



## Bereaved Parents of the USA

### Anne Arundel County Chapter

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You never know how strong you are until being strong is your only choice.

-- Bob Marley



### ***Tria Marie Castiglia***

***July 6, 1963 - October 14, 1984***

We miss you so much and always will until we are reunited with you in God's kingdom.

We love you.

Dad, Mom & Carla

### ***David William Tomaszewski***

***September 4, 1974 – February 6, 2001***

Love you and miss you dearly, Mom, Dad, Beth, Lara and Josh



### ***Descriptions and Attributes***

By Rick Tomaszewski, Dave's Dad

Our son Dave's 46<sup>th</sup> birthday is September 4, 2020. February 6, 2021 marks 20 years of desperately missing a loving son. The comments describing Dave are like so many others made by family and friends: loving father, brother and son. He was kind, thoughtful, creative, talented, caring, and a true friend. In between those thoughts there is an occasional "but he was really a handful at times."

As his Dad, after nearly 20 years, I have gained comfort from the kind descriptions, and tended to put the "handful" comment way in the back of my mind. That has helped me not only cope much better with our loss, but to also realize how important seeing those good attributes in others is uplifting. I see those qualities especially in my wife, Carol, and daughters Beth and Lara.

Also, we all may be a "handful" at times, but, it's really not worth dwelling on.

# ZOOM Virtual Meeting on September 3

## CHAPTER GATHERINGS and MEETINGS

### COVID-19 Still leaves us ZOOMing for our monthly Gatherings.

We are all looking forward to the time when we can come together and see each other face-to-face and give and receive those wonderful hugs. But for now, we continue our ZOOM virtual meetings, and stay home, and stay safe.

Using ZOOM is easier than you may think. You can use your smart phone, iPad, or PC. You will receive an email with the link to the meeting, and when it's time for the meeting just click on the link. You will be in a "waiting room" and the host will let you "in". Our meetings are private so only those who receive the email with the link can participate.

Here's a link for a tutorial on how to join a meeting:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-How-Do-I-Join-A-Meeting->

We have successfully had 25-35 people in our virtual gathering and then break out into smaller groups for sharing. The virtual gathering will have the same feel as our normal gatherings. We will have an opening, and possibly a guest speaker or video program. We will say our children's names and read the credo. After the general opening, we will hold smaller sharing groups. In September, following the presentation we will break into our sharing groups - 1st timers, newly bereaved, and a sibling group. Parents, invite and encourage your children to join us in September and join our sibling sharing group. Siblings often neglect their grief and healing needs as they help us work through our grief. Their needs are different from ours. This is a chance for them to share their feelings with other siblings.

For more information, please contact our ZOOM host, Bob Burash, 410-551-5774, [bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com](mailto:bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com)

### **September 3 virtual meeting: Watch for an email with details for joining with ZOOM.**

Anne Moss Rogers, whose son completed suicide, will be our guest speaker. Her presentation will be – COPING STRATEGIES FOR GRIEF & LOSS . She will provide strategies on managing the pain of losing a child to suicide; coping strategies to help manage the pain of losing a child; examples of how others have moved through grief in a healthy and productive way; and ideas on how to re-frame and answer insensitive comments from others.

### **National Suicide Prevention Hotline [1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255)**

**October 1 virtual meeting:** Susan Coale, LCSW-C, Director of Chesapeake Life Center, will present a talk on sibling loss. We welcome siblings to join us for this meeting. Susan always provides insight into many aspects of grief.

*"My Sibling has Died: Now Who Am I? Addressing the grief of our surviving children"*

It makes sense that the death of a brother or sister at any age would profoundly change the lives of surviving siblings. Yet as the parent whose child has died, it can be overwhelming to contemplate both our own grief and that of our surviving children. Even the sibling may feel that their job is support their parents, putting their own grief on hold until they feel their parents are stable and ok. While parents and siblings are grieving for the same individual, they are two very different relationships and it is likely that they will grieve in very different ways. Both grieving parents and siblings are invited as we address some of the unique aspects of sibling grief, with the goals of learning more about how to support our children of any age, and for the siblings who attend to have their grief process normalized and affirmed.

### **Scheduled Chapter Meetings: November 5, and December 3**

**OTHER IMPORTANT DATES:**

**October 3 9:00 AM: The Annual Memory Walk** will be a **virtual walk** this year. We will have an opening and readings, time to share a butterfly decorated in memory of your child, a photo show of our children, and a closing. You will receive an invitation email with more information, the butterfly template, and registration details. The forms are also included on page 20 and 21. Although we will miss being at Quiet Waters Park, this may be an opportunity for more of you to participate from home. Go outside with your computer or phone and join us. We'll all enjoy seeing the nature that you have at your home.

**December 6: Our Annual Service of Remembrance** will also be a **virtual gathering**. We plan to keep the format very similar to past services, with music, readings, candle lighting, and a photo show. We are in the planning stage and welcome any suggestions and volunteers. The theme for the Service is "Keep HOPE Alive." Please volunteer to be part of the planning and event.

You have an opportunity to take an active part in both of these events. We need people to do readings - some are standards we have done over the years, and some can be a poem or reading of your choice. More information about the events will be shared as plans are completed. If you are interested in doing a reading, or helping in any way, please contact [Bob Burash, 410-551-5774, bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com](mailto:Bob.Burash@bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com)

**CHAPTER GATHERING SUMMARY:** ZOOM Virtual Gatherings are being scheduled. These virtual gatherings will continue as long as necessary to adhere to state guidelines and Calvary United Methodist Church policy.

