating in our group.

If you are interest in training as a facilitator, co-facilitator or greeter, please reply to Noel Castiglia <[ncastiglia@hotmail.com](mailto:ncastiglia@hotmail.com)> or Sandi Burash <[burash@verizon.net](mailto:burash@verizon.net)> so that we may better allocate our training resources and integrate this training opportunity into our **JUNE** meeting schedule.



### *CREDO*

#### **OF THE ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA**

**We are not alone.**

**We are the parents whose children have died.**

**We are the grandparents who have buried grandchildren.**

**We are the siblings whose brothers and sisters no longer walk with us through life.**

**We are the aunts and uncles whose cherished nieces and nephews are gone.**

**We are here to support and care for each other.**

**We are united by the love we share for our children.**

**We have learned that children die at any age and from many causes.**

**Just as our children died at all ages, we too are all ages.**

**We share our pain, our lost dreams and our hopes for the future.**

**We are a diverse family.**

**We realize death does not discriminate against race, creed, color, income or social standing**

**We are at many stages of recovery, and sometimes fluctuate among them.**

**Some of us have a deep religious faith, some of us have lost our faith, while some of us are still adrift.**

**The emotions we share are anger, guilt and a deep abiding sadness.**

**But regardless of the emotions we bring to our meetings,**

**it is the sharing of grief and love for our children that**

**helps us to**

**be better today than we were yesterday.**

**We reach for that inner peace as we touch each other's**

**lives and place our hand print on each other's hearts.**

**Our hope for today is to survive the day;**

**Our dream for tomorrow is gentle memories and perhaps to smile.**

***We are not alone***

***We walk together with hope in our hearts***



## YOU'LL NEVER GET OVER IT

In working with hundreds of grieving families over the years, I've witnessed how hope survives even the cruelest losses. Parents who have lost a child hope to live a life their child would be proud of; they hope to find ways to honor their child's memory or prevent another family from enduring such a loss. They hope to find a way back to normal, or to at least establish a new "normal."

But I've also heard people hope for the day they would "get over it." Sometimes uttered by people who have closed themselves off to their own feelings, this statement is also repeated by people who are devastated. The former just want to erase this period of time and go back to their neutral state of being, never too ruffled or excited; the latter feel they're carrying an extraordinary burden and can't go another mile with it, so please, please let them set it down.

There's nothing wrong with either impulse. Grief is a tidal wave that scoops you under and throws you back out, and wanting an escape from its roller coaster is common — even sane, some might say. When the actual circumstances of your life have changed, how much is it to ask to have one thing — your mental state — stay the same? Is it too much to ask?

The truth: You'll never get over it. Your grief will mutate and change; it will feel like it's dissipating and then return with a force. Some days will feel manageable, almost light; other days will feel heavy. Something will trigger a memory; something else will bring forth a smile. You'll be happy; you'll be sad. Your grief won't stay the same, which may occasionally make you feel like you *are* getting over it, but you're not. You're processing. "Getting over it" isn't what you really want, anyway. "Getting over it" is tantamount to forgetting. It's like overlooking a really important chapter of a good book. What happened before that part of the book and what happened after are miles apart, and you have to get familiar with that chapter to understand the rest.

Leonard Cohen captured this perfectly in his song "[Anthem](#)":  
"Ring the bells that still can ring

Forget your perfect offering

There is a crack, a crack in everything

That's how the light gets in."

That chapter — that big crack — is painful. It's also the path to letting the light shine in. Not fully processing grief can result in a much bigger crack over time, the kind that splits the frame. And grieving is a way of letting the earlier chapters live on, letting them build the kind of significance they deserve and don't often get in day-to-day life. Between breakfast and work and practices and bedtime, we don't pause to see *those* are the moments we'll always remember. *Not* "getting over it" allows us to bask in those memories and let the good parts stand alongside the bad.

