



*Offering support,
understanding, encouragement
and hope.*

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I recall the change of seasons in the first year after my son, Nick, died . How could life go on as if nothing had happened? Nature reflects both a harsh reality (death is part of life) and hope to move forward (spring brings new life), even though we may not feel we want to. Nick died on a cold January day. I recall sitting on my front stoop, just 3 months later. I noticed daffodil bulbs poking through the ground. How could this be, I wondered? I reflected:

April 21, 2016

The trees were bare and lonely
The day you left us, Dear.
They matched my mood of heartbreak,
Longing for you near.

The winter days crept slowly,
But some days seemed to fly.
I felt some consolation
In the bleakness passing by.

I yearned to stay within myself,
As if I'd find you there.
But every day not seeing you
Brought even more despair.

Some days it snowed to cover ground,
Some days just cloudy gloom
Would cover me in darkness,
Where comfort seemed to loom.

The first few bulbs pushed through the earth,
Two months aft you were gone.
"I am not ready to be gay!
Await my mourning's done!"

But sprouting bulbs pushed up their way,
No listening to me they did.
Emergent spring comes forth 'round me.
Can't beg it to be hid.

Now early flowers have come and gone,
As gifted signs from God.
I must accept your absence, Dear,
And see you in God's Laud.

The moon tonight takes breath away,
As rising onward high,
With yellow orange it speaks to me:
Full lifetime circle nigh.

--- Tina Delaney, Nick's Mom

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REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN APRIL

William Mizra Khadem

October 24, 1984 - April 6, 2012



Your eyes, your beautiful, beautiful eyes. Oh, how I wish I had a good picture of your beautiful hazel-green eyes with their thick, black lashes. I wish I had you. I wish I had you here to hold and squeeze and give big, warm, bear hugs too.

But you are happy. You are happy in your dwelling place in Heaven. You are happy with Tommy, Ricky, Dave, Paul, and Amber. You are happy with Tria and Bethany Ann. You are joyous as you listen to John "El" belt out his beautiful and perfect impersonations of Elvis and you are joyous as Matt lovingly puts you in a headlock. You are joyous as you laugh and joke with Joey and Donny. You are joyous as you hug Nanny, Grandma Lura, Grandpa Bill, Auntie Pauline and Grandma Sonya and everyone else who has gone before.

Yes, my precious, hazel green-eyed beautiful, 27-year-old baby boy, while I want you here beside me, you are joyous, along with passed friends and family, by Jesus' side in Heaven. You are far happier there than you were here on earth. I only know this because of what you've shown me. And, because I love you far more than I care for my own selfish happiness, I will leave you to bask in that joy.

Thank you for coming and visiting Earth in bodily form when you did. I wish it could have been longer. Thank you for choosing to be our son and thank you for all the joy you brought and bring us. You are truly one of the greatest gifts God could ever have given us. We love you more than mere words can express. Until we meet again, close your sweet, beautiful hazel-green eyes with those thick black lashes for a moment and say a sweet prayer for those of us who miss you terribly.

Much, much love,

Mom, Dad, Seyed, Susan, Darling Hayden, Uncle Bubble, Uncle John, Aunt Rhonda, Precious Autumn, Lauryn, Jessica, Steve, Aunt Barb, Lovely Dakota

Walter H. Maynard IV
January 2, 1965 - April 14, 2006

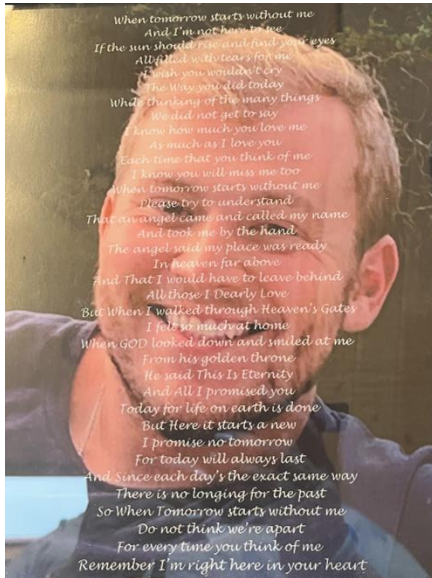


My mind still talks to you
 My heart still looks for you
 I pray you are at peace
 I miss you every single day

---- Mom

REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN APRIL

Dulaney Covington Logan III (aka Trip)
September 10, 1996 - April 24, 2023



Trip, not a day goes by that our hearts don't ache for you.
 Keep shining your bright light and keep sending those signs.

We love you "to infinity and beyond!"

Love, Mom, Dad and Katie

When Tomorrow Starts Without Me

When tomorrow starts without me
 And I'm not here to see
 If the sun should rise and find your eyes
 All filled with tears for me

I wish you wouldn't cry
 The way you did today
 While thinking of the many things
 We did not get to say

I know how much you love me
 As much as I love you
 Each time that you think of me
 I know you will miss me too

When tomorrow starts without me
 Please try to understand
 That an angel came and called my name
 And took me by the hand

The angel said my place was ready
 In heaven far above
 And that I would have to leave behind
 All those I dearly love

But when I walked through Heaven's Gates
 I felt so much at home
 When God looked down and smiled at me
 From his golden throne

He said this is eternity
 And all I promised you
 Today for life on earth is done
 But here it starts a new

I promise no tomorrow
 For today will always last
 And since each day's the exact same way
 There is no longing for the past

So when tomorrow starts without me
 Do not think we're apart
 For every time you think of me
 Remember I'm right here in your heart

David Romano. "When Tomorrow Starts Without Me." Family Friend Poems, <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/when-tomorrow-starts-without-me-by-david-romano>

REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN APRIL

Jeff Baldwin

April 27, 1967 – April 26, 1991



Jeff, my only son. You've been gone 34 years. Where has the time gone? It was a long hard journey the first seven years. I had so much anger, hated God but I now know my God has carried me through the grief journey. The tears still come and go.

I will always remember you as a great dancer, handsome, loved by everyone, had so many friends, do tricks on your motorcycle and would love that skateboard and fix up a great car to be fancy. So protective of me. You would tell me when I danced to be home by midnight or you're coming to get me.

Jeff was sweet, kind, generous and a forgiving guy. Jeff was gone too soon but after crying many years I know when he took his last breath, he was absent from his body, and present with our Lord in Heaven. Until I see you again. True love never dies.

