



August 2011 – September 2011

## A Journey Together: Hinsdale Chapter - Bereaved Parents of the USA www.bpusahinsdale.org

### Bereaved Parents of the USA Mission:

We, as bereaved parents, help grieving parents and families rebuild their lives following the death of a child.

*Meetings are generally held the first Friday of every month. Doors open at 7:00 PM for greeting and fellowship.*

*Redeemer Lutheran Church, 139 East First Street, Hinsdale, Illinois  
(One block east of Garfield Street & one block south of the railroad tracks)  
Donna Corrigan, Chapter Leader 630-279-6148 or 630-841-7056 (cell)*

## A Thousand Milestones

*by Donna Corrigan*

Did you ever play the card game Mille Bornes with your family? The name, a thousand milestones, refers to the stone markers along the roads in France. Throughout the game, there are many unexpected hazards, not unlike our grief journey,

There are many days when you can barely get out of bed. You're out of gas, all four tires are flat and you see a giant STOP sign looming ahead. Somehow you push on, find the strength for one more day and head out into the world. You might never feel like you can get out of low gear for months. This isn't unusual or unexpected for a grieving parent; our motors are just above idle.

The days do come when you are puttering along, not really cruising, but moving forward and the dangerous curve in the road ahead almost tosses you off the path. It can be a birthday or anniversary, a picture, a family or school celebration that unseats your resolve to be aware of grief trigger. Even though you saw it coming, you didn't see it coming. Sometimes it can take weeks of grief work to get you back on the roadway.

For every hazard in the card game, there is a remedy. And as in life, unfortunately, you may not have it when you need it.

One giant roadblock on our grief journey can be funerals. Whether it is the service for a loved one, an acquaintance, or a business associate, it can have the power to make you feel trapped on a dangerous dead end road of hopelessness with no help in sight. The music, the flowers, the people.

All the progress you have made seems insignificant. When you see the pain of others in

### UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:

**Friday, August 5 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:** 7:30 PM to 9:30 PM - Small Group Discussion. Also, if you would like to bring school supplies in memory of your child they will be donated to a needy school. (optional)

**Wednesday, August 10 - Men's Group:** - Meet at Hardys' house in Westmont for a cookout at 6:30 PM Please RSVP to Jerry (630) 205-4552 or Don (630) 222-3341 or [d.hardy@comcast.net](mailto:d.hardy@comcast.net)

**Sunday, August 21- Butterfly Release & Family Picnic** - Katherine Legge Memorial Park, 60<sup>th</sup> & County Line Rd, Hinsdale (North Pavillion) - **Please RSVP by August 7th** - see information inside this newsletter

**Friday, September 9 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:** 7:30 PM to 9:30 PM - "What everyone should know about grieving people"

**Wednesday, September 14 - Ladies' Night Out:** - Meet at (ANOTHER NEW LOCATION & TIME) Bohemian Crystal, Blackhawk Drive in Westmont at 6:00 PM

**Saturday, September 17- Cemetery Visits Day** - Meet at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Hinsdale at 9:30 AM

grief, it can be paralyzing... it takes your breath away. You were once there, you remember.

When this has happened to me in the past, I find it very helpful to share my feelings with other travelers. They can help me get my perspective back, and perhaps work on old issues that have arisen in a new way. I can get back on the roadway.

As time goes by, I have learned to look at these experiences as milestones on my journey. ✱

♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gifts ♥ ♥ ♥

A Love Gift is a donation to the chapter in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling. A financial contribution in any amount is appreciated. All Love Gifts are gratefully acknowledged in the newsletter accompanied by wording exactly as the donor submits. BP/USA is a national non-profit organization therefore; all donations to the chapter are tax deductible as allowed by law.

When mailing in a love gift, **please include your child's name, your address** and any other info you would like in your love gift message. Make your check payable to: **BP/USA Hinsdale** and **mail it to arrive by the 10<sup>th</sup>** of the month prior to the upcoming newsletter. The newsletter is published every other month. Mail your check to:

**BP/USA Hinsdale Chapter  
PO Box 703  
Hinsdale IL 60522**

It is also recommended that you email your love gift message to the newsletter editor, **celeste\_hardy@hotmail.com**.



*In loving memory of  
Patrick Vincent DeMauro  
January 28, 1982 until August 29, 2001*

10 long years of missing you, still as heartbroken now as the day you left us.

