



January – February – March 2017

A Journey Together: Chicagoland Chapter - Bereaved Parents of the USA www.bpusachicagoland.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 Tuesday of every month, 7:00 – 8:30 PM. Doors open at 6:30 PM for greeting and fellowship.
First Congregational Church of Western Springs, 1106 Chestnut Street, Western Springs, Illinois
Eleanor Byrne (708-485-6160) and Sally Yarberry (708-560-0393), Chapter Co-Leaders*

Winter

by Donna Corrigan
reprinted from BP/USA/Hinsdale Chapter
Feb 2010 Newsletter

I really don't like winter. You would think that having spent my whole life in the Midwest, I would have come to terms with the cold, often slushy, gray months of January and February. Each year I promise myself I will work on the negative attitude and follow it up with positive actions. Sometimes I succeed.

One of my constructive cold weather activities is driving through the Arboretum. Today the hills and valleys are covered with a blanket of snow, it has literally become a winter wonderland. Although the trees are bare of leaves, they don't seem barren. Wrapped in a snowy covering of white; they don't seem lonely or cold. Instead of stark and forlorn they seem almost snug and comfy.

Gradually, I realized that before me is not a sweeping valley at all, it is a frozen pond. On warmer days, the sun would be reflecting on water and there would be fish and frogs and lily pads and all sorts of underwater growth. The peaceful scene I am experiencing is fleeting; beneath the snow is an entirely different countryside. Which encounter would best describe the landscape?

Circumstances may force us to temporarily surround our broken hearts with a happy countenance. Sometimes our jobs, our lives, our responsibilities, demand an upbeat appearance. We can manage it, in the short term, but underneath the thin veil of pleasantness is a hurting bereaved parent, struggling to survive. There is a danger when we (and others) mistakenly assume this veneer is the outward sign of inner healing.

You may have already discovered that many people assume that there is a timeline for grief and for

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:

Tuesday, January 3 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:

7:00 PM to 8:30 PM - General Discussion

Sunday, January 22 - Candle Lighting Program

(Rescheduled): Doors open 6:30 PM; Program 7:00 PM, Education Bldg., Chapel and Parlor, 1st Floor

Tuesday, February 7 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:

7:00 PM to 8:30 PM - Topic to be determined

Tuesday, March 7 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:

7:00 PM to 8:30 PM - Topic to be determined

"normal." We have learned otherwise; it is a very long, often overwhelming journey that takes us to a "new normal." We do not want to be cheered up or hurried; we want to grieve our losses.

Of course, people are relieved to see us smiling and seeming to be back to our regular routines. We like that too! Grief is so physically and emotionally exhausting. Just be sure that you have a safe place to peel the smiley face off and be a bereaved parent. 🙏



♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gift ♥ ♥ ♥

In loving remembrance of

Douglas Scott McCallum

September 23, 1980 until February 21, 2000

It's hard to believe that 16 years have gone by.
We desperately miss you
and think of you every day.

Love, your family,

Reg & Marcia McCallum



♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gift ♥ ♥ ♥

*In Memory of Mike and the Bereaved Parents who
helped me live after his death.*

Mike Seaney

February 24, 1951 until September 23, 1995

In loving remembrance,

Vernadene Tolman



♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gift ♥ ♥ ♥

In loving memory of my daughter

Heather Runge

November 21, 1989 until January 4, 1990

Love always,

Sandy Runge-Sand



♥ ♥ ♥ 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**, and any other info you would like in your love gift message. Make your check payable to: **BP/USA Chicagoland** and mail it to arrive **by the 10th** of the month prior to the upcoming newsletter. **The newsletter is published quarterly.**

Mail your check to:
Bereaved Parents of the USA, Chicagoland Chapter
P.O. Box 320, Western Springs, IL 60558

It is also recommended that you email your love gift message to the newsletter editor and chapter co-leader, Sally Yarberry, at psyrbrry@hotmail.com. 🍀



♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gift ♥ ♥ ♥

In loving remembrance of

Gregory Michael Humbert

August 31, 1961 until October 31, 1991

Greg,

Over 25 years has passed and so much has happened. Your daughter, Brianne, was married a few years ago and this year you became the grandfather of Wyatt Gregory.

What a tribute and how proud you must be! I can just see you jumping up and down as you did when you got excited. I am so happy for you.

I'm writing a book about you and hope to finish it this year.

We all miss you and talk and pray to you every day.