We will continue to have a general meeting, followed by sharing groups as desired for first-time attendees, and the newly and non-newly bereaved. ZOOM meeting access opens at 7:00 to allow for connection time and greeting time. The meeting will start shortly after. Gatherings are open to anyone grieving the death of a child. 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.

**WHAT TO EXPECT AT OUR CHAPTER GATHERINGS:** 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.

**We expect our virtual meetings to basically follow the same format.**

**CORE GROUP MEETINGS: WHAT IS THE CORE GROUP:** The Core Group consists of anyone who is interested in the ongoing administration of our Chapter. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend our core group meetings. We are always looking for new ideas and programs. A core group meeting typically meets from 7 pm until 9 pm, once a quarter. We discuss finances, upcoming activities, plan the annual walk, plan the service of remembrance, suggest programs for the monthly gatherings, and address any number of issues that may come before the group. These will also be ZOOM virtual meetings as long as necessary. **Please consider joining us. November 10 Core Group – ZOOM Virtual Meeting starting at 7:00 PM.** Anyone interested in participating, contact Bob Burash at [bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com](mailto:bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com) to be included on the email invitation.

### CHAPTER 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:** Carol and Rick Tomaszewski, 410-519-8448, [ctomaszewski74@gmail.com](mailto:ctomaszewski74@gmail.com)

### VOLUNTEERS REQUESTED:

**Volunteering with our Chapter** -- Giving of yourself is always healing, and being instrumental in providing resources to other Bereaved Parents is a very positive step in your journey as you extend a helping hand to so many others. There are many ways you can help our Chapter continue to support others. What may seem like something insignificant to you, may actually be something very beneficial to 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).

**VOLUNTEERS ARE THE BACKBONE OF ALL BP/USA AA County Chapter MEETINGS, PROGRAMS, AND EVENTS.**

**You and your family are encouraged to volunteer!**

### CURRENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

**Assist with the October Memory Walk**

**Participate in the December Annual Service of Remembrance**

**Provide Newsletter content: poems, graphics, articles**

**Provide book recommendations for inclusion in our library**

### Newsletter Publication:

**NEWSLETTER ARTICLES:** Please consider submitting an article, letter, poem or graphic for inclusion in the newsletter. Words that are meaningful to you will also be meaningful to others. Provide this information no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication to [ctomaszewski74@gmail.com](mailto:ctomaszewski74@gmail.com). ... on Oct 15, Dec 15.

**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 contact Mary Redmiles, Sponsorship Coordinator, at 301-704-8086 or [mary.redmiles@gmail.com](mailto:mary.redmiles@gmail.com).

- For the newsletter, submit a photograph and a 2 or 3 line memorial no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication. Forward this to [ctomaszewski74@gmail.com](mailto:ctomaszewski74@gmail.com). ...on Oct 15 or Dec 15.
- 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.

**CHAPTER RESOURCES:****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.

**CREATIVE HANDS HEALING:** Using your hands and being creative is often a very soothing way to work through your grief. Our Chapter has two projects, Angel Gowns and Knotted Blankets, that may provide you a means of using your hands to make something for other children. If interested in participating, please contact Carol Tomaszewski, [ctomaszewski74@gmail.com](mailto:ctomaszewski74@gmail.com).

**RESOURCE INFORMATION:** Any and all resource information provided in our Newsletter, Website or Emails, is for your information and reference. Our Chapter does not necessarily endorse the views, recommendations, guidance, or advertising associated with these resources.

**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 [Bob Burash, 410-551-5774, bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com](mailto:Bob.Burash@410-551-5774), use subject: Privacy

**ACCURACY:** We make every effort to ensure the accurate spelling of your child’s name and his/her date of birth and date of death. If any of this information is incorrect or your child’s name does not appear in the newsletter, let us know.

**DONATIONS**

***Donations may be made in memory of your child to offset the costs of our local chapter’s events and communications.***

***We gratefully acknowledge the following donations made recently:***

Eric and Lois Carlson in memory of their son Andrew

**Sponsorship Donations – Newsletter and Website**

Noel and Ann Castiglia in memory of Tria Castiglia

Rick and Carol Tomaszewski in memory of Dave Tomaszewski

Fran Palmer and Ethel Cleary in memory of Scott Thomas Palmer

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*A friend is someone who knows the song in your heart and can sing it back to you  
when you have forgotten the words.*

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THOUGHTS AND ARTICLES FROM.... AND ABOUT.... CHAPTER MEMBERS

## A New Normal

By Bob Burash, Paul's father and Chapter Leader

"A new normal" - This is one of today's most widely used and seemingly favorite buzz phrases brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are being told that in the future we will need to adjust to "a new normal," not only in our public life, but also in our private life. We are being told - no hugs, no handshakes, no family gatherings, no large gatherings in churches, restaurants, cinemas, theaters, swimming pools, or sporting events, and the list goes on and on and on. We are being told that we can find a new normal by adjusting to physical and social distancing. Everyone can do this.