Love always,  
Mom & Dad  
Vincent & Debbie DeMauro



*In loving memory of  
Douglas McCallum  
September 23, 1980 until February 21, 2000*

We wish you were here with us to celebrate your birthday. It seems we miss you more with each passing year.

Love,  
Mom & Dad  
Reg & Marcia McCallum



♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gifts ♥ ♥ ♥



*In loving memory of our beautiful babies  
Jeffery James and Natalie June Snyder  
July 14, 1986 until June 23, 1989*

Happy 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
Twenty five years later, and never a day goes by...

*"You were born together, and together you shall be forever more. ....  
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you."  
~ Kahlil Gibran  
The Prophet*

With love,  
Mom, Dad, Jamie & Michael  
Don & Leslie Snyder



Thank You for your continued support of  
Bereaved Parents of the USA - Hinsdale Chapter.



*In loving memory of  
Michael Patrick Gordon  
February 20, 1974 until  
August 8, 2004*

On May 24, 2011, the City of Chicago dedicated an honorary street sign for Chicago Officer Michael Gordon who was killed in the line of duty on August 8, 2004. The sign is located at the corner of 51st Street and South Leamington Ave, where Michael at one time resided as well as his grandmother. Michael is the son of Bob and Carol Gordon. Pictured holding the sign are Michael's children, Cullen, Grace and Malik.

## School Supplies

For the last several years our chapter has donated school supplies to a local public school, in memory of our children. The following list has some suggestions for your purchase.

Jumbo glue sticks  
 Baby wipes for dirty hands  
 Erasers  
 Pencils  
 Colored pencils-sharpened  
 Fiskars scissors-pointed  
 Crayola markers-any colors  
 Paper plates (cheap)  
 Elmer's glue  
 Spiral notebooks

Any supplies will be appreciated. Just bring them to the August or September meeting. 🌿

## Cemetery Visit Day

As bereaved parents we enjoy sharing stories about our children. On Saturday September 17th we will meet at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Hinsdale at 9:30 and visit our children's graves together.

Afterwards, we will have lunch at a local restaurant. If your child has not been interred or is not buried in the area, you are welcome to join us. We will have a sign up sheet at the August and September meetings.

Call Donna if you have questions 630 841 7056. 🌿

## Welcome

Bereaved Parents Hinsdale Chapter extends a warm welcome to the new attendees at our recent meetings. We know it is difficult to come to your first meeting.

New attendees:

♥ Robin Legittino, mom of **Anthony Legittino**

We are very sorry for the reason you are here, but we are glad that you found us. 🌿

## Walking Through Grief – Together

*by Ruth Juergensen, Melissa's mom*

This May I had an opportunity to participate in a fund raising event for the Center for Grief Recovery & Therapeutic Services. The event's mission was to raise money to offset the costs to individuals who cannot afford counseling services. This center has been serving the Chicagoland area for over 25 years, providing grief counseling services to the community. This agency was cofounded by Dr. Jerry Rothman following the death of his brother. Dr. Rothman was unable to find the support he needed to work through his grief, hence he founded this center. The center prides itself on utilizing "creative treatment and training methods".

They have a website ([griefcounselor.org](http://griefcounselor.org)) on which you can find a place to blog, read grief recovery articles, find support resources and general information about the centers' services. This is another resource to consider. I have not used their professional services and cannot offer any feedback. This is just information to pass on and share. It may be useful now or in the future for those of us on our grief journey. The information for the center is as follows: Center for Grief Recovery & Therapeutic Services: Institute for Creativity & Development; 1263 W Loyola, Chicago, IL. 60626; 773-274-4600. 🌿

## The Beginning of a New School Year

*by Mary S. Cleckley, I Walked A Mile With Sorrow*

The beginning of a new school year can be a painful time, particularly if you have school-aged children. There is some pain that has no road around it, and this qualifies as such. I hope you will let those who care about you help you through this special day. There are also some things you can do to help yourself. A window-shopping trip to a mall may help, or extra exercise can help dispel some depression and anxiety. Just know that it's normal to have these feelings. More importantly, know that this, too, shall pass. 🌿

*Our Children, Loved Missed and Remembered - Anniversaries and birthdays are difficult for bereaved parents and families. In the days ahead, may we lovingly remember these children and send our prayers, love and support to their parents and families*