That's the key: Getting over it gets rid of the bad, but it also eliminates the good. In "[The Gifts of Imperfection](#)," Brené Brown says, "We cannot selectively numb emotions. When we numb the painful emotions, we also numb the positive emotions." Getting over it makes the pain go away, but it also takes away the good — and isn't that what we want back? Why would we voluntarily give it up? It's like getting back at grief, only to hurt ourselves.

Wanting to “get over it” is a normal, very human reaction. Trying to make it happen, however, is unrealistic. If we get rid of both the bad and the good, we give up hope — and hope is the thing that must survive. Hope can survive the cruelest losses, but it needs us to fan the flame.

- By Dr. Gloria Horsley



## Our Children Remembered

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

Jonathan David Aorilio  
Son of Tracie Aorilio  
May 18, 1996 - August 28, 2018

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

Anthony Raymond Cesario  
Son of Lisa Cesario  
March 25, 1989 - May 1, 2017

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

Robert "Bo" William DePaola  
Son of Jill and John DePaola  
March 22, 1995 - May 23, 2015

Michelle Marie Dyke  
Daughter of Marie Dyke

## May 2019 Web OCR

May 19, 1975 - November 10, 1992

Jeffrey Arthur Elder, Jr.  
Son of Kymn and Brendan Burns McFetridge  
May 17, 1986 - March 22, 2018

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

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

Aaron Gene Marshall  
Son of Alycia Marshall  
May 26, 1996 - April 11, 2016

Jerry Mason Jr.  
Son of Mary and Jerry Mason

May 6, 1968 - March 23, 2005

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

Katherine Sarah Morris  
Daughter of Marguerite Morris  
March 11, 1990 - May 6, 2012

Shane Aaron Morris II  
Son of Michelle and Shane Morris  
June 16, 1992 - May 10, 2015

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

Christopher Gordon Pessano  
Son of Claire and Roger Cole  
December 18, 1971 - May 26, 2017

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

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

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

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

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

Cathryn Christiana Tsu  
Daughter of Horace and Cynthia Tsu  
May 27, 1997 - January 18, 2017

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



## June 2019 Web OCR List:

James William Aikin  
Grandson of Elizabeth and Barry Aikin  
June 5, 1982 - March 18, 2008

Stokely Malcolm Andrews  
Son of Mari and Malcolm Andrews  
June 23, 2015 - June 13, 2017

William P. Anthony Jr.  
Son of Bill and Linda Anthony  
June 1, 1965 - January 2, 1999

Oscar William Atha-Nicholls  
Son of Richard and Amy Atha-Nicholls  
June 2, 2018 - June 2, 2018

Johnny Sivert Brungot  
Son of Christine and George Brungot  
June 28, 1990 - June 29, 2011

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

Olivia Rachel Constants  
Daughter of Stephen and Dorothy Constants  
July 28, 1996 - June 23, 2011

Ryan Corr  
Son of Pam Corr  
March 2, 2003 - June 4, 2011

Jack Turner Dumont  
Son of Jill and Dave Dumont  
June 26, 2003 - June 26, 2003

Jonathan David Elkins  
Son of Viki Foster  
June 16, 1987 - June 5, 2017

Alice Engleman  
Daughter of Elizabeth Engleman  
November 20, 1997 - June 21, 2011

Joseph A. Esterling Jr.  
Son of Joe and Michelle Esterling  
June 7, 1967 - April 27, 1990

Thomas James Geoghegan  
Son of Maureen Geoghegan  
November 13, 1969 - June 30, 2013

Carolyn A Griffin  
Daughter of Rick and Jan Griffin  
February 15, 1983 - June 1, 2011

Scott Andrew Katsikas  
Son of Linda Snead  
June 9, 1980 - August 13, 2004

Bryan Adam Krouse  
Son of James and Judy Krouse  
March 11, 1965 - June 29, 2007

James Arthur Leese  
Son of Judith and John Leese  
July 27, 1960 - June 25, 2013

Deana Jean Marie Lenz  
Daughter of Patricia and James Lenz  
June 5, 2009 - June 6, 2009