What if you are a bereaved parent and have already had to find a new normal? What was normal the moment before you learned of your child's death certainly does not resemble your "new normal." How did you find your new normal while dealing with the unique pain of your child's death? This is a journey you must walk alone, together with other bereaved parents.

For us bereaved parents, we have settled into our new normal, most likely after 2, 3, 4, or more years of our grief journey, when some of our anger, guilt, and regret became less and our concern, compassion, and love became greater. The daily 'petty' challenges of our previous life have been overshadowed by what is most important - greater love of family. Our new normal. The death of our child changed us forever. We know what it is to have been normal. Going back to that time is impossible. Part of my new normal has been to reach out to other bereaved parents. What is your "new normal?"

*Editor's request: Please answer Bob's question -- What is your "new normal"?* -- and forward your response to me at [ctomaszewski74@gmail.com](mailto:ctomaszewski74@gmail.com). This can be just a few simple words, or several sentences, or several paragraphs, or possibly a photo or video. I hope to consolidate your responses and publish them in the newsletter. Consider both the "new normal" you found after the death of your child, and the "new normal" required by the COVID-19 pandemic. I look forward to hearing from you.



**WOW!!!** has been my reaction to the BPUSA Virtual National Gathering held earlier this month. Almost a month later I still think of it and say WOW!!!

As most of you may know the National Gathering is usually held the first weekend in August. Its location moves around based on the Local Chapter hosting the event. It was scheduled to be held in St. Louis this year. Of particular note is that 2020 is the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the BPUSA. "Wings of Hope" was going to be the theme, a tie into The Spirit of St Louis and the famous Charles Lindberg flight. It was planned to be a "Best Ever" event.

In April the decision was made to cancel the Live event in light of the current pandemic and to stage a Virtual Gathering - Whatever that means??? The planning committee had very limited experience with virtual meetings, most of which was limited to local chapter meetings. Needless to say none of the folks involved had any experience with anything of the magnitude we envisioned. Decision made, Gathering Theme changed from "Wings of Hope" to "Wings of Hope at Home" and we were off!!!

The vision was to try and recreate the actual Gathering virtually. In hindsight I think they were very successful. The Gathering included:

- An Opening Day Meet and Greet (Thursday evening)- A Welcome Message, a Love in Motion performance (song and dance), random sharing sessions with other attendees, a Yoga session, an Arts and Craft (Creative Grief workshop) session and a close out Jam session.
- Friday included two Keynote address - one in the morning and one at the afternoon break and 20 workshops spread over 2 morning and 2 afternoon sessions. Friday evening there were additional sharing sessions and again a close out jam session.
- Saturday included two Keynote address - one in the morning and one at the afternoon break and 20 workshops spread over 2 morning and 2 afternoon sessions. The Meeting Closing was held Saturday evening. It included Closing remarks and Thanks Yous to attendees and the Committee, a Love in Motion performance, including a song written especially for the Gathering, and a closing slide show with pictures of our children.

All in all I think the Gathering was a GREAT SUCCESS!!! Not as good as a live meeting but a close 2nd!! Feedback from all who attended was very positive (excluding a few technical glitches - we're bereaved parents - we're not perfect :). The Workshops were well received and had a broad range of topics to help bereaved parents along the many different stages and paths of their grief journey.

If you missed it don't despair (we have enough of that in our normal life!). The BPUSA BoD will be making copies of the Keynotes and the workshops available to the local chapters for their use. Just ask any Core Group member if there are specific topics you are interested in and we will be glad to help you see what's there.

So again I say - WOW!!! Thanks to the Gathering Committee and all who participated to make the event possible and a success. And a Special Thank You to BPUSA on both the National and Local Level for the support they provide to Bereaved Parents. I'm proud to be part of the organization. I think our children are proud of us for our efforts to help other fellow Pilgrims. Healing by Helping really works. I encourage you to try it!!!

Paul Balasic  
BPUSA Anne Arundel County MD Chapter



## You Were A Million Other Things

Coping with Grief : Litsa Williams, Program Director and Co-Founder of What's Your Grief  
[LITSA@whatsyourgrief.com](mailto:LITSA@whatsyourgrief.com), <https://whatsyourgrief.com>

Someone recently asked me the following question: *"A friend's son died and they didn't share the cause of his death in the obituary and haven't told me. Is it okay for me to ask?"*

I took a breath before responding. The therapist in me wanted to ask, "Why does it feel so important to know?". The griever in me wanted to yell, "Mind your own business – if they wanted you to know, they would share!!!". The human being in me sympathized with him.

When someone dies, presumably at a younger age than 'expected', our anxiety kicks in. What we sometimes call 'morbid curiosity' seems almost an evolutionary, self-protective instinct.

On some subconscious level, we think, "If I know what happened, I can better protect myself. I can make sure my loved ones and I are safe". Of course, that isn't the reality. Knowing whether someone died from cancer, a car accident, a suicide, a stroke, an overdose, or whatever else, rarely helps us stay safe.

But what is more important than why people want to know might be why some people choose to keep that information private. The obvious answer is one we have talked about here before: [stigma or shame](#).

Unfortunately, we still live in a society where mental illnesses, like depression and substance abuse, are not treated like other illnesses. There is still blame toward the person, in life, and in death. And people say heartless and thoughtless things. So sometimes we sacrifice the support that might come from people knowing the cause of death to protect from the risk of hurtful comments, shame, or blame.