Love forever, Mom

Wendy Jean Bolly

April 6, 1977 - October 11, 2002



REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN **APRIL**

Bethany Anne Balasic
Daughter of Paul and Claudia Balasic
2/13/1981 - 4/5/1996

Jeff Baldwin
Son of Aurelia Ferraro
4/27/1967 - 4/26/1991

Stephanie Noell Banchero
Daughter of Bill Banchero
12/16/1985 - 4/9/2012

Joey E Belcher
Son of Joseph and Irene Belcher
4/21/1975 - 12/17/2012

Wendy Jean Bolly
Daughter of Judith and Louie Bolly
4/6/1977 - 10/11/2002

Faith Campbell
Daughter of John and Cathi Campbell
4/5/1994 - 4/5/1994

William Frederick Carter Jr.
Son of Dot Carter
Brother of Lisa Beall
Brother of Janet Tyler
4/24/1959 - 8/16/1992

Angela Rose Cook
Daughter of Nancy Cook
4/13/1988 - 5/22/2022

Jasmin Aliyah Corria
Daughter of Diran and Mila Corria
4/14/2015 - 4/16/2015

Joseph Fredrick Errichiello Jr.
Son of Susan and Joe Errichiello
4/6/1979 - 5/29/2004

Joseph A. Esterling Jr.
Son of Joe and Michelle Esterling
6/7/1967 - 4/27/1990

Galen Andrew Harig-Blaine
Son of Clare and Stephen Blaine
11/14/1989 - 4/22/2007

Brian Michael Hendricks
Son of Jeannine Hendricks
3/4/1991 - 4/22/2012

William Mirza Khadem
Son of Yoosef and Linda Khadem
10/24/1984 - 4/6/2012

Dulaney Covington (Trip) Logan III
Son of Cathy and Deke Logan
9/10/1996 - 4/24/2023

Giertler Lukasz
Brother of Edyta and Bruce Dulski
4/17/1989 - 3/15/2015

Aaron Gene Marshall
Son of Alycia Marshall
5/26/1996 - 4/11/2016

Walter H. Maynard IV
Son of Rose Marie Carnes and
Walter Maynard III
1/2/1965 - 4/14/2006

Craig Steven Nelson
Son of Karen Coulson
4/2/1974 - 1/31/1995

Kevin M Nichols
Son of Bob Nichols
4/12/1982 - 8/21/2017

Jessica Price Parsons
Daughter of Patricia and James Price
11/24/1984 - 4/8/2016

Christopher Gordon Pessano
Son of Claire and Roger Cole
12/18/1971 - 4/26/2017

REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN APRIL

Waverly K Roberts
Son of Waverly and Angela Roberts
4/9/1993 - 7/4/2014

Dennis Richard Rohrbach
Son of Dennis and Joan Rohrbach
4/8/1964 - 7/3/1988

Andr  Marc Sanders
Son of Karen Sanders
4/8/1968 - 11/27/2002

Ariel Carmen Silver
Daughter of Lee Wolff
7/20/1986 - 4/20/2019

Matthew Ryan Stangle
Son of Scott and Jeanette Stangle
4/5/1989 - 1/14/2017

Joseph (Joey) Scott Sudo
Son of Joe and Suzanne Sudo
12/3/1999 - 4/23/2012

Alisa Joy Withers
Daughter of Jan Withers
7/7/1976 - 4/16/1992

I Remember Another Spring

Each year when the azaleas bloom,
I remember another spring.
That one was a pall.
The rain would not stop.
It poured into the open grave of my son.
It poured deep into my heart.
I was sure it would never, ever stop.
It did, though I sometimes wished it hadn't.
I was stuck between forgetting and remembering.
Remembering won. Now I see his face in the azaleas.
They bloomed that Spring while he died -
I no longer hold it against them.

~ Fay Harden



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN MAY

Dora Baldwin

December 11, 1964 – May 2, 2012



My beautiful oldest daughter was called home 13 years ago. That cancer is bad stuff. She suffered terribly. We had our ups and downs due to her bi-polar disease. I miss our daily phone calls, shopping together, dancing, etc. She was very sweet, thoughtful, caring the best singer in the world. Her idol was the famous Cher and boy when she sang in public, a crowd of many came to her and told her she was the real Cher. I taught her how to dance. I was a professional ballroom dancer.

She always said I was the greatest. She now lives in glory with her brother Jeff and Uncle John "El":

Forever loved and missed,
Mom

John "El" Ferraro

January 30, 1951 – May 20, 2022



My brother John "El" was a wonderful brother and best Uncle ever. John went to Heaven 3 years ago. He was a model child and adult. So caring, thoughtful, awesome, full of compassion, so brilliant, very successful. Not one sour bone in his body. He would knock the socks off your feet with his brilliant Elvis Presley voice.

We were very close.

I will miss him forever.

Love, your sister
Aurelia Ferraro

REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN MAY

Jordan Edward Ambrozewicz
Son of Steven and Beverly Ambrozewicz
5/27/1993 - 5/10/1995

Jonathan David Aorilio
Son of Tracie Aorilio
5/18/1996 - 8/28/2018

Dora Baldwin
Daughter of Aurelia Ferraro
12/11/1964 - 5/2/2012

Donald Gordon Barrett
Son of Kathy and Don Barrett
5/14/1976 - 5/3/2002

De'Andre Castro
Son of Dalia and Victor Vega
5/3/1998 - 3/9/2022

Anthony Raymond Cesario
Son of Lisa Cesario
3/25/1989 - 5/1/2017

Pamela Grace Clair
Daughter of Doris and Charles Clair
6/3/1954 - 5/11/1984

Angela Rose Cook
Daughter of Nancy Cook
4/13/1988 - 5/22/2022

Robert "Bo" William DePaola
Son of Jill and John DePaola
3/22/1995 - 5/23/2015

Clay Edward Derderian
Son of Mary Bannon and James Derderian
12/14/2005 - 5/16/2021

Michelle Marie Dyke
Daughter of Marie Dyke
5/19/1975 - 11/10/1992

Jeffrey Arthur Elder, Jr.
Son of Kymn and Brendan Burns McFetridge
5/17/1986 - 3/22/2018

Joseph Fredrick Errichiello Jr.
Son of Susan and Joe Errichiello
4/6/1979 - 5/29/2004