Nicholas Paul Liberatore  
Son of Larry and Pat Liberatore  
September 27, 1980 - June 9, 1997

Brian Richard Melcher  
Son of Norma and Donald Melcher  
Brother of Cheryl Lewis  
August 30, 1960 - June 14, 2002

Cody Thomas Moczulski  
Son of Robin Moczulski  
September 19, 1993 - June 13, 2010

Shane Aaron Morris II  
Son of Michelle and Shane Morris  
June 16, 1992 - May 10, 2015

Shannon Marie Nuth  
Daughter of Patty and Joe Nuth  
Sister of Bridget Rice  
June 25, 1991 - June 20, 2016

Kevin Alan O'Brien  
Son of Lorrie and Keith O'Brien  
December 24, 1986 - June 29, 2012

Sarah Elizabeth Patterson  
Daughter of Cindy Patterson  
June 28, 1987 - September 19, 2006

Samantha Nicole Prouty  
Daughter of Carmen Skarlupka  
June 28, 1991 - April 14, 2018

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

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

Kelsey R Silva  
Daughter of Kristen Silva  
Daughter of Francisco Martins Silva  
October 28, 1991 - June 16, 2011

Patrick F. Smith  
Son of Fran Smith  
February 20, 1978 - June 23, 2000

Christopher John Smith  
Son of Debi Wilson-Smith  
March 27, 1981 - June 30, 2000

Daniel John Sohovich II  
Son of Vera Sohovich  
January 26, 1988 - June 9, 2011

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

Cindy Sue Walker  
Daughter of Edward and Phyllis Frazier-James  
June 22, 1959 - June 21, 2010

Albert Wallace Whitby, Jr  
Brother of Susan Lovett  
April 25, 1951 - June 2, 1981



## **CHAPTER NEWS**

**CHAPTER NEWS SUBMISSION:** Please consider submitting something to be printed in this column to: [bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com](mailto:bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com), or mail to PO Box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401.

**VOLUNTEERS REQUESTED:** Volunteering with our Chapter -- Giving of yourself is always healing and being instrumental in providing resources to other Bereaved Parents can only be a positive step in your journey as you extend a helping hand to so many others. If you feel you would like to do something, but don't know what you can possibly do, please talk to me. We can work together to find an opportunity that works for you. Contact me if you have questions or will volunteer in any capacity. Thank you. **Bob Burash, 410-551-5774, [bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com](mailto:bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com)**

**CHAPTER MEETING SUMMARY:** 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. (Doors open at 7:00) 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. 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 are 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.

**CHAPTER GATHERING PROGRAM TOPICS:** Please let us know if you have a request for a meeting topic and/or a suggestion of a speaker.

### **Monthly Gatherings:**

**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 2-3 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.

**Core Group Meetings:**

**Tuesday, May 21, 2019**

**Tuesday, August 8, 2019**

**Tuesday, November 14, 2019**

**OUR WEBSITE:** <http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org/HTML/Home.htm>

Visit our website for information about our Chapter, Our Children, the Newsletter, upcoming events, and many other resources.

**FACEBOOK:** Join our private, members only, Chapter forum. In Facebook, search for “Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA”. Our moderator will respond to requests to be included as a friend.

**PRIVACY POLICY:** Our Chapter is cognizant of privacy concerns related to our children. We ask that each family provide written consent to include your child’s name, photo, birth date and death date in our newsletter, on our website and other published listings of Our Children, such as for the Service of Remembrance. If you don’t see your child’s name included in our publications, and would like them to be included, please contact me. **Bob Burash, 410-551-5774, [bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com](mailto:bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com)**, use subject: Privacy

**ANGEL GOWN PROJECT:** We are able to continue our Angel Gown Project thanks to the volunteers who are sewing the gowns and distributing them to the hospitals. We also continue to have wedding gowns donated. If you know of anyone who would like to contribute to this very healing, worthwhile project, either through sewing or donating gowns or trims or ribbon, please let us know.