Love you with all my heart,

Mother

Marge Humbert





bereaved parents usa
national gathering
august 4-6, 2017 | washington, dc
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Join us in Washington DC for the
2017 Bereaved Parents of the USA National Gathering.

Hilton Washington Dulles Airport
13869 Park Center Road, Herndon, VA 20171
(703) 478-2900 | <http://www.dulleshilton.com>

Start planning now, information is on the national website at
<http://bereavedparentsusa.org/gathering/>

For info contact Jodi Norman, Gathering Chairperson, 703-656-6999

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

Breanne Conterio – 21

Feb 27, 1990 - Jan 09, 2012
P.E.
Teri & Steve Conterio

Bryce Stack – 30

Jan 26, 1979 - Jul 24, 2009
Accidental Overdose
Trish DeBauche

Dana Samuel – 32

Apr 07, 1970 - Jan 23, 2003
Asphyxiation
Lana Samuel

Denise Dubois – 38

Feb 12, 1960 - Jan 02, 1999
Cancer/Suicide
Janet & Bernie Finnigan

Gerrick Davies – 18

Jan 21, 1986 - Feb 09, 2004
Murdered
Diane Davies

Heather Runge – 6 Weeks

Nov 21, 1989 - Jan 04, 1990
Neuroblastoma
Sandy Sand

Jeffrey Anderson – 17

Jan 28, 1981 - May 25, 1998
Asphyxiation
John & Irene Anderson

Jeffrey Scott Caccavari – 34

Jan 16, 1967 - May 10, 2001
Unknown
Dominic & Karen Caccavari

Jennifer Roley – 22

Nov 26, 1989 - Jan 15, 2012
Drug Overdose
Lynn Gantner

Josiah Weiberg – 10 Months

Jan 16, 2009 - Dec 03, 2009
SMA Type 1
Alesha & Jim Weiberg

Martin K. Adams – 42

Dec 11, 1960 - Jan 06, 2003
Marge & Bill Adams

Matthew Gavin – 32

Jan 22, 1981 - May 17, 2013
Cancer
Mary Ellen & Glenn Gavin

Matthew Swett – 25

Jan 07, 1979 - Jan 25, 2003
Accident
Keith & Jean Swett

Patrick Vincent DeMauro – 19

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

Ryan James Moravcik – 21

Jan 07, 1980 - Dec 31, 2001
Suicide
James & Lucille Moravcik

Ryan Vesely – 17

Oct 03, 1974 - Jan 18, 1992
Auto Accident
Stan & Val Vesely

Eric – 22

Jun 28, 1970 – Feb 08, 1993
Sue and Lou Robisch

Douglas McCallum – 19

Sep 23, 1980 – Feb 21, 2000
Accident
Reg & Marcia McCallum

Alyssa Dabrowski – 22

May 20, 1979 - Feb 03, 2002
Car Accident - Hit & Run
Allen & Rosemary Dabrowski

Donna Hark – 48

Oct 28, 1961 – Feb 08, 2010
Pulmonary Hypertension
Geraldine Ploskonka

Casey Cox – 27

Dec 17, 1985 - Feb 14, 2013
Asthma
Cynthia Cox

Dan Parmenter – 20

Oct 15, 1987 - Feb 14, 2008
NIU Classroom Shooting
Gary Parmenter

Daniel Meyer – 7

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

Deborah Gilligan Main – 35

Mar 18, 1965 - Feb 13, 2001
Melanoma
Margaret Gilligan

Colt Grabowski – 20

Feb 21, 1993 – May 16, 2013
Car Accident
Meg Iorfida

Dennis Rich – 37

Feb 11, 1971 - Apr 01, 2008
Cancer
Karen Rich

Melissa Juergensen – 19

Feb 24, 1989 – May 03, 2008
Auto Accident
Ruth Juergensen

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Joseph Ross – 23

Jun 09, 1985 – Feb 05, 2009
Asthma
Pat Ross

Emily Rose Ford –

Feb 23, 2010 - Feb 24, 2010
Prematurity
Jeremy & Jaime Ford

Henry J Ford –

Feb 25, 2010 - Feb 26, 2010
Prematurity
Jeremy & Jaime Ford

Evan Holmes – 20

Feb 09, 1990 - Apr 02, 2010
Unknown
Irene Gangemi