Ultimately, I think the fear is that one single piece of information will come to define the person we love and their memory. Maybe they were depressed. Perhaps they had a substance use disorder. Maybe they died by suicide or by overdose. And then that fear sets in – maybe this one thing is all that people will see and remember.

And this fear is not wholly unfounded. We still live in a world where we call people “addicts” rather than people with substance use disorders. We define people by a single thing they are coping with. And when they die because of it, it can feel like that seals it permanently. We worry that will forever define their memory to those who didn’t know they were so much more.

When my sister’s boyfriend died, his addiction had taken his life (first figuratively, then literally). But it wasn’t *him*. He wasn’t merely “an addict”. He was an amazing human being who was struggling with an addiction.

John was . . . good. It seems too simple a word to describe a person, but he was just so good. He could make conversation with anyone, make instant friends. John had this incredible openness with people – he would help anyone. He was so smart and so curious – interested in things in real and deep ways. And he was so funny – goofy and able to make me laugh even when I was so angry at him. He was just so good.

I talked to someone else who lost a friend to an overdose recently. We talked about this risk of someone being defined by their addiction. “He was a million other things,” she said.

### *A million other things.*

I kept coming back to that simple phrase. John was a million other things. Those people we love with substance use disorders are a million other things. Those we’ve lost to substance use disorders, they were a million other things.

August 31st is [Overdose Awareness Day](#), and we often do something to honor the day. This year, I want to do something collaborative. If you lost a loved one to addiction or overdose, I want to invite you to share some of the “million other things” you love and miss about the person.



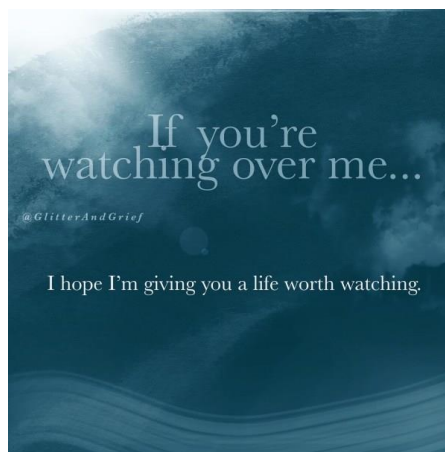
On Instagram (or anywhere else on social), share these by using the hashtag #amillionotherthings. And if you want to help people know why you are sharing and encourage them to share, you can also include this image with your post.

If you don’t use Instagram, or your Instagram is private, you can also email us at [submit@whatsyourgrief.com](mailto:submit@whatsyourgrief.com) with a photo or video and words about something else you loved and remember about that person – anything at all.

We will find some way to share as many of these as we can – those on the hashtag and those emailed – in a post and/or on social media for Overdose Awareness Day.

So please join us in raising awareness about addiction, raising awareness about overdose, and honoring and remembering our loved ones for a million other things. **Please help us spread the word about our #amillionotherthings effort. As always, subscribe to receive our weekly newsletter with new posts and podcasts.**

Editors Note: This article touched my heart and soul. Our son was an addict and yet he was a million other things. I know it may be a little late to submit your thoughts for Overdose Awareness Day, but send them in anyway. *What’s Your Grief* is a local organization with relevant information and perspectives on many aspects of grief. Consider browsing their website and subscribing to their newsletter to learn more about their resources. <https://whatsyourgrief.com>







## ***Tears In Heaven***

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JxPi3GAYYZO>

"Tears in Heaven" is a ballad written by Eric Clapton and Will Jennings about the pain Clapton felt following the death of his four-year-old son, Conor, who fell from a window of the 53rd-floor New York apartment of his mother's friend, on March 20, 1991. Clapton, who arrived at the apartment shortly after the accident, was visibly distraught for months afterwards.

Would you know my name  
If I saw you in heaven?  
Would it be the same  
If I saw you in heaven?  
I must be strong and carry on  
'Cause I know I don't belong here in heaven

Would you hold my hand  
If I saw you in heaven?  
Would you help me stand  
If I saw you in heaven?  
I'll find my way through night and day  
'Cause I know I just can't stay here in heaven

Time can bring you down, time can bend your knees  
Time can break your heart, have you begging please, begging please

Beyond the door there's peace I'm sure  
And I know there'll be no more tears in heaven

Would you know my name  
If I saw you in heaven?  
Would it be the same  
If I saw you in heaven?  
I must be strong and carry on  
'Cause I know I don't belong here in heaven

Tears In Heaven Lyrics © Warner Chappell Music, Inc, Universal Music Publishing Group, Warner Chappell Music Inc

## ***Since I Lost You*** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xe63zLRu89w>

Sung by [Genesis // Phil Collins](#)

Phil Collins wrote this song when he heard of the tragedy his friend, Eric Clapton, was facing.