**PHONE NUMBERS TO CALL IF YOU NEED TO TALK IN BETWEEN MEETINGS.**

Barbara Bessling (410) 761-9017    Mary Redmiles (301) 704-8086    Janet Tyler (410)960-8759

**CHAPTER VOLUNTEER CONTACTS:**

**Chapter leader:** Bob Burash, 410-551-5774, [bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com](mailto:bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Fran Palmer

**Refreshments:** Sandi Burash, 410-551-5774

**Librarian:** Bob and Sandi Burash

**Programs/Sponsorships:** Mary Redmiles 301-704-8086 [mary.redmiles@gmail.com](mailto:mary.redmiles@gmail.com)

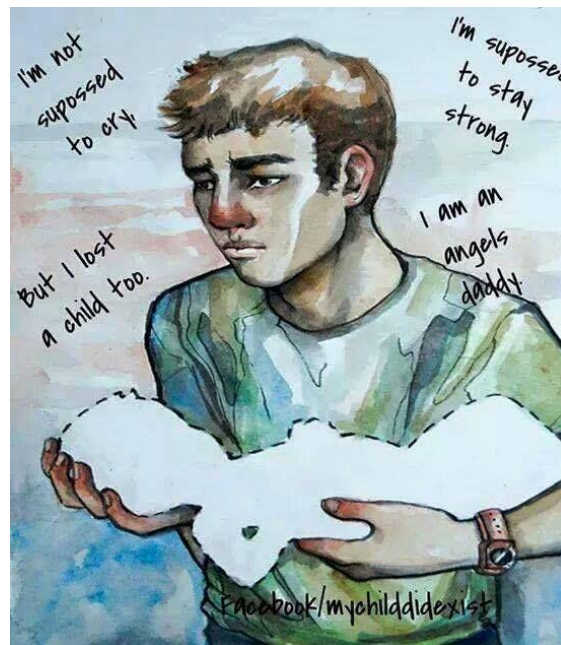
**Newsletter:** Joe and Irene Belcher [belcherirene@gmail.com](mailto:belcherirene@gmail.com)

**NEWSLETTER ARTICLES:** If you are submitting an article, letter or poem for inclusion in the newsletter, please provide this information no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication.

**SPONSORSHIP of newsletter and website:** You can honor your child's memory by sponsoring our newsletter and/or website. The donation for sponsoring the newsletter is \$75.00 and the website is \$25.00. Either sign up at a meeting or call Mary Redmiles, Sponsorship Coordinator.

For the newsletter, submit a photograph and a 2 or 3 line memorial no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication. Forward this to Irene Belcher.

For the website, a sponsor's link will be put on the home page that will open your child's photo from the Our Children section of the website, if you have given permission to include a photo on our website. If no photo is available, your child's name will still be included on the website home page.



## SAVE THE DATE

It's never too early to start making plans to attend the 2019 National Gathering Conference. We hope you will join us for an uplifting and inspiring weekend.

Our Annual Gathering Conference provides an opportunity to hear some of the best speakers and workshop presenters in the nation who are experts on many topics related to grief and loss. They will inspire you with their messages of HOPE. They will offer you the tools you need to continue to HEAL as you transition from mourning to living again after the loss of your child, sibling or grandchild.

The camaraderie and connections created, as you get to know parents and siblings from across the United States who have experienced similar losses, will touch you in a profound way. You will benefit from sharing stories, tears, hugs, laughter and more as you bond during workshop sessions, shared meals, remembrance ceremonies and creative activities. Let the "Spirit of Love" fill your heart in 2019.

# NATIONAL GATHERING 2019



## Bereaved Parents USA

August 2-4 ♥ St. Louis, Missouri

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Note to Chapter Leaders: Please share *Chapter Chat* with your chapter members.



Anne Arundel County Chapter BPUSA  
P.O . Box 6280  
Annapolis, MD 21401