John "EL" Ferraro
Brother of Aurelia Ferraro
1/30/1951 - 5/10/2022

Andrew Thomas "Drew" Gawthrop
Son of Brenda Gawthrop
5/25/1990 - 8/12/2002

Ian David Guckes
Son of Stacey and Fred Guckes
5/18/2000 - 8/8/2022

Matthew Gordon Haines
Son of Gordon and Peggy Haines
5/3/1977 - 7/4/1996

Kaiya Monic-Gabrielle Hawkins
Daughter of Andrea Hawkins
2/18/2003 - 5/31/2022

REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN MAY

Charles Lee Holmes. Sr
Son of Charlene Kvech
7/4/1958 - 5/22/2019

Michael Warren "Mikey" Hugel, Jr.
Son of Theresa Sheehan
5/22/1986 - 5/18/2016

Brian Keith Jones
Son of Leroy and Jeanne Jones
5/22/1974 - 5/22/1974

Aaron Gene Marshall
Son of Alycia Marshall
5/26/1996 - 4/11/2016

Tyler Luke Martin
Son of Kelly Bostic
12/17/1992 - 5/27/2022

Jerry Mason Jr.
Son of Mary and Jerry Mason
5/6/1968 - 3/23/2005

Daniel "Dan" Michael Milord
Son of Mike Milord
7/15/1982 - 5/5/2004

Katherine Sarah Morris
Daughter of Marguerite Morris
3/11/1990 - 5/6/2012

Shane Aaron Morris II
Son of Michelle and Shane Morris
6/16/1992 - 5/10/2015

Tyler John Orsulak
Son of Richard and Sandra Orsulak
12/19/1989 - 5/14/2021

Sydney Elaine Patronik
Daughter of Holly and Michael Patronik
3/26/2002 - 5/11/2002

Celeste Emelia Perry
Daughter of Erica Truske
11/13/2017 - 5/2/2023

Samantha Ann Rankin
Daughter of Vickie and Bart Rankin
11/19/1988 - 5/31/2010

Wendy Dawn Saunders
Daughter of Ronald and Aljuana Saunders
5/20/1972 - 5/14/1998

James Benjamin Scheff
Son of James and Gail Scheff
5/9/1979 - 6/1/2012

Brandon Michael Sisler
Son of Laura Sisler
5/7/1993 - 10/15/2011

Abigail Helen "Abbey" Skuletich
Daughter of John and Glenda Skuletich
3/9/1984 - 5/12/1992

Tori Danielle Stitely
Daughter of Tawny Stitely-Lopez
5/21/1985 - 11/26/2012

Christopher Lewis Strader
Son of Lewis and Peggy Strader
5/27/1979 - 6/21/1997

Cathryn Christiana Tsu
Daughter of Horace and Cynthia Tsu
5/27/1997 - 1/18/2017

Carole Anne Wilford
Sister of Aljuana Saunders
1/7/1944 - 5/4/1998

Matthew Tyler Williams
Son of Marta and Chuck Williams
5/8/1986 - 1/13/2011

REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN JUNE

Rowan Ethridge
October 8, 1995-June 8, 2023



Not a day passes that we don't think of you, love you, and miss you. Your pictures are prominent, sunflowers fill vases around the house, the custom quilt on your bed and your stuffed teddy bear give us something to hold on to. Every week we water your plants. Your bedroom remains untouched. You are everywhere, yet the absence of your physical presence is a constant ache. Thank you for your love, the beauty and shining light of your spirit, the lessons you taught us, your smiles and laughter, your unapologetic embrace of your authentic self. We look at your pictures, watch your videos, and can't believe you're gone, but the hole in our hearts bears witness to reality. We know your beautiful, eternal soul watches over us and is experiencing its next phase of spiritual love and joy.

Physical death cannot separate us. You are part of us and we look forward to the joyful day we will see you again.

Love Mom and Dad

Jason "Tyler" Crawford
June 11, 1999 - December 15, 2022



Happy Birthday in Heaven Buddha! You will always be forever 23 to me. Today I am filled with a mix of emotions Bud. It's still so hard to think about celebrating your birthday without your presence. The days keep passing, but I'm often still frozen in time replaying that awful day that you unexpectedly left this world. I miss you so much more than my words could ever express. I promise to keep your spirit alive every day in everything that I do as my life on this earth continues. I take comfort in knowing that you are in a great place, celebrating today with some of my favorite people and you are doing just fine. Someday we will be reunited in Heaven. Until then, I will love and miss you every day Ty.

Love,
 Mom AKA "Your Lovebug"

REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN JUNE

James William Aikin
Grandson of Elizabeth and Barry Aikin
6/5/1982 - 3/18/2008

Stokely Malcolm Andrews
Son of Mari and Malcolm Andrews
6/23/2015 - 6/13/2017

William P. Anthony Jr.
Son of Bill and Linda Anthony
6/1/1965 - 1/2/1999

Oscar William Atha-Nicholls
Son of Richard and Amy Atha-Nicholls
6/2/2018 - 6/2/2018

Hope Marie Butler
Daughter of Wayne and Deanna Butler
6/12/2021 - 6/18/2021

Pamela Grace Clair
Daughter of Doris and Charles Clair
6/3/1954 - 5/11/1984

Ryan Corr
Son of Pam Corr
3/2/2003 - 6/4/2011

Jason Tyler Crawford
Son of Michelle and Jason Crawford
6/11/1999 - 12/15/2022

Jack Turner Dumont
Son of Jill and Dave Dumont
6/26/2003 - 6/26/2003

Jonathan David Elkins
Son of Viki Foster
6/16/1987 - 6/5/2017

Alice Engleman
Daughter of Elizabeth Engleman
11/20/1997 - 6/21/2011

Joseph A. Esterling Jr.
Son of Joe and Michelle Esterling
6/7/1967 - 4/27/1990

Rowan Genevieve Ethridge
Daughter of Kim and Jeff Ethridge
10/8/1995 - 6/8/2023

Thomas James Geoghegan
Son of Maureen Geoghegan
11/13/1969 - 6/30/2013

Emilio Juan Honesto
Son of Alexandra Honesto
6/29/2010 - 3/26/2011

Scott Andrew Katsikas
Son of Linda Snead
6/9/1980 - 8/13/2004

Bryan Adam Krouse
Son of James and Judy Krouse
3/11/1965 - 6/29/2007

Charlotte Belinda Lauren
Daughter of Peter and Robin Lauren
6/19/1987 - 12/19/2021

REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN JUNE

James Arthur Leese

Son of Judith and John Leese

7/27/1960 - 6/25/2013

Deana Jean Marie Lenz

Daughter of Patricia and James Lenz

6/5/2009 - 6/6/2009

Nicholas Paul Liberatore

Son of Larry and Pat Liberatore

9/27/1980 - 6/9/1997

Brian Richard Melcher

Son of Norma and Donald Melcher

Brother of Cheryl Lewis

8/30/1960 - 6/14/2002

Cody Thomas Moczulski

Son of Robin Moczulski

9/19/1993 - 6/13/2010

Shane Aaron Morris II

Son of Michelle and Shane Morris

6/16/1992 - 5/10/2015

Shannon Marie Nuth

Daughter of Patty and Joe Nuth

Sister of Bridget Rice

6/25/1991 - 6/20/2016

Kevin Alan O'Brien

Son of Lorrie and Keith O'Brien

12/24/1986 - 6/29/2012

Sarah Elizabeth Patterson

Daughter of Cindy Patterson

6/28/1987 - 9/19/2006

Krystal Brooke Pearce

Daughter of Douglas Pearce

6/1/1995 - 10/3/2013

James Benjamin Scheff

Son of James and Gail Scheff

5/9/1979 - 6/1/2012

David C. Schmier

Son of Gordon and Virginia Schmier

6/26/1964 - 2/10/1992

Hailey Anne Shipe

Daughter of Kristen and Mike Dickenson

3/18/2002 - 6/25/2022

Kelsey R Silva

Daughter of Kristen Silva

Daughter of Francisco Martins Silva

10/28/1991 - 6/16/2011

Christopher John Smith

Son of Debi Wilson-Smith

3/27/1981 - 6/30/2000

Christopher Lewis Strader

Son of Lewis and Peggy Strader

5/27/1979 - 6/21/1997

Cindy Sue Walker

Daughter of Edward & Phyllis Frazier-James

6/22/1959 - 6/21/2010

Michael Shane Wheeler

Son of Lita L. Ciaccio

6/22/1976 - 1/11/1997

“Why I'm a Believer”

When my sweet William died, I lost all my faith. I had been raised Methodist and believed very deeply in the teachings of Christ. While far from perfect, I considered myself to be what one author referred to as a, “Red Letter Christian”. I was so steeped in the belief of a sweet, loving Jesus, who forgave all our sins and could turn the most hardened of murders into weeping, contrite, repentant souls, by giving their lives over to Him.

I, while not having a hardened heart, most certainly had a shredded one.

I was a victim/survivor of childhood trauma and had seen the power of gratitude - in even the worst of circumstances. That is why, before William died, I gave thanks for him literally 1000 times a day.

How I came to do this is a little funny. I was supposed to play Jesus in the Sunrise service for our church Easter Sunday. I was a 15-year-old girl in a brand new, eggshell, white dress being given a ride by our pastor, only he was late. When he got there, I laughed and said, “blame the Devil”. Our sagacious pastor laughed back and quoted a scripture I have since emblazoned in my memory, “For Everything, give thanks”. I thought that was really sweet, but had no idea the magnitude of that one, tiny, little sentence. I tucked it away for future contemplation.

The future came when my children were mere babes and I had been forced to deal with the trauma of my childhood. We had no money for therapy and I had a nervous breakdown. The absolute most I could do during this terrible and turbulent time, was nurse my darling infant William, when my husband Yoosef handed him to me. I loved my children beyond anything I can describe. I had wanted to be a mother ever since I was a wee babe, myself. I wanted to be a mother even more than I wanted to be a globe-trotting Virologist, traveling the world in search of mysterious and heretofore unknown, but extremely dangerous viruses - and I wanted that very badly. But when I had the breakdown, I had sealed myself off, only to occupy the smallest part of our bed, in the darkest room in our house. Lights out, curtains closed, I quickly lost all hope and spent most of the time contemplating the meaning of life, a life I desperately did not want to live. But there was the burning question, “*why are we here and what was the meaning of life?*”

The question sounds so simple. It sounds so innocuous, but the pain from my childhood was so great, that I had contemplated suicide the vast majority of my existence and had very seriously tried on a number of occasions. I hurt so badly that even my two, beautiful, precious, adorable, darling babies could not take that pain away. Even the realization of my happiest dream could not erase the harm that was done me. I suffered greatly to the point of barely existing, always questioning why we were here and *why did some of us have to suffer so mightily*.

One day, when my pain was especially severe, a tiny thought crept into my mind. The simple, yet powerful scripture my pastor shared with me that one Easter Sunday came back to me: “For everything, give thanks.”

WTF? I thought. Actually, I did not. I did not curse back then, but the emotion and question were virtually the same, WTF? How could a human suffer so greatly and still give thanks for the deed that brought so much pain??? This was a question I could not answer, yet I could not let go. No matter where my brain tried to escape it or how hard I tried to push it aside, the little phrase would not leave me, “For everything, give thanks”, it said and it reverberated over and over again in my head. So finally, I did. I gave up and gave thanks for the pain and torment and agony I was suffering so greatly, but I did not believe a word of it. No, when I gave thanks for the horrors of my childhood, I told God, in no uncertain terms, that I did not believe it nor feel it, not in the least, but He said to do it, so I tried it.

Gradually and amazingly, maybe even miraculously, I began to rise from the agony that was my reality. Slowly, but surely, I began to heal from the pain that had poisoned the greater part of my existence. In the end, I actually DID give thanks for what had hit me. I realized that with the pain also came a gift. I was a much better, much deeper, much more compassionate and understanding person than I ever could have dreamed of before going through all that. Yes, I was grateful for my trauma. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, God. Please do not let it ever happen to another human being, but thank you, Jesus. Thank you, God.

As time went on, I enjoyed raising my two beautiful boys. We laughed, we played, and they grew up to be wonderful men. I had taken the lesson I had learned from that trauma and had incorporated it into my daily life. By the time my sweet William died, I was literally giving thanks for him a thousand times a day.

When I thought about it, I could not believe it. I even thought it hyperbolic to think I gave thanks for him 100 times a day. Then, I analyzed: a thought takes about seven seconds. There are sixty seconds in a minute, 60 minutes in an hour and 18 waking hours in a day. That comes to more than 1000 thoughts a day and virtually every waking moment I spent giving thanks. I gave thanks for everything that popped into my head, good or bad, but most of those thoughts were Gratitude for my sweet William. Every day I spent the vast majority of the day thanking Jesus for the sweet joy that was my beautiful baby boy.

Then he died.