It seems in a moment, your whole world can shatter  
Like morning dreams they just disappear  
Like dust in your hand falling to the floor  
How can life ever be the same

'Cause my heart is broken in pieces  
Yes my heart is broken in pieces  
Since you've been gone

It's all too easy to take so much for granted  
But it's so hard to find the words to say  
Like a castle in the sand the water takes away  
How can life ever be the same

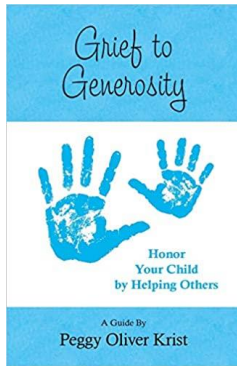
'Cause my heart is broken in pieces  
Yes my heart is broken in pieces  
Since I've lost you

Ooh now you'll never see  
Ooh now you'll never know  
All the things I planned for you  
Things for you and me

I held your hand so tightly  
That I couldn't let it go  
Now how can life ever be the same

'Cause my heart is broken in pieces  
Yes my heart is broken in pieces  
Since you've been gone

Songwriters: Tony Banks / Phil Collins / Michael Rutherford

**BOOK REVIEW:****Grief to Generosity: Honor Your Child by Helping Others**by [Peggy Oliver Krist](#) (Author)

ONE PART MEMOIR and two parts “how to,” *Grief to Generosity* shows how you can channel despair into action by publicly memorializing your child. The lessons in this book help you navigate the challenges you’ll face. Step by step, the author leads you through your grief and into something positive. And while helping others, you’ll realize that your child can become the inspiration, not the necessity in your grief.

You have suffered an unthinkable loss: the death of your child. I hope my book can serve as a roadmap for you as you pull out of spiraling grief and move into something positive.

This book is a set of lessons to help you navigate the obstacles you’ll face if you choose to publicly memorialize your child. It is a resource I wish I’d had at the beginning of my journey, when I had no idea how to deal with our son’s death or how to honor his memory. This is how I found my way back: I kept my heart and mind together and did the work our son didn’t finish.

When your child’s tribute takes root through giving, your child feels present. But it’s a slow and bumpy process. The 10 steps to philanthropy listed in my book are meant to lead you beyond your grief. As you start to get involved with your mission, you need to be aware of how your grief still follows you and disrupts you. The 10 common challenges illustrate some of the unique issues familiar to all bereaved parents working in philanthropy. I share what we faced in our outreach—and I hope that our stories will prepare and inspire you.

*“This is a book of discovery, an anchor, a beacon of light for those who have suffered the unthinkable. It provides a way back for parents who have lost what they should not lose, and a path to a new way of thinking for those who do not understand what that journey involves. The Krist family’s story is living proof that the immeasurable gifts children bestow upon their parents can spread throughout the world in ways far beyond our imagination, which is why we have children in the first place.”*

— James McBride, *New York Times* best-selling author of *The Color of Water*, winner of the 2013 National Book Award for his novel *The Good Lord Bird* and 2015 recipient of the National Humanities Medal presented by President Obama.

## *Tobias (Toby) Graham Stern received his angel wings*



*after only 12 weeks and 5 days on this earth...*

God had a plan for Toby that is far greater than we as parents could have ever dreamed of for him. We hope that one day we can see or understand that plan, but for now, we can only pray for the heartache to dull and do good things for others, in his name.

Toby fit perfectly into our family from the minute he was born. He was the most content baby, hardly ever cried. He loved to be held by anyone that would hold him. He smiled and laughed from an early age, and we loved watching him because it brought joy and laughter into our home. He was so content with Luke. Luke loved to hold him, make sure he had his binky, bring us diapers and pick out his toys. Toby watched him with so much focus, it was amazing. We couldn't wait to watch them grow up together and knew the memories with them would be some of the most cherished of our lives.

That is exactly what they are. We didn't realize it at the time, but we had taken so many pictures during the 12 weeks Toby was with us. And now, those are the memories that we look at daily, hold on to when we just want to hold him, and talk about with Luke so he never forgets those moments that he had with Toby and how much love he was surrounded with while he was here with us. It is amazing to think that we had an angel in our home, in our arms, for the time that we did.

Dan and I were immensely blessed in the weeks following Toby's death. Even more than we realize, we know. By people that we knew and many that we didn't. After the fog began to lift, we had an immense feeling in our hearts to "find a way to do good, give back, pay it forward" in memory of Toby and in a way that we could also share his story and people could know our precious son who was behind these actions. That is how and where the foundation started.

Our challenge came in creating a name for the foundation. We wanted it to have meaning, even if it was something that was truly special to us right now and we also wanted Toby's name to be a part of it. For a few weeks, this seemed harder than we thought it would be. We tossed around many names, phrases, things that reminded us of Toby. But nothing seemed it "fit." Then one evening it clicked. [The Little Fox.](#)

In preparing for Toby's arrival in May, we decided to use the outdoor/wilderness theme for his nursery. There was hunter green and orange and pictures of a fox and a bear. Dan had nicknamed Luke "bear" from the time he was a few months old, and when we saw the bear and the fox together, we knew that was perfect for Toby. He had a little toy fox that was almost always with him and that was buried with him. And now, anytime we see something with a fox on it, it reminds us of Toby. That is the perfect way to remember Toby and the perfect name for this Foundation that we have created in his memory.

Source: [www.thelittlefoxfoundation.org/our-story/](http://www.thelittlefoxfoundation.org/our-story/)

## 10 Quotes + Sentiments to Help You Keep Hope Alive When You Need the Light

<https://healingbrave.com/blogs/all/quotes-keep-hope-alive>

Written by Jennifer Williamson



Today is the anniversary of my brother's death, so I dedicate this post to Love—the kind that keeps us going, that offers comfort and encouragement to keep hope alive when all other lights have gone out.