Mason Holmes

Nancy Inamine – 47

Apr 15, 1967 – Feb 07, 2015
Cancer
Joyce Connolly

Foly Phillips – 26

Feb 18, 1982 - Feb 26, 2008
Sickness
Yinka & Grace Phillips

Keya Sansquiri - 5

Apr 07, 2010 – Feb 13, 2016
Cardiac Arrest
Nella Sansquiri

Glenn Patrick Beach – 31

Nov 07, 1960 - Feb 16, 1992
Murdered
John & Grace Beach

Mark Susong – 21

Jun 05, 1990 – Feb 10, 2012
Drug Overdose
Jill Susong

Ian McDonald-Shumaker – 17

Feb 06, 1989 - May 11, 2006
Suicide
Stacia McDonald-Shumaker

Jamie Mitchell – 31

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

Steven Glosky – 23

Feb 16, 1972 – Nov 13, 1995
Suicide
Judy & Danny Glosky

Kate Pranno – 24

May 19, 1977 - Feb 22, 2002
Liver Failure from Drugs & Alcohol
Suzi Scott

Katherine Lacewell – 41

Feb 27, 1969 - Oct 16, 2011
Alcoholism
Allen Lacewell

Kimberly Ann Olson – 15

Feb 14, 1983 - Aug 20, 1998
Histicytic Disorder
Larry & Danita Olson

Michael Patrick Gordon – 30

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

Mike Seaney – 44

Feb 24, 1951 - Sep 23, 1995
Medical Misdiagnosis
Vernadene Tolman

Nadia Chowdhury – 20

May 14, 1983 - Feb 21, 2004
Hit & Killed by Drunk Driver
Nasrin & Shamsul Chowdhury

Nancy R. Lyell (Sue's Sister) – 35

Feb 14, 1961 - Sep 10, 1996
Cancer
Sue & Garry Fink

Roseanne Strick – 22

Feb 27, 1969 - Oct 14, 1991
Brain Aneurysm/Heart Attack/Car
Accident
Ilse Strick

Sean Howard Anderson – 17

Feb 22, 1983 - Dec 05, 2000
Suicide
Maureen Anderson

Amy Elizabeth Gales – 19

Jul 18, 1975 – Mar 08, 1995
Auto Accident
Ron & Sandy Gales

Thomas (Tommy John) Adams – 35

Feb 01, 1966 - Nov 01, 2001
Marge & Bill Adams

Tim Schiefelbein – 18

Dec 07, 1989 - Feb 24, 2007
Car Accident
Diane Grabowski

Timmy Ciametti – 5

Feb 12, 1985 - Mar 18, 1990
Adult Respiratory Distress Syndrome
Vince & Gloria Ciametti

Tony Jurkas Jr. – 23

Feb 26, 1983 - Apr 16, 2006
Suicide
Laurie Jurkas

Jacob Kowalik – 10

Feb 26, 2004 – Apr 15, 2014
Heart Attack
Mike & Jennifer Kowalik

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

Amanda Coughlin – 10
May 11, 1991 - Mar 15, 2002

Cathy Coughlin

Sarah Jane Melton – 27
Mar 19, 1969 – Jul 09, 1996
Anaplastic Thyroid Carcinoma
Jack & Jane Larson

Brendon Anderson – 22
Jul 18, 1976 - Mar 16, 1998
Murdered
Rob Anderson

Carl Alan Vuillaume – 16
Mar 14, 1989 - Jul 21, 2005
Accidental Drowning
Rob & Charleen Vuillaume

Dan Woods – 29
Mar 12, 1978 - Aug 22, 2007
Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy
Mary Woods

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

Timothy Kuzmicki – 16
Mar 07, 1986 - Nov 13, 2002
Motorcycle/Auto Collision
Kathy Kuzmicki

Eric-Alan Gottung – 24
Oct 10, 1986 - Mar 04, 2011
Suicide
Nancy & Eric Gottung

Frank Knapczyk, Jr. – 25
Mar 28, 1967 - Oct 24, 1992
Electrocution
Barbara & Frank Knapczyk

Garrett Joel Zaagman – 7
Mar 04, 1976 - Dec 09, 1983
Spinal Meningitis
Dirk & Florence Zaagman

Gianna (Gia) Ugartechea - 18
Mar 21, 1998 – Mar 09, 2016
Unknown
Kimberly Baber & Henry Ugartechea

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

Jessica Louise Lang – 23
Mar 03, 1980 - Dec 12, 2003
Heroin Overdose
Kristine Lang