**Brian Sirotzke - 26**  
Aug 03, 1982 - Sep 05, 2008  
Anne Sirotzke

**Chris Marie Longo - 18**  
Dec 21, 1951 - Sep 26, 1970  
Brain Aneurysm  
Anthony & Margery Longo

**Christopher Kavanagh - 25**  
Sep 23, 1984 - Nov 15, 2009  
Undetermined  
Sherri Kavanagh

**Daniel Meyer - 7**  
Feb 21, 1977 - Sep 21, 1984  
Hit by Car  
Kenneth & Olivia Meyer

**Daryle J. "DJ" Hall - 22**  
Mar 10, 1984 - Sep 11, 2006  
Accidental Drug Overdose  
Bob and Sherry Hall

**Douglas McCallum - 19**  
Sep 23, 1980 - Feb 21, 2000  
Accident  
Reg & Marcia McCallum

**Eric Byrne - 44**  
Sep 04, 1960 - May 09, 2005  
Pulmonary Embolism  
Eleanor & Joe Byrne

**Frank P. Amelio - 27**  
Apr 25, 1980 - Sep 13, 2007  
Drug Overdose  
Helen Amelio

**James G. Frale - 13**  
Jul 11, 1967 - Sep 13, 1981  
Electrocution  
John & JoAnn Frale

**Jamie Lee Hoebble - 21**  
Jul 26, 1983 - Sep 23, 2004  
Karen & John Pech

**Jamie Mitchell - 31**  
Feb 28, 1978 - Sep 19, 2009  
Suicide  
Lance & Kristie Mitchell

**Jennifer Lynn Kirwan - 17**  
Mar 10, 1981 - Sep 20, 1998  
Auto Accident  
Linda Kelley

**Jill Kathleen Ebert - 6**  
Jun 24, 1984 - Sep 03, 1990  
BrainTumor  
Michael P Ebert

**Jimmy Lekas - 18**  
Sep 10, 1969 - Jun 14, 1988  
Cancer  
Stephanie Lekas

**Johnny Hurley - 28**  
Apr 15, 1977 - Sep 11, 2005  
Motorcycle Accident  
John & Pat Hurley

**Joshua Burkett - 27**  
Sep 14, 1982 - May 04, 2010  
Car Accident  
Dan Burkett

**Kelly Ann Meicrotto - 23**  
May 25, 1980 - Sep 01, 2003  
Lenore Robinson

**Kerri L. Gartner - 22**  
Sep 09, 1981 - Oct 24, 2003  
Auto Accident  
Ervin & Kathleen Gartner

**Laura Ryeczyk -**  
Sep 03, 1965 - Sep 03, 1965  
Cord strangulation  
Jack & Karen Ryeczyk

**Lily Claire Domagala - 16 Months**  
May 11, 2002 - Sep 12, 2003  
Heart & Lung Defects  
Lisa Domagala

**Marty Sobanski (Brother) - 28**  
Dec 08, 1961 - Sep 05, 1990  
Seizure Disorder  
Helen Sobanski-Hennessey

**Michael Atella - 60**  
Oct 11, 1949 - Sep 12, 2008  
Heart Attack  
Edna Atella

**Mike Seaney - 44**  
Feb 24, 1951 - Sep 23, 1995  
Medical Misdiagnosis  
Vernadene Tolman

**Nancy R. Lyell (Sue's Sister) - 35**  
Feb 14, 1961 - Sep 10, 1996  
Cancer  
Sue & Garry Fink

**Phillip G. Dore - 21**  
Nov 11, 1988 - Sep 02, 2010  
Suicide  
Phil & Linda Dore

**Rachel Krueger - 21**  
Dec 29, 1986 - Sep 23, 2008  
Pulmonary Embolism  
Jim Krueger & Rose Martino-Krueger

**Tamaron "Tami" Racky - 21**  
Jul 08, 1975 - Sep 12, 1996  
Accidental Drug Overdose  
John & Debbie Racky

*Our Children, Loved Missed and Remembered (continued) - Anniversaries and birthdays are difficult for bereaved parents and families. In the days ahead, may we lovingly remember these children and send our prayers, love and support to their parents and families*