*“You go on by doing the best you can. You go on by being generous. You go on by being true. You go on by allowing the unbearable days to pass and by allowing the pleasure in other days. You go on by finding a channel for your love and another for your rage.” — Cheryl Strayed*

If you’ve been reading for a while, you might know that I lost my brother to suicide in 2011. [After 7 years](#), the anniversary of his passing is still a tough day.

My decision to move forward after his loss was shaped by his character: he had a profound impact on the people in his world, and I wanted to honor him by being more like him. In that way, I think, I’ve given him to the world, by doing what I love and giving it away.

From the dark dirt of uncertainty, [a seedling of hope sprouted](#). It took a long time, but I returned to writing as nourishment, and now that’s the gift I love to give.

Take these quotes and let them encourage you to keep hope alive when you feel like you’ve been crushed, dismantled, and covered in dirt.

[Dark times have the power to bring you into the light, more fully than you’ve ever been before.](#)

### 1. In the dark cocoon

*“I used to see a butterfly in my mind’s eye every time I heard the word transformation, but life has schooled me. Transformation isn’t a butterfly. It’s the thing before you get to be a pretty bug flying away. It’s huddling in the dark cocoon and then pushing your way out. It’s the messy work of making sense of your fortunes and misfortunes, desires and doubts, hang-ups and sorrows, so you can go on and become the person you must next become.” — Cheryl Strayed*

Living in a highly connected world is a gift, but we don’t hear enough stories of huddling in the dark cocoon. We see transformation after it’s happened, but there’s messiness involved in the process.

[Healing is messy work, but it gives new life a chance to take flight.](#)

### 2. Turning thunder into grace

*“It’s turning the thunder into grace, knowing sometimes the break in your heart is like the hole in the flute. Sometimes it’s the place where the music comes through.” — Andrea Gibson*

Our broken places, when mended with the bonding agent of love, become the places through which we make our greatest impact on the world.

[Hope feels like the memory of spring in the middle of a cold and barren winter.](#)

### 3. Hope for us all

*“I believe there is hope for us all, even amid the suffering and maybe even inside the suffering. And that’s why I write fiction, probably. It’s my attempt to keep that fragile strand of radical hope, to build a fire in the darkness.” — John Green*

We rewrite our own realities in order to bring light to an otherwise darkened field. We’re no longer retained by our current circumstances if we choose to create a new story that better reflects our love, rather than just perpetuate our pain.

**4. You've been planted**

*"Sometimes when you're in a dark place you think you've been buried, but you've actually been planted." — Christine Caine*

Just because we feel lost and confused doesn't mean we've not been planted in the precise position from which to grow towards the light.

**5. Do not judge the universe**

*"I find hope in the darkest of days, and focus in the brightest. I do not judge the universe." — Dalai Lama*

This is one of those quotes that started my journey into a more hopeful and intentional life. Who am I to judge the universe? Who am I NOT to live as fully as I can? [I am here, and it is my duty to live.](#)

Hope is not blind. True hope rests on a foundation of resilience. It is born of courage. It sees what closed hearts don't see.

**6. There's beauty in the unknowns**

*"Embrace uncertainty. Some of the most beautiful chapters in our lives won't have a title until much later." — Bob Goff*

We can look behind us and make sense of things, and it's actually a key factor in post-traumatic growth. We can only look so far ahead and make sense of things. [We're meant to live here in the space we're given,](#)

learn as we go, and do our best to receive insights without forcing their wisdom.

**7. Keep some room**

*"Keep some room in your heart for the unimaginable." — Mary Oliver*

Hope lives when we keep some room in the heart for what we don't know and can't yet perceive. This is how healing gets to unfold naturally, without resistance and restraint.

**8. Let the universe arrange it for you**

*"Things are far more beautiful when the universe arranges them for you." — Jai-Jagdeesh*

Surrendering my need to be in control of what's not mine to control is a great exhale.

Hope tells us that we are worthy of living like we haven't lived before.

**9. Share this**

*"Part of the healing process is sharing with other people who care." — Jerry Cantrell*

You find people who care by sharing.

[You can't foresee how your story will help someone else.](#)

Share because it's a healing process that complements hope.

**10. Other people feel this too**

*"Sometimes the most healing thing to do is remind ourselves over and over and over, other people feel this too." — Andrea Gibson*

Though I would never wish the suffering I have known on anyone, it's a relief to know that I am not alone. Others feel what I have felt and will feel, even when I'd like to pretend that I am not understood—what a self-sabotaging, false thing to pretend. We are not islands. Our lives are woven together in endless, invisible and sometimes visible ways. Share. Listen. Learn. Give. Receive. We feel.