I was in shock. I spent those first excruciatingly painful months vacillating between not believing in anything to giving thanks that I had gotten to have my precious son for those ever-so-short, 27 years. Oftentimes, I did this screaming at the top of my lungs.

I was thankful I had gotten to have him for 27 years, extraordinarily thankful. I just no longer believed in the existence of God or Heaven or anything beyond what was right here in this earthly realm.

I had lost my faith.

I remember attending meetings where Tommy's mom and Ricky's mom would laugh and talk about how our kids were together joking around in Heaven. I would metaphorically pat them on their heads and say, "ok, if that is what makes you feel better, but I do not buy it". I absolutely felt they were saying this to make themselves feel better, but that their fantasies were illusions and had no validity. They were just a bunch of pipe dreams to keep them surviving day to day.

I was the world's greatest skeptic.

I kept my thoughts to myself. As much as I thought their fantasies were hogwash, I certainly could not tell them that. I could not take away what little hope they had left. I could not destroy their reason for existing.

I, like every other bereaved parent, suffered horrifically every day, but they had their faith to soothe them. I had nothing. At the same time, I prayed to a God I did not believe in, that William would send me a dream.

I know, I know, it seems like a contradiction. How can you pray to something or someone you do not believe the existence of? Yeah, that was my life, tons of contradictions.

I prayed this prayer every night until I fell asleep from exhaustion. Then...

Nothing.....Nothing.....Nothing.

Nothing after nothing after nothing.Nothing.

Nothing, until after about a month I finally got tired of hitting my head on a brick wall and gave up. That night, I had a dream...

It was a simple dream. One of little significance or import. I thought nothing of it, while I was dreaming the night away.

It was so simple. Just a woman sitting in a balcony in a darkened theater. She was completely alone, as far as an audience was concerned. She was not thinking much of anything. Not looking forward to anything, just sitting there looking nonchalantly ahead at the people on the stage.

The stage was the only thing lit in the otherwise darkened theater. She did not care much, but had her head tilted as she quizzically looked at the performers onstage.

They were all in a tizzy.

She had no concern, but was a little puzzled as to why all the fuss. The performers, she noticed were all costumed in whites and silvers and greys. When she tried to describe them, the only word that would come to her was, "exquisite". Yes, they were so incredibly beautiful. They were exquisite. The perfect word.

But why were they so disturbed? She did not really care much, but it did puzzle her. As she listened closer, she found they were all upset because “the star of the show” was not there. How could they go on without the star of the show being there? Neither she nor they knew the answer to that question, but it distressed them immensely.

Then, up from the right, came someone beautifully bedecked and bedazzled just as the performers on the stage were. She knew him to be the star of the show.

He sat beside her and said, “I cannot be the star of the show, anymore, but I am sending these people to help you”. Then, he left, and as if on cue, as if a curtain had risen and the play began, these multitudinous acrobats and dancers began to perform dances of such intricacy that, surely, many were destined to collide. Yet, none did. They danced their beautiful dance with such precision, it was as if they had been practicing their entire lives for this one fantastic and greatly important occasion.

Then, I felt this very forceful, very physical pushing at my back, telling me to “Get up and write! Get up and write!”.

I was EXHAUSTED! I had barely slept since William had died. I had never been more sleepy in my entire life.

I told the entity that I would remember and tried to shrug it off.

The entity was even more persistent and more forceful. “Get up and write! Get up and write!” It demanded.

Still I argued with it. I am SO TIRED, I begged. I promise, I will remember. Just let me sleep.

It did not listen.

With even greater force, the entity demanded I, “Get up and Write!”.

After much arguing, I finally gave in.

I reached over the side of my bed and brought the pen and paper I had kept to document every memory I had of my precious son and I began to write.

It was then I began to realize the meaning of the dream.

I was the woman in the theater and my sweet William was the star of the show! But who were these other people? I did not recognize them. They were bedecked in dazzling whites and silvers and grays from the tops of their heads to the shoes on their feet. I could not recognize any of them. In addition to that, there were a magnitude of people on stage. I had only been associating with 3 people before William died - and he was one of them. I did not recognize any of these people.

But Needless to say, I was ecstatic! I had gotten a dream from William.

William truly had been the star of the show for me. We have an older son. He was a very successful computer scientist. He was in a happy marriage. He did not need me, but my sweet William did.

My whole life revolved around William.

From the moment I woke up, I would ask, “what do you want to do today, William?”. Whatever he said, that is what we did. Making William happy, made me happy. Whether it was driving 45 minutes in rush hour traffic to get him a cotton candy flavored Italian ice or down to Dave and Buster’s, so he could play video games at the arcade or driving to any of a million different bookstores far and wide, so he could spend hour after hour after hour looking through books or simply driving down the street to Hardee’s to get his favorite Beer Battered Onion Rings, along with his also favorite, Swiss Mushroom Burger, that is what we did. No matter what he wanted, that is what we did. My little angel was so appreciative of the tiniest of efforts that everything I could do for him brought me great pleasure. While I was driving my precious child to and fro, we would tell each other of the different things we had learned throughout the day. We constantly educated each other, and I loved every teeny, tiny minute I was with him. We were together virtually every minute of every day and I could not have been happier. No wonder I gave thanks for him a thousand times a day. Nothing could have been more natural or more easy.

Then, he died.

With his body, my hope and faith were gone. Seemingly, swept out into the ether forever, never to be had again.

Then, he sent me that dream.

Shortly after William died, my husband and I started attending bereaved parents meetings. I noticed, while I was there, when we were talking, I would see Paul's mom and dad and Tria's mom and dad and Dave's mom just as they were, just as normal and lifelike as anyone would see anyone standing right in front of them. But when I got home, when I got home and thought about them, they did not look the same, at all.

No, instead of people with normal bodies and hair and faces, I would see these radiant, glowing white orbs with dazzling silver rays emanating from them. When William died, my vocabulary was extraordinary. Both he and I could have gotten into grad school on our vocabulary alone, when he was only in 5th grade. Our vocabulary grew every year. William was 27, when he died, so you can imagine the encyclopedia's worth of words I had to choose from, when looking for a word to describe these glowing orbs.

Yet, the only word I could come up with was, "exquisite".

I felt such extraordinary love and immense gratitude for these people who were helping guide me through the blazing inferno that was the life of a newly bereaved parent. I thought for sure the colors I would use for these extraordinary beings would be my favorites: purples, blues and greens. Yet, they were not. The colors used when I envisioned my dear, dear friends were a glowing white with dazzling silver rays.