**William E. Barth - 20 1/2**  
Sep 23, 1965 - Jun 05, 1986  
Suicide  
Karen Barth

**Zachary "Zach" Pfingston - 13**  
Sep 20, 1996 - Jul 31, 2009  
Seizure  
Manjula & Jack Pfingston



**Brandon Hardy - 22**  
Aug 13, 1980 - Dec 28, 2002  
Auto Accident  
Don & Celeste Hardy

**Brian Sirotzke - 26**  
Aug 03, 1982 - Sep 05, 2008  
Anne Sirotzke

**Carole "Suzie" Pavett - 56**  
Jun 03, 1953 - Aug 20, 2009  
Heart Attack  
Audrey Stolfa

**Corinne Naumann - 23**  
Aug 14, 1986 - Apr 14, 2010  
Cheryl Naumann

**Danny Golden - 22**  
Aug 26, 1975 - Aug 24, 1998  
Suicide  
Janet Mallo

**David Horn - 7**  
Aug 05, 1973 - Nov 20, 1980  
Leukemia  
Russ & Linda Horn

**Frank Gianfortune Jr - 19**  
Aug 01, 1968 - Dec 06, 1987  
Auto Accident  
Ms. Adel Gianfortune

**Jason Matthew Bill - 13**  
Aug 17, 1981 - Jun 14, 1995  
Water Sport Accident  
Nancy Stein

**Jennifer Erin Morris - 16**  
Jul 15, 1982 - Aug 10, 1998  
Auto Accident  
Wendy & Dan Morris

**Kimberly Ann Olson - 15**  
Feb 14, 1983 - Aug 20, 1998  
Histicytic Disorder  
Larry & Danita Olson

**Mark Thomas Fornek - 6**  
May 16, 1992 - Aug 04, 1998  
Floodwater Drowning  
Greg & Wendy Fornek

**Matthew Corrigan - 14**  
Jul 04, 1977 - Aug 12, 1991  
Auto Accident  
Donna & Mike Corrigan

**Megan Elisabeth Peters - 23**  
Nov 26, 1980 - Aug 31, 2004  
Drug Overdose  
Kathleen Peters

**Michael Knorps - 51**  
Aug 17, 1957 - May 30, 2009  
Mary Ann Knorps

**Michael Patrick Gordon - 30**  
Feb 20, 1974 - Aug 08, 2004  
Killed by Drunk Driver  
Robert & Carol Gordon

**Patrick Dore - 12**  
Aug 08, 1990 - Aug 25, 2002  
Meningitis  
Lois McDonald

**Patrick Dore - 12**  
Aug 08, 1990 - Aug 25, 2002  
Meningitis  
Phil & Linda Dore

**Patrick Vincent DeMauro - 19**  
Jan 28, 1982 - Aug 29, 2001  
Car Accident  
Vincent & Debbie DeMauro

**Rob Funston - 25**  
Aug 22, 1955 - Jul 30, 1981  
Pneumonia  
Bob & Fran Funston

**Ron Buccieri - 42**  
Mar 22, 1961 - Aug 31, 2003  
Unknown  
Carol Polich

**Sarah Callister - 16**  
Aug 09, 1980 - May 03, 1997  
Cardiac Arrhythmia  
Lynn Callister

**Thomas Burton - 22**  
Apr 14, 1954 - Aug 27, 1976  
Suicide  
Patricia & Erwin Burton

**Trudy Boskey - 47**  
Jul 06, 1953 - Aug 03, 2000  
Cancer  
Rose Conway



## BUTTERFLY RELEASE & FAMILY PICNIC



**Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup> 12:00 Noon**

Katherine Legge Memorial Park ~ North Pavilion  
60<sup>th</sup> and County Line Road ~ Hinsdale

Donation: \$10 per individual; \$20 per family  
Chicken, Beverages, Utensils provided

A - H Bring dessert (for 12)

I - Z Bring side dish/salad (for 12)

RSVP by August 7<sup>th</sup> to:

BP/USA Hinsdale

PO Box 703

Hinsdale, IL 60521

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BP/USA Hinsdale Chapter - August 21, 2011 - Picnic RSVP

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of People: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise for the soul

by Rob Anderson

At my first support group meeting the facilitator suggested I try at least three meetings before deciding if a support group was for me. He said they work for some and not for others and that I might actually feel worse after the first meeting, but give it three meetings before I decide. The part about feeling worse sounded odd, but I allowed the three meeting advice into me because I assumed he knew more about this process than I did. He could actually put a few sentences together that made sense. I was still having trouble with that. At the first meeting not too much was making sense and I didn't know what was going to work. All I knew was that I needed something to help my pain.