# **Our Children Remembered September 2020**

Jon Russell Aikin  
Grandson of Elizabeth and Barry Aikin  
September 4, 1983 - November 19, 2001

Mariah Nicole Albee  
Daughter of Valerie and Richard Albee  
November 27, 1982 - September 7, 2012

Traci Lynn Boone  
Daughter of Bonita Boone-Adamecz  
September 17, 1964 - August 17, 1986

Allison (Alli) Leigh Cantrell  
Daughter of Kristy Cantrell  
January 19, 1982 - September 5, 2014

Jacquelyn D. Connolley  
Daughter of Pat Donoho  
October 3, 1969 - September 13, 1986

O. Steven Cooper  
Cousin of Frances Palmer  
July 5, 1954 - September 26, 1998

Dayden Alexander Dunn  
Grandson of Beverley and Wayne Dunn  
September 12, 2006 - June 1, 2008

Jason T. Easter  
Son of Janice and Chris Kunkel  
January 30, 1973 - September 9, 1999

Christine Kelly Enders  
Daughter of Holly and Alli Enders  
September 26, 1986 - October 15, 2008

Cynthia Lynn Ferguson  
Daughter of Doris and Charles Clair  
September 4, 1952 - March 28, 2010

Genevieve Marie French  
Daughter of Tina French  
September 25, 1995 - November 7, 2017

Edward Allen Funkhouser  
Son of Sam and Maureen Funkhouser  
September 3, 1971 - January 23, 2018

Jeffrey Andrew Grimm  
Son of John and Linda Grimm  
November 25, 1973 - September 28, 1989

Henry Ku'ualoha Giugni Halbach  
Son of Gina Giugni and Dan Halbach  
December 9, 1991 - September 25, 2016

Kerry Elizabeth Hambleton  
Daughter of Bob and Ellen Hambleton  
September 14, 1983 - July 26, 2011

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

Brandon James Lima  
Son of Lisa Lima  
July 30, 1998 - September 19, 2018

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

Chad William Muehlhauser  
Son of Paula and Bill Muehlhauser  
October 3, 1983 - September 16, 1992

Robert Adam "Robby" Ostrowski  
Son of Denise Crouse  
January 30, 1995 - September 11, 2010

Scott Thomas Palmer  
Son of Frances Palmer  
Grandson of Ethel Cleary  
August 3, 1983 - September 1, 1996

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

John Christopher Poe  
Son of Sharon and Ben Poe  
October 12, 1967 - September 24, 2001

Steven Craig Rasmussen  
Son of Robert and Linda Rasmussen  
July 15, 1961 - September 24, 1997

Robert William Rey II  
Friend of Peggy Smeltzer  
September 14, 1965 - October 2, 2003

BPUSA Anne Arundel County Chapter Newsletter

Nathaneal Paul Rohan

Son of Andi Zolt

October 2, 1983 - September 14, 2013

James Ryan Rohrbaugh

Son of Doug and Donna Rohrbaugh

August 30, 1983 - September 5, 1983

Daniel Maurice Rothman

Son of Juliet and Leonard Rothman

January 20, 1971 - September 17, 1992

Michael Edward Shannon

Son of Karen Shannon

September 10, 1965 - August 13, 2013

Thomas "Tommy" Richard Short

Son of Karen Short

September 25, 1997 - October 16, 1997

Deonte Joseph Simms

Grandson of Deborah Simms

October 1, 1981 - September 9, 2001

Owen Robert Sinex

Son of Phyllis and Bob Sinex

September 2, 1993 - December 20, 2012

September/October 2020

Gregory Panagiotis Skaltsis

Son of Cynthia L Skaltsis

September 9, 1991 - July 28, 2017

David William Tomaszewski

Son of Richard and Carol Tomaszewski

September 4, 1974 - February 6, 2001

Christopher Thomas Trachy

Son of Tom and Chrys Trachy

September 3, 1986 - March 3, 2016

Timothy Allen Umbel

Son of Richard and Mary Ann Umbel

February 16, 1982 - September 15, 2002

Jeffrey Kevin Withers

Son of Jan Withers

July 30, 1975 - September 28, 1975

Miriam Luby Wolfe

Daughter of Larry and Rosemary Mild

September 26, 1968 - December 21, 1988

Sienna Blue Water Zertuche

Daughter of Karen Samaras

September 5, 1976 - July 31, 2008



# Our Children Remembered October 2020

James "Jamie" William Henry Alexander  
Son of Dave and Sue Alexander  
October 12, 1970 - October 26, 1998

Wendy Jean Bolly  
Daughter of Judith and Louie Bolly  
April 6, 1977 - October 11, 2002

Wes Paul Boone  
Son of Eve Boone  
October 9, 2008 - January 19, 2015

Christopher Ryan Boslet  
Grandson of Carol N. Boslet  
October 23, 1985 - February 20, 2003

Drew Caldwell  
Son of Karen and Bob Caldwell  
August 24, 1989 - October 9, 2019

Amber Marie Calistro  
Daughter of Patti and John DiMiceli  
February 28, 1976 - October 30, 1980

Hannah Lindley Campbell  
Daughter of John and Cathi Campbell  
October 10, 1992 - October 10, 1992

Tria Marie Castiglia  
Daughter of Noel and Ann Castiglia  
Sister of Carla Castiglia  
July 6, 1963 - October 14, 1984

Jacquelyn D. Connolley  
Daughter of Pat Donoho  
October 3, 1969 - September 13, 1986

John Mario DeMichiei Jr.  
Son of John and Linda DeMichiei  
February 24, 1979 - October 23, 2008

Christine Kelly Enders  
Daughter of Holly and Alli Enders  
September 26, 1986 - October 15, 2008

Brandon Robert French  
Son of Rhonda and Norman French  
October 8, 1983 - July 29, 2006