Something I later came to believe was my guardian angel, tapped me on my right shoulder one day and said, "doesn't that remind you of something? Doesn't that remind you of something?" It repeated.

In the far recesses of my mind, I realized it did. Yes, Yes, the glowing white orbs with dazzling silver rays were the same colors as the people in my dream!!!

My sweet William was telling me he had sent you all to help me. He had told me of your existence months before I had met any of you.

That could only have happened, if our children are out there. It could only have happened if they are out there and want us to be happy.

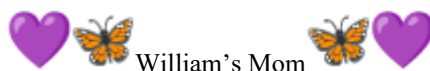
Our children love us. That is why they brought us together. This and a multitude of other amazing, almost miraculous reasons are why I am now not only a believer, but a fervent believer. These incredible, amazing, wonderful things - that have no other explanation - could not happen with the volume they do, if our babies were not out there. They could not happen, if we were not greatly and magnificently loved.

This brings me back to my question about the meaning of life. Through the kindness, compassion and love from you, my Earthly saviors, I have learned the meaning of life is to help one another. We were put- you, I, and every one else - were put here to help others along this all too often treacherous path. We are here to guide and hold the hands of our fellow man while we navigate the pitfalls on the road of life. It is just as Bethany Anne's father says, "Helping through healing". It is by helping others that we avoid or lessen the pain of the road of life. As Rabbi Kushner of, "When Bad Things Happen to Good People" said, when one is there to share the burden, we can endure twice as much pain.

With that, I thank you blessed, blessed people from the bottom of my heart and wish you not only hope and peace, but joy also, as we travel this all too often treacherous, yet also magnificently beautiful path of life.

Much, much love and appreciation,

Linda Khadem



William's Mom

David Kessler gets it.

By Sherrie Smith, Andrew's Mom

I forget how I was introduced to David Kessler and his book, "Finding Meaning, The Sixth Stage of Grief". I'd heard of him and his work with Elisabeth Kübler-Ross on the five stages of loss (On Grief and Grieving) and somehow came across his book "Finding Meaning". It may have been when I was looking for something, anything, that might help me understand and make some sort of meaning out of my son, Andrew's, death.

David Kessler is in the same boat that we're in; he, too, lost his twenty-one year old son. He spent a lifetime working on the stages of grief, writing, going on lecture tours, talking to people about what happens when you grieve. This was his profession. And then his son died and he went through the same stages that we are going through or have gone through or will go through.

Here is a quote from his book: *It's hard for us to accept that early deaths just happen. But despite our best efforts, they do. The most stellar parents have children who die young and it isn't anyone's fault. But because we are so accustomed to taking responsibility for everything that happens to our children, we can't help but wonder what we could have done differently to change the outcome. There will never be a satisfying answer to this question.*

Being able to find resources such as this is one of the many things that helps me on my grief journey, one that will never end. Kessler says in the book that when someone asks you how long will you grieve, ask them how long will your child be dead? Because that's how long we'll grieve.

David Kessler gets it. My copy of his book is dog-eared, underlined, and highlighted. I highly recommend it and if you get a chance to listen to one of his podcasts, please do. They are very informative and people from all over participate in them.

David Kessler website: <https://grief.com/>

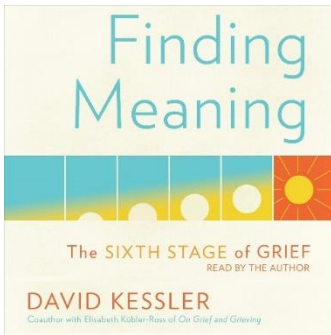
David Kessler podcasts: <https://grief.com/podcasts/>

David Kessler videos can also be found on youtube.

All There Is

I came across Anderson Cooper's podcast "All There Is," a podcast about grief. I would like to share this link with the group, as I feel many people would be interested in listening. It can be found at <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/all-there-is-with-anderson-cooper/id1643163707>

Kim Ethridge
Rowan's mom



Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief

[David Kessler](#) (Author, Narrator),

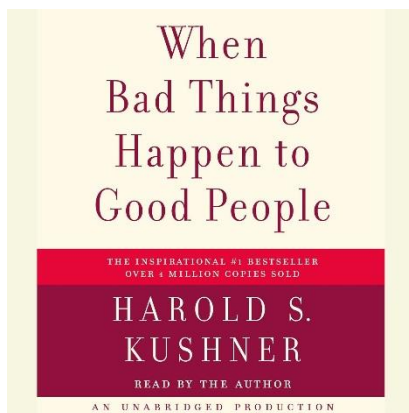
In this groundbreaking and “poignant” (Los Angeles Times) book, David Kessler — praised for his work by Maria Shriver, Marianne Williamson, and Mother Teresa — journeys beyond the classic five stages to discover a sixth stage: meaning.

In 1969, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross first identified the stages of dying in her transformative book *On Death and Dying*. Decades later, she and David Kessler wrote the classic *On Grief and Grieving*, introducing the stages of grief with the same transformative pragmatism and compassion. Now, based on hard-earned

personal experiences, as well as knowledge and wisdom gained through decades of work with the grieving, Kessler introduces a critical sixth stage: meaning.

Kessler’s insight is both professional and intensely personal. His journey with grief began when, as a child, he witnessed a mass shooting at the same time his mother was dying. For most of his life, Kessler taught physicians, nurses, counselors, police, and first responders about end of life, trauma, and grief, as well as leading talks and retreats for those experiencing grief. Despite his knowledge, his life was upended by the sudden death of his 21-year-old son.

How does the grief expert handle such a tragic loss? He knew he had to find a way through this unexpected, devastating loss, a way that would honor his son. That, ultimately, was the sixth stage of grief - meaning. In *Finding Meaning*, Kessler shares the insights, collective wisdom, and powerful tools that will help those experiencing loss.



When Bad Things Happen to Good People

Harold S. Kushner (Narrator, Author)

When Harold Kushner’s three-year-old son was diagnosed with a degenerative disease that meant the boy would only live until his early teens, he was faced with one of life’s most difficult questions: Why, God?

Years later, Rabbi Kushner wrote this straightforward, elegant contemplation of the doubts and fears that arise when tragedy strikes. In these pages, Kushner shares his wisdom as a rabbi, a parent, a reader, and a human being. Often imitated but never superseded, *When Bad Things*

Happen to Good People is a classic that offers clear thinking and consolation in times of sorrow.