Katie Evans – 35
Mar 24, 1978 - Jul 16, 2013
Heroin overdose
Anne & Ed Evans

Mia Lozano – 13
Jul 04, 2002 – Mar 11, 2016
Diabetes / Cardiac Arrest
Augustine Lozano

Matthew Lane – 27
Mar 08, 1978 - Oct 10, 2005
Car Accident
Joylin Lane

Michael Werth – 24
Mar 18, 1978 - Mar 22, 2002

Janey Reed

Natalie Anne Ragusa – 27
Oct 24, 1975 - Mar 04, 2003
Car Accident
George Ragusa

Nicholas Palumbo – 21
Jul 10, 1981 - Mar 05, 2003
Snowmobile Accident
Debbie Palumbo

Robert Joseph Gentilini, Jr. – 25
Mar 20, 1964 - May 18, 1989
Brain Infection
Bob & Mary Gentilini

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

Russel Witek – 14
Jun 16, 1994 - Mar 29, 2009
Leukemia/Brain Tumor
Dan & Helen Dennett

Ryan Paul – 15 1/2
Jul 06, 1988 - Mar 09, 2004
Hit by Car
Roy & Melody Paul

Vincenza – 47
Jul 30, 1966 – Mar 08, 2014
Cancer
Margherita Arrowsmith (Sister)

Sarah Lynn Moore – 5
Dec 18, 1998 - Mar 31, 2004
Surgical Complications
Susan Moore

Scott Saville – 42
Mar 29, 1969 - Jul 30, 2011
Brain Aneurysm
Mary Saville

Gina –
Mar 07, 1968 –

Fred & Carol Renzetti

Our Children Remembered (continued)....

Kevin O'Malley – 25
 Mar 04, 1990 – May 30, 2015
 Murder
 Brian & Sharon O'Malley

Nicky Angone – 57
 Nov 13, 1958 – Mar 26, 2016
 Cancer
 Diane Angone

Hudson Colwell – 1
 Mar 28, 2014 – Apr 24, 2015
 Virus
 Megan & Chris Colwell



Heartfelt Thanks From Thumbuddy Special For Christmas Gifts

January 7, 2017

Dear Bereaved Parents,

I am a bereaved parent of Katherine Pranno who died in 2002, at 24 years of age. I relate and understand your desire or urge to shop for your children and give them gifts at Christmas. You see this taking place all around you, and it hurts. I find it truly admirable that, since you can't do this with your child, you still want to shop and give to underprivileged children.

This year, you again donated quite a variety of toys, stuffed animals, building sets, art sets and games for boy and girls of all ages. I know each of you have a story behind the items you selected. It was probably your child's favorite toy. Cheryl, the occupational therapist, and I laid out all the gifts to look at them. Then Cheryl took them to the wrapping party. We donated your gifts to the organization, "Thumbuddy Special". The recipients are the children who have disabilities, such as Downs Syndrome, Autism and children who are physically handicapped. The gifts were targeted for the appropriate ages. They were distributed on the Polar Express Train Ride by Santa Claus before Christmas. The recipients are some of the Special Ed children I have in art class where they are mainstreamed with the General Education students. We have 22 art and 22 music teachers in the elementary schools in Cicero. The students love my subject, how much fun is that to teach!

You all were very generous with such delightful gifts. Thank you so very much! Cheryl said the students were so excited when they received the gifts.

Sincerely,

Suzi Scott

Bereaved mom of Katherine Pranno

Dear Bereaved Parents,

On behalf of Thumbuddy Special I would like to thank you and your organization for the generous toys that you donated this holiday season! Every year around the holidays we work with school social workers from Cicero, Berwyn, Forest Park and surrounding areas to make sure that every child has a present or two to open on Christmas morning. The many toys that Suzi Scott delivered to me on behalf of your organization made many children happy this holiday season. There was such a wonderful variety of toys to choose from; the educational toys that you provided were a hit with our older children, the little ones loved all the beautiful stuffed animals and the boys loved the action figures.