"Okay," I thought, "let's get through the next minute and then the next one after that and this meeting will end and if somehow I make it to the day before the second meeting I'll decide what to do at that point." The day before the second meeting came and I remembered that yes, I had felt worse at the end of that first meeting. I'd felt beaten up and beaten down, but I trusted the facilitator and I went to the second meeting. That meeting was a little better and the third was even better and by that time I was hooked. I was a support group junkie. I found it worked for me in many large and small ways. I felt comfortable in the group setting knowing I could express myself in anyway I wanted, knowing I would not be judged or "shoulded" on. Express myself I did. Those first few meetings are a bit hazy, but I remember anger, tears, yelling and pounding the table. I was a scary guy, but every time I let out my pain, I let healing in. Now many years down the road I'm grateful for the "three meeting" advice.

Through the years I've kept trying to think of an analogy that would help describe how important it is to keep coming back to those meetings. When you're at your first meeting and someone's asking you to come to the third meeting, it really doesn't make sense. It feels too far away. Here's the analogy I've come up with. Joining a support group is like starting an exercise program after many years on the couch. Make sense? Stay with me. Just like going to that first meeting is hard, it's also hard to start exercising again. The first workout consists of figuring out what to do and where to start. The weights are dusty, the treadmill is covered with clothes and who the heck knows where the exercise mat is located.

That first meeting may also be hard to start. You'll awkwardly introduce yourself and hear strange things like, "I'm glad you're here." which kind of upsets you

because you don't really know what that means. Your clothes will feel heavy, your body will feel awkward, not to mention you've got to figure out a place to sit, who to sit next to and what to say. "Lost" is where you are, but as you look around the room and see parents smiling, laughing and hugging, a little teeny tiny bit of "found" will creep into you. You won't recognize it and it will take a few more meetings before you realize what that means, but it will find its way into you and gently wait for you to find its meaning.

Now back to the exercise analogy. You start your exercise program by doing as little as possible because you don't really want to be doing anything, but deep down you know it's important to your health, so you push on. You may do two sets of five push ups, ten crunches, hit the treadmill for five minutes and call it quits. That first session will be over and you won't feel very good. Your body will be yelling at you and the couch will be calling you. Just like your first workout, at your first support group meeting you might not want to do much either. You may do as little as possible and then find your soul is yelling at you and your pain is calling you. Pain you didn't know you had may have come to the surface and it scared you which made you think, "Why should I come back if I feel worse than when I came in?"

The morning after your first workout you throw your legs over the side of the bed and every single muscle in your body is screaming at you. "Oh my gosh," you think, "what did I do to myself? Why should I do that again?" You may feel the same way the day after your first support group meeting. When you wake up the next morning, tears may run down your cheeks when you think about what happened and you may think, "Oh my gosh, what did I do to myself? Why should I do that again?"

You manage to gently but gingerly get back into your workout clothes and head to the basement for another try. After stretching out and again convincing yourself it's a good thing, you get started. Much to your surprise you're able to add one push up, one crunch, but decide to stay the same distance on the treadmill because, "Hey, let's not get nuts here." What you find is that you saw progress, you moved forward, got a little stronger and you feel a little better about yourself. "Hey, maybe I should keep coming back," you say.

*Continued on the next page*

*Exercise for the soul ... Continued from page 7*

When the day before the second support group meeting comes you have to decide what to do. Go, not go; go, not go; go, not go? In the back of your mind you keep hearing the facilitator asking you to try three meetings, but you're scared. Just like you know that exercising is good for you, you kind of think going to another meeting will be good for you, so you decide to give the support group another try. When you walk in, the surroundings feel a little more familiar, you get hugs from the same people (and maybe new ones) that you got them from last month and the statement, "I'm glad you're here," makes a little more sense. You may open up just a little bit more, share a little more of your pain and feel just a little bit better at the end of the meeting. Your second workout comes to mind and you realize that here too you saw progress, you moved forward, got a little stronger and you feel a little better about yourself. But, it still wasn't all that great. It still hurt. You're still sore.

Now onto your third workout and even though you're no tri-athlete, you feel a little less sore, a little stronger and a little more motivated. You may add nothing to your push-ups, crunches and treadmill, but you showed up and got involved; a victory. Things are moving along in little steps, but they're moving along. Your body is less angry and motivation becomes a word that's starting to make sense. The day before the third support group meeting arrives and even though you're still hesitant because your soul still hurts, the facilitator's advice is now stronger and making more sense. In you go.