Monthly Gatherings In-person Gatherings are scheduled for the FIRST THURSDAY of each month at Calvary United Methodist Church, 301 Rowe Blvd, Annapolis, MD 21401.

Doors open at 6:30, meeting starts at 7 PM.

In-person meetings are scheduled for April 3, May 1 and June 5.

For more information on our Chapter Gatherings, please contact our Chapter Co-Leaders, Tina Delaney 410-794-6688, or Sherrie Smith, 410-353-6992, at aabereavedparents@gmail.com or visit our website home page at <https://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org/HTML/Home.htm>

The **ZOOM Virtual Gatherings** are scheduled on the THIRD THURSDAY of each month. Watch for updates in email and future newsletters. Meeting starts at 7 PM. LogIn by approximately 6:45PM.

If interested, contact a team member to receive the email invitations to the ZOOM meetings.

If you have any problems logging in please contact one of the members of the Chapter Virtual Team and "hopefully" we'll be able to help.

Virtual ZOOM meetings are scheduled for April 17, May 15, and June 19.

BPUSA Anne Arundel Chapter Virtual Support Team

Paul Balasic - 443-566-0193

Jody Seyfferth - 619-592-1231

Michelle Crawford - 443-858-7887

Steve Knott - 410-409-0416

Core group quarterly meetings. A virtual ZOOM meeting held the 2nd Tuesday of the month, **starting at 7:00 PM**. Anyone interested in participating, contact Tina Delaney, 410-794-6688 or Sherrie Smith, 410-353-6992 at aabereavedparents@gmail.com to be included on the email invitation. We discuss finances, upcoming activities, plan the annual walk, and service of remembrance, suggest programs for the monthly gatherings, and address any number of issues that may come before the group.

Please join us. We welcome new Core Group Members.

April 8, July 8, October 14

BPUSA National Gathering, July 27– 29, 2025

Pittsburgh Airport Marriott, 777 Aten Road, Coraopolis, PA

For information go to <https://bereavedparentsusa.org/2025-national-gathering/>

Annual Memory Walk October 4, 8:30 AM

Quiet Waters Park, Annapolis

Service of Remembrance December 7, at 3 PM

St Martins in-the-Field Episcopal Church

Benfield Blvd, Severna Park

DONATIONS**may be made in memory of your child*****to offset the costs of our local chapter's events and communications.******Your donations provide the core resource for our Chapter.*****Digital Donations can now be made through ZELLE.**Add our Chapter as a RECIPIENT by using the Chapter email aabereavedparents@gmail.com.***Thank you for your thoughtful generosity.*****Newsletter & Website Sponsor Donations**

Judy and Louie Bolly in memory of Wendy Bolly

Linda and Yoosef Khadem in memory of William Khadem

Cathy and Deke Logan in memory of Trip Logan

Kim and Jeff Ethridge in memory of Rowan Ethridge

Jody Seyfferth (in kind donation) in memory of Donnie Seyfferth

Michelle and Jason Campbell in memory of Jason "Tyler" Campbell

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES: *I encourage you to become a contributor. This newsletter is published for you, so I ask you to make it your own. Whatever you are feeling or thinking will be useful to someone else. 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 to Carol at ctomaszewski74@gmail.com by **June 15 for the July/Aug/Sept 2025 newsletter***We are also looking for a new Newsletter Editor. Please consider filling this position.**Our newsletter is often a lifeline to our members and we want to continue this resource.***SPONSORSHIP OF NEWSLETTER AND WEBSITE:** *This is a wonderful way to honor your child's memory and share them with all of us, while at the same time contribute to our Chapter. The **suggested 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*

- For the newsletter, submit a photograph and a short memorial to ctomaszewski74@gmail.com to be included in the newsletter, by **June 15 for the July/Aug/Sept 2025 newsletter**.
- 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.
- **Make check payable to Anne Arundel County Chapter, BPUSA.**
And mail to PO Box 6280, Annapolis MD 21401.
Or use ZELLE through your bank to aabereavedparents@gmail.com

CHAPTER CONTACTS:

Chapter Co-Leader: Tina Delaney, 410-794-6688, aabereavedparents@gmail.com
Chapter Co-Leader: Sherrie Smith, 410-353-6992, aabereavedparents@gmail.com
Virtual Meetings Coordinator: Jody Seyfferth, 619-592-1231; Paul Balasic, 443-566-0193
Treasurer: Janet Tyler
Librarian: Beth Mucciariaro
Hospitality: Sandi Burash 410-551-5774
Programs/Sponsorships: Mary Redmiles 301-704-8086, mary.redmiles@gmail.com
Newsletter: Carol and Rick Tomaszewski, 410-519-8448, ctomaszewski74@gmail.com
Sibling Coordinator: Amanda Halbach Hughes, 443-994-3855, alrhalbach@gmail.com
Facebook Administrators: June Erickson juneerickson@aol.com,
Tawny Lopez torismom444@gmail.com
Spanish Speaking Support: Irene Belcher, 443-824-2638, Belcherirene@yahoo.com .
Special Greeting Cards: Linda Khadem, lindakhadem@icloud.com

Our Anne Arundel County Chapter, Bereaved Parents USA, 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, bebessling@aol.com,
Mary Redmiles (301) 704-8086
Noel Castiglia (410) 974 1626
Ann Castiglia (410) 757-5129
Paul Balasic (443) 566 0193

Email: aabereavedparents@gmail.com

On **Facebook**: search for “Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA”
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BPUSAAAC/>

Browse our website <https://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org/HTML/Home.htm> to find information about our meetings, resources, and view the link to Our Children which gives their names and some photos.

Other sites to browse:

<https://bereavedparentsusa.org/>
<https://www.compassionatefriends.org/>
<https://www.opentohope.com/>
<https://whatsyourgrief.com/>

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 handprint 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

Grief in the Season of Renewal

Litsa Williams, What's Your Grief, <https://whatsyourgrief.com/grief-in-spring/>

The spring equinox is just behind us, a time that reminds us of balance and the cycles of the natural world. If you're a person of faith, spring brings holidays. Easter comes, with messages of hope and resurrection, and Passover, with contemplation of redemption and freedom. And holidays aside, it's hard not to notice the natural world begging us to appreciate renewal.

With grief in spring, the cycles of life and death can be . . . complicated.

On the one hand, reminders of hope or renewal or redemption can be comforting and inspiring. On the other, grief in spring can mean these reminders feel painful and alienating if you're feeling personally disconnected from them. Seeing a bleak winter

landscape turning a lush green can be inspiring. It gives hope for the evolution of our lives after loss while simultaneously feeling like an unwanted reminder that the world keeps turning.