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

Romana Alice Hale  
Sister of Bobbi Remines  
October 8, 1948 - November 5, 1976

Traci Jeanne Heincelman  
Niece of Terre and John Belt  
October 6, 1980 - March 10, 2002

Charles "Chip" Marshall Hodges  
Son of Betty and John Hodges  
October 24, 1954 - March 14, 2005

Andrew Scott Hoffman  
Son of Donna and Bryan Hoffman  
March 6, 1986 - October 27, 2013

Richard Arland Jackson  
Son of Margaret Jackson  
February 9, 1990 - October 22, 2010

William Mirza Khadem  
Son of Yoosef and Linda Khadem  
October 24, 1984 - April 6, 2012

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

Matthew Joseph Morrow  
Son of Carla and Ed Morrow  
November 13, 1990 - October 13, 2012

Chad William Muehlhauser  
Son of Paula and Bill Muehlhauser  
October 3, 1983 - September 16, 1992

Krystal Brooke Pearce  
Daughter of Douglas Pearce  
June 1, 1995 - October 3, 2013

John Christopher Poe  
Son of Sharon and Ben Poe  
October 12, 1967 - September 24, 2001



Robert William Rey II  
Friend of Peggy Smeltzer  
September 14, 1965 - October 2, 2003

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

Zachary Daniel Robertson  
Son of Mary Ellen and Jim Young  
March 3, 1978 - October 26, 2006

Nathaneal Paul Rohan  
Son of Andi Zolt  
October 2, 1983 - September 14, 2013

Thomas "Tommy" Richard Short  
Son of Karen Short  
September 25, 1997 - October 16, 1997

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

Deonte Joseph Simms  
Grandson of Deborah Simms  
October 1, 1981 - September 9, 2001

Vejay Singh  
Son of Jessica and Hardeep Singh  
October 12, 1992 - March 21, 2014

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

Brittany Nicole Tyler  
Daughter of Janet and Dan Tyler  
Granddaughter of Dot Carter  
October 12, 1986 - August 23, 1992

Charles E Valentine, III  
Son of Cathy Valentine  
November 29, 1974 - October 21, 2011

Richard C. Watts  
Son of Tom and Fran Cease  
December 28, 1966 - October 28, 1998

Grant Alan Williams  
Son of Mark and Randye Williams  
October 25, 2000 - October 25, 2000

Samuel Mark Williams  
Son of Mark and Randye Williams  
October 25, 2000 - October 25, 2000

Tracy Woodfork, Jr.  
Son of Jennifer Woodfork  
Grandchild of Julie Bergmeier  
November 28, 1989 - October 8, 2012

Alex Paul Yokanovich  
Son of Delight (Nick) Yokanovich  
November 22, 1979 - October 30, 2013



**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.***



Our Anne Arundel County Chapter is always here for you.  
Do not hesitate to call one of our phone friends, email someone, or go on Facebook.

Phone friends to call if you need to talk:

Barbara Bessling (410) 761-9017  
Mary Redmiles (301) 704-8086  
Noel Castiglia (410) 974 1626  
Ann Castiglia (410) 757-5129  
Paul Balasic (443) 566 0193  
Sandi Burash (443) 831 3960  
Bob Burash (443) 306 9186

Email: [bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com](mailto:bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com)

On Facebook: search for "Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA"

## Grief-Related Challenges



- The entire family is likely grieving the same loss.
- Adults are often unsure of what "normal" grief looks like, especially for children. The lack of baseline normalcy can complicate things further.
- Bereaved children often say they wish they had more memories of the person who died.
- Family members often avoid talking about their grief and the deceased loved one because they worry about upsetting one another.
- COVID related restrictions create barriers to receiving support from friends, family, community members, and professionals.
- COVID related restrictions limit access to coping resources and outlets for healthy distractions

what's  
your  
grief?

**The Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA**

**Eighteenth Annual Memory Walk (VIRTUAL)**

**October 3, 2020 9:00am**

**\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\* Due to the increased concern over the spread of COVID-19\*\*\***

*This year's "Memory Walk" will be virtual. It will consist of an opening, readings, and a slide show of our children. If you would like your child's picture included, and we have your child's picture from the 2019 Memory Walk or Service of Remembrance, we can use that one. If not, you can email it to [pjbspmd@gmail.com](mailto:pjbspmd@gmail.com) or mail a picture to BPUSA/AA County, P.O. Box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401-0280 . We will need forms and pictures by September 27, 2020. You will find a large template butterfly attached. Please decorate or color any way you want in memory of your child and you will be able to share it with fellow participants.*

**COST: \$0 (But we would welcome your donation!)**

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

*If you have any questions about this event, please send an email to : [bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com](mailto:bpaacntychapterleader@gmail.com) or call Barbara 410-761-9017*

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount \_\_\_\_\_ Do we have a picture? \_\_\_\_\_

**DISCLAIMER: I hereby agree to the following:**

To ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the BPUSA Anne Arundel County Chapter, MD Virtual Walk, please accept the following terms below to complete your registration. Participation in the walk using the online Zoom application could pose a chance of security being breached. I will not hold Bereaved Parents of the USA, Inc., Anne Arundel County Chapter, MD responsible in any way.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*The Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA, states that no goods or services were provided in exchange for your contribution. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. The Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA, is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt not-for-profit organization. Our employer identification number is 36-4081249.*