This time you initiate the greetings and hugs, which kind of surprises you. You find yourself gravitating to certain people and feel comfortable talking with them. You never had that feeling before and are very grateful for their presence. They're probably thinking the same thing about you. The circle of mutual support is beginning to surround you. On the way home from your third meeting you know what the facilitator meant by asking for three meetings and you silently thank him.

Over the next several months of exercising you get very strong and very healthy. Your attitude is better; your body feels wonderful; no part of it is yelling at you anymore. Instead it's thanking you. You're now highly motivated and look forward to working out. It can be the same for your healing. By this time you've attended eight or nine meetings and can't wait to get to the next one. Even though you don't feel wonderful by any means, you feel better, you continue to move forward and get stronger. Deep down in your soul you think you heard a laugh. It's a distant echo, but you're sure it's

what you heard. Just like you've been exercising your body, you've been exercising your soul by attending a support group.

The point of this story is that if you exercise your soul by continuously sharing your story and reaching out for help, you can get stronger, you can get happier and your life can get better. However you exercise your soul is up to you. There are many ways to do it. The important thing is to do it consistently and with as much enthusiasm as you can muster. By working at your grieving and healing, good things can happen. You can one day smile and find meaning in your life again; and those are very good things. #



## Falling Apart

*by Eloise Cole*

I seem to be falling apart.  
 My attention span can be measured in seconds.  
 My patience in minutes.  
 I cry at the drop of a hat.  
 I forget things constantly.  
 The morning toast burns daily.  
 I forget to sign the checks.  
 Half of everything in the house is misplaced.  
 Feelings of anxiety and restlessness are my  
 constant companions.  
 Rainy days seem extra dreary.  
 Sunny days seem an outrage.  
 Other people's frustrations seem insignificant.  
 It has become routine to feel half crazy.  
 I am normal I am told.  
 I am a newly grieving person.



## It Isn't Fair

by Mark S. Cleckley, *I Walked a Mile With Sorrow*

It isn't fair (and there's a lot about life that isn't), but when a child dies, the responsibility for maintaining relationships falls on the shoulders of those who are grieving. It seems it should be the other way around, doesn't it? Most of us expect those who love and care for us to be the ones who will understand our needs, reach out to us, and support us while we struggle to regain some balance in our lives. So it comes as a rude shock when we discover some of these people don't understand any more than the proverbial man in the street. When this happens, we become angry and disappointed.

It is a mistake for grieving people to try to make important decisions too early in their grief. In an effort to escape some of the pain and because of the anger inherent in the situation, we often make decisions that seem right for the moment, but in fact are not best for the long run. We sacrifice long-term pleasure for immediate gratification. Deciding who will and will not continue to be important in our lives is an important decision.

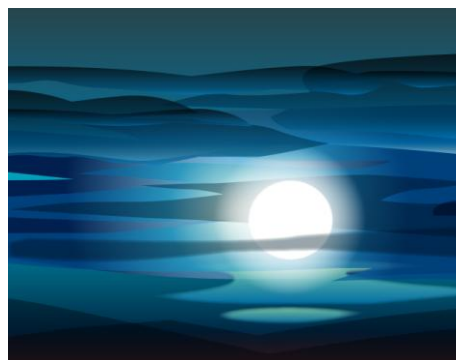
Think back to the time before your child died. You must have known some bereaved people back then who were important to you. How well did you understand their feelings and needs? How good were you at being there for them through the long haul? Maybe you can remember feeling tongue-tied, inadequate, and even cowardly, not because you didn't care, but because you cared so much you couldn't cope with their pain. You felt inadequate, and so, in their eyes, you may have failed them in their time of greatest need.

This is where the responsibility for relationships comes in. No important association should be severed during early bereavement without you having first made an effort to communicate your needs to those who love you. Before you cut them out of your life, at least try to educate them. Give them a book to read that spells out some of what you are going through and how much you need them to just be there to listen without giving you any answers. Impress upon them the fact that grief for a child is not a short-term thing and ask for their patience and their understanding.

Not everybody will be able to "be there" for you, no matter how hard you try to educate. If, however, you salvage one important relationship, it will have been worth your time and effort. Down

the road a way when you've had the time to make your adjustment to life without your child, you will find that some of these "unnecessary" people you gave up on too early in your grief really are a vital part of your life. It is difficult to go back and reestablish relationships that have been too long neglected.