In its most practical terms, this spring stretch might bring beautiful moments with friends, family, and in nature. With the joy and comfort you find there, you might also find some pangs of guilt. No matter the highlights of this day, week, or month, it will likely also include difficult reminders. There are reminders that another season has come and gone. We can be left feeling hyperaware that we've moved even further from a past that we love and miss.

You might find yourself reminded of the family members absent from Seder tables and Easter meals. Or perhaps you find yourself all alone at a time of year when others are gathered with family. You might find yourself surrounded by people, but acutely aware that loneliness is not simply about being alone. It is about missing a certain person or a certain type of relationship. It's what can leave us feeling lonely in a room full of people.

Wouldn't it be great if there were some magic words to wipe away all the grievous pain of spring?

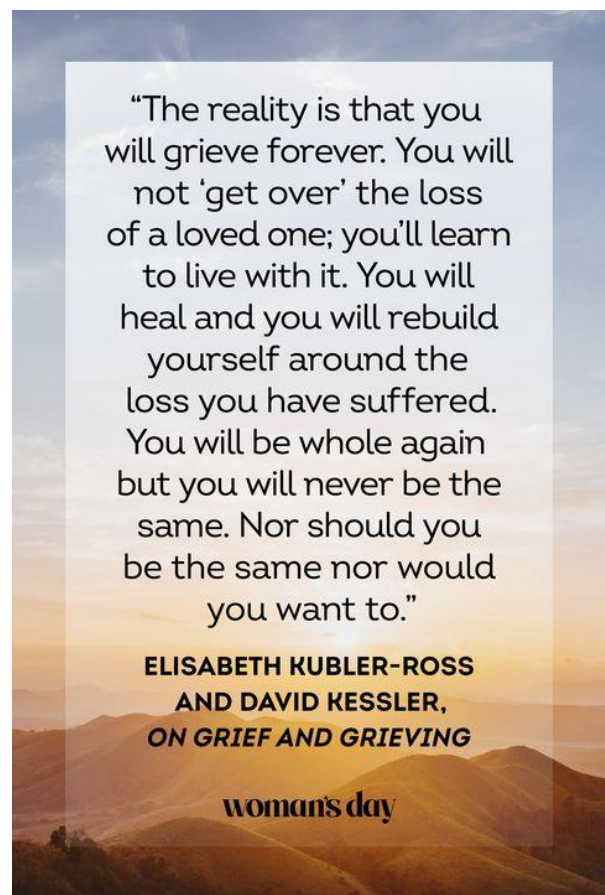
Spoiler alert: no magic words here to fix grief in spring because grief [isn't something that needs fixing](#). But we can offer a few gentle reminders as you navigate this new season.

1. Decide to find comfort where you can - be it in the cycles of nature, spiritual reminders of rebirth and redemption, or time with friends and family.
2. Create space for the grief. When the sun is shining and the birds are singing or we're gathered with people we love, it can feel like we should just focus on the positive - embrace that attitude of gratitude. But gratitude isn't an antidote to grief. It is a companion to it. We can still create room to acknowledge all that has been lost alongside all that remains. Feeling our grief in spring fully while being grateful for the hope in the season is a helpful practice.
3. Remember, your pain is not your connection. If you are lucky enough to be finding bright spots in the spring season that seem to be easing your pain or making it easier to carry, embrace them. Your connection to your past and those you have lost lives in your memories of past spring seasons, in the ways they shaped who you are and how you live in the world, in the things that you do in their memory.

4. Spend time in nature. Though some may find greater spiritual connection to nature than others, on a tangible, physiological level, nature is good for us. Research has found that being in nature can lower our stress hormone levels, which in turn can lower our anxiety and depression. Studies have shown that spending time in nature can improve our mood, make us more mentally sharp, lower blood pressure, and there is even some evidence it can boost our immune systems. Though being in nature is good for us any time of year, the change of the seasons can be an especially impactful time to connect with the natural world.
5. Set an intention for the coming season. This doesn't have to be something huge. Any small thing that you want more of or less of in your day-to-day life can be an easy and realistic place to start. (If you are a member of our grievers' [community](#), we've put some time on the calendar for this at the start of each season).
6. Whatever grief in spring brings for you, remember that we are never as alone as we feel. If the seasonal changes have you feeling down, you're not alone. Statistically, it is actually surprisingly common in the spring. So reach out -- to friends and family, to a support group or counselor, or to others in your community.

April 17, 2023

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Go to <https://bereavedparentsusa.org/2025-national-gathering/> for details on the National Gathering and all activities. Registration is available through the website.



Early Bird Registration by June 1, cost \$80.
Our Chapter will reimburse your \$80 fee.

Meal Plan is \$235, or purchase ALA Carte

Hotel reservations by June 30 are \$125 per night at Pittsburgh Airport Marriott. The hotel is providing a guaranteed block of rooms for the nights of July 24-27 at a discount rate of \$125 per night (plus tax) for rooms booked by June 30th. A free airport shuttle service is provided by the hotel.

Thursday night Gateway Clipper Cruise, \$28

Candle lighting and Slideshow Saturday evening, picture deadline July 9

Closing Ceremony Sunday morning

Attending a National Gathering can be life-changing as you hear speakers and attend workshops on topics of interest to you. Being together with other bereaved parents will assure you that you are not alone in your grief. There are opportunities to honor your child by placing an "ad" in the Memorial Booklet, getting a photo button made, participating in the Candle Lighting and Memorial Slide Show, and of course connecting with others and telling your child's story. It's several days you will always remember.

Carol Tomaszewski, Dave's Mom

The first National Gathering we attended was in Memphis, just 2 years after our son, Nick, died. As we walked into the conference, we were surrounded by bereaved parents from all over the country. It was a feeling of "instant family," and the three days spent with them proved to be somewhat consoling, not feeling alone in our deep grief. We attended various breakout sessions, ate meals together, listened to keynote speakers, walked the grounds, and sang songs. Our children who have left us too soon brought us together, as we honored them in a meaningful gathering.

Tina Delaney, Nick's Mom

To be reimbursed, just let us know you are attending the National Gathering. Contact

Chapter Co-Leader: Tina Delaney, 410-794-6688, aabereavedparents@gmail.com

Chapter Co-Leader: Sherrie Smith, 410-353-6992, aabereavedparents@gmail.com