No, it isn't fair, but we are the only ones who know how it feels to have been on both sides of that grief fence. Put that Ph.D. you've earned the hard way to good use. The payoff comes later when you have regained some equilibrium in your life and still have about you some of those people who really do matter and are necessary. #



## Sweet Dreams

by Shirley Cognard Ottman, *The Slender Thread*

Even while she lived sometimes I'd dream of her, my child. Now that she's gone—yes, even now—occasionally I'll dream of her again. Sometimes she's just a little girl in dresses I had made, her long blond hair cascading down her back or drawn up in a pony tail. At other times she's grown. I'll see her walking toward our pool, her waist about the size of Scarlett's when she caught Rhett Butler's eye. And once I dreamed that she was on a plain in Africa as I stood on a broad veranda watching her approach. What all these dreams might signify I cannot say with any certainty. Yet all the same, I recognize and feel ecstatic joy with each embrace. This joy remains, a sweet euphoria; it lingers for a time, illuminating life for me when day invades my senses and the dreams are gone.

## Anger

by Brenda Hobbs, *Where Are All The Butterflies?, Bereaved Parents of North Texas*

Of all the emotions that come with grief, I believe anger is one of the hardest for me to cope with. I had been angry many times in my life before our son Jesse died. But the anger that I experienced after his death was more intense and fierce than any anger I had ever felt before. Luckily, thanks to our bereavement support group, I have seen others with this kind of anger, so I wasn't as frightened by it as I would have been otherwise. Mine was such a raging, consuming anger that I remember the exact moment it hit me.

What I want to tell other bereaved parents is that it is perfectly normal to be angry. Anger is a very natural response to the devastating experience of the death of one's child. Anger craves a target. Anger can be directed toward a medical doctor, a drunk driver, God, yourself, or even your deceased child. It's all right to be mad at any of them. It can be horrifying, but it's still OK.

In my case, I found myself angry with God. I had complete faith that God would get Jesse through the open-heart surgery, and that he would be fine. I gave God credit for blessing us with Jesse, and for getting him to three years old with his health problems. I prayed with all my heart and soul for God to make Jesse well with the right surgeon and treatment. I believed God was showing us the way. So when Jesse died shortly after surgery, God got credit for that, also.

I had never been mad at God before, and it horrified me. A wonderful pastor/friend allowed me to talk with him about my anger. We discussed all of this for quite awhile.

During our discussion, he told me, *God is big enough to handle your anger.* I'll be forever thankful for his compassionate and understanding response. It helped me immensely to know that it was OK, to know that I wasn't a horrible person.

The worst thing that can happen with anger is that it can consume you. It can make you miserable and bitter. It has to be dealt with; it has to be vented—crying, screaming, talking, writing, exercising. I know of one man who bought dishes at garage sales, took them outside, and threw them at a brick wall. Use whatever it takes as long as it doesn't hurt anyone

else. Then reclaim life's beauty and goodness.

When we've conquered our anger, we've made a living tribute to the importance and lasting value of our children's lives. ❀



## Letting go

by Rob Anderson

If I do not let go of his death,  
I will not find his life.  
If I do not let go of my pain,  
I will not find my life.  
Others may want me to be as they  
think I should be.  
"Heal quickly, heal today,  
heal now so my pain will leave."  
I let go of their expectations  
and of mine.  
Healing is slow,  
slow like a spring flower  
resting in winter.  
I will not expect things of myself  
that my heart cannot do.  
My tears will visit frequently,  
my smile will return  
when it's ready.  
All I need for healing  
is my child and my grief work.  
If I fully embrace my pain,  
feel it all and not deny it,  
I will heal, I will laugh again.  
Forever I will miss his touch,  
his smile and scent.  
If I let go of his death,  
I will no longer miss all of him,  
because his joy, his spirit  
and most importantly,  
his life will return to mine.

## BP/USA Hinsdale Chapter

**Bereaved Parents of the USA** is a self-help support group which is run entirely by volunteers who are also bereaved parents. The volunteers are a little further down the road in their grief and can give back to the chapter by helping with the many jobs it takes to keep the chapter running. This makes it possible for new bereaved parents to see survival and hope when they walk through the door of their first meeting.

The steering committee meets periodically during the year to discuss future meeting programs, fund raising, member involvement, our library and other pertinent issues. Contact a member below if you would like to get involved

HINSDALE BP/USA STEERING COMMITTEE		
Chapter Leader	Donna Corrigan	(630) 279-6148
	Cell:	(630) 841-7056
Database Administrator	Angelo Tomasello	(630) 420-1649
Hospitality	Sally Yarberry	(708) 560-0393
Treasurer	George Ragusa	
Librarian		
Newsletter Editor	Celeste Hardy	(630) 963-0096
Members at Large	Eleanor Byrne	(708) 485-6160
	Ruth Juergensen	
	Rose Martino-Krueger	(847) 208-5620
	Jerry Schulman	(630) 205-4552
	Linda Tomasello	(630) 420-1649

## Telephone Friends

When you have a need to talk to another bereaved parent, these members are available to listen:

Val Vesely	(630) 469-9584
Donna Corrigan	(630) 279-6148
Marge Humbert	(815) 609-4151
Jim Moravcik (suicide)	(630) 904-9094

## Chapter Library

We maintain a large lending library of books and tapes of interest to bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents. These resources are available to check out at each meeting to be returned at the following meeting, if possible. If you come across a book at home that belongs to our library, please **mail it** to us at the reduced **"media rate"** to: **PO Box 703, Hinsdale IL 60522-0703.**

### *From your editor....*

We are different, our grief has changed us, not to mention we continue to have birthdays and grow older. But our children who have died are the same. They have no more birthdays and stay the same age. Do they watch us and marvel at our daily challenges? Do they experience through us those life events which continue on earth but they cannot participate? It is frustrating because we can talk out loud to them, we can scream for them or at them, we can shed tears for them but we cannot hear them or see them or feel their embrace. We can believe and have hope that we will be reunited but it does not always help us in the here and now when we try to imagine what they would be doing with their lives. We of course imagine them as being successful in life but know that there is always a chance had they lived that their lives could have been filled with hardship and/or heartache and pain.

What is the point of all this? It's like in the movie "Up In the Air" when George Clooney's character is trying to reason with his future brother-in-law who has cold feet a couple hours before the wedding. The groom imagines the drudgery of all of life's events and asks "What is the point?" And Clooney's character says it like it is, "there is no point." Does there have to be a point? I believe we ARE here for a purpose, so there is a "point", but as much as we seek the answer and try to reason it all out, we cannot fully know the "point" of our earthly life, no matter how much wisdom we possess. Just as we cannot know the answers to lingering questions which we have for our children who have died.

*Celeste*

## "A Journey Together: Hinsdale Chapter BP/USA"

The Hinsdale Chapter newsletter is compiled, stamped and mailed by volunteers, in loving memory of our children. There is no charge to receive it. Please send **address changes** to Angelo Tomasello at [angelotomasello@comcast.net](mailto:angelotomasello@comcast.net).

The newsletter is published on the Hinsdale Chapter website at:

<http://www.bpusahinsdale.org/>

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**August**

August 5	<b>Monthly Meeting:</b> 7:30 PM – Small group discussion
August 10	<b>Men's Group:</b> 6:30 PM – Meet at Hardys' in Westmont (RSVP to Jerry Schulman or Don Hardy)
August 21	<b>Butterfly Release &amp; Family Picnic:</b> Noon - KLM Park, 60 <sup>th</sup> & County Line Rd, Hinsdale

**September**

September 9	<b>Monthly Meeting:</b> 7:30 PM - What everyone should know about grieving people
September 14	<b>Ladies Night Out:</b> 6:00 PM – <b>Another NEW LOCATION &amp; Earlier Time</b> - Meet at Bohemian Crystal, Blackhawk Dr, Westmont
September 17	<b>Cemetery Visits Day</b> – Meet at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Hinsdale at 9:30 AM

**October**

October 7	<b>Monthly Meeting:</b> 7:30 PM
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**Love**

*by Darcie Sims*

Grief is the price we pay for love.  
We did not lose our children.

They died, taking with them our hopes and dreams  
for the future, but never, never taking away their  
love.

Though death comes, love will never go away.  
Hold it tight, the love our children gave us.  
Hold it tight through the storms of grief and bring it  
with you into today.

Love never goes away.

**BP/USA Hinsdale on the Web:**  
<http://www.bpusahinsdale.org/>

Bereaved Parents of the USA  
Hinsdale Chapter  
P.O. Box 703  
Hinsdale, IL 60522-0703



August 2011 – September 2011