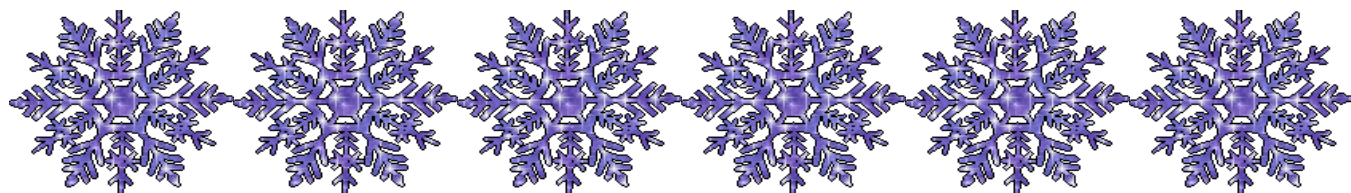
Your generosity and kindness is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Cheryl McCulloch

Thumbuddy Special Board Member





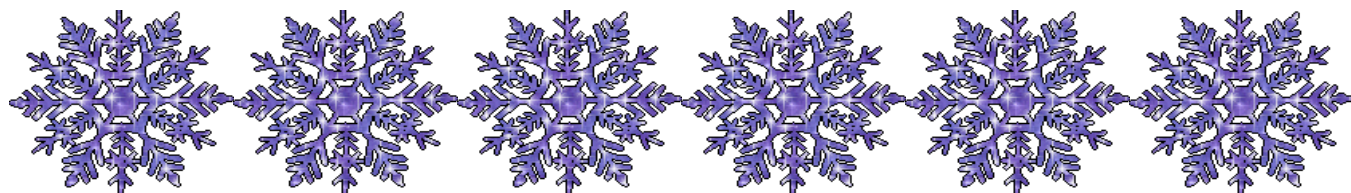
New Year's Resolutions for the Bereaved

By Tanya Lord, *The Grief Toolbox*

<http://thegrieftoolbox.com/artwork/new-year-s-resolutions-bereaved>

This year I resolve to:

- ❖ Not put a time limit on my grief. Loving someone means loving them for my lifetime whether they are physically present or not.
- ❖ Tell their stories, the happy and the sad, so they will live on through me.
- ❖ Encourage others to share memories.
- ❖ Teach others that they cannot “make” me cry; tears are only an external expression of how I am feeling all the time.
- ❖ Understand that crying or otherwise expressing my pain is healthy and normal. “Doing well” means expressing my feelings.
- ❖ Understand that others will not understand my pain and it isn’t fair to expect them to do anything but listen.
- ❖ Recognize that asking for help from those that love us is really a gift that we give to them.
- ❖ Help others, reaching out to others in pain will help me to heal.
- ❖ Do something nice for myself every day.
- ❖ Know that if today I cannot do everything that needs to be done, tomorrow is another chance.
- ❖ Cry when I need to, laugh when I can and not feel guilty about either one.
- ❖ Let go, bit by bit, of the guilt, regret and anger because I know holding on to these emotions can be so damaging.
- ❖ Take a risk and let others into my life and heart.
- ❖ Take care of my physical, emotional, and spiritual health.
- ❖ Reinvest in life a little bit each day...



HAPPY NEW YEAR?

Margaret Gerner, TCF, St. Louis, MO
BP/USA/AA County January 2014 Newsletter

How can it ever be again? How will I ever make it through another year of this torment?

When we are hurting and so terribly depressed, it is hard to see any good in your new year, but we must try. First, we must hold on tightly to the idea that we will not always be this miserable, that we will someday feel good again. This is almost impossible to believe, but even if we don't believe it, we must tell ourselves, over and over again, that it is true - because it is. Many parents whose children have died some years past will attest to this. Remember also, no one can suffer indefinitely as you are suffering right now.

Secondly, we must face the new year with the knowledge that this year offers us a choice - whether we will be on our way to healing this time next year - or still be in the pit of intense grief. We must remind ourselves that if we choose to be on our way to healing by the following year, we must work to get there and that work entails allowing ourselves to go through our grief, to cry, to be angry, to talk about our guilt, to do whatever is necessary to move towards healing.

Thirdly, we must look for good in our lives and find reasons to go on, and accept the fact that our continued suffering will not bring our child back. Many of us have other children and/or a spouse for whom we must go on. More importantly, we have our own lives that must be lived. Most of us know our dead children would want us to go on.

No, this coming year may not be a happy one, but it can be a constructive one. Through our grief we can grow and become more understanding, loving and compassionate, and more aware of the real values in life.

Let us not waste this New Year. 🌹



On Grief and Grieving: Finding the Meaning of Grief Through the Five Stages of Loss

— Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and David Kessler, <https://widowplusthree.com/inspiration-from-others/on-grief-and-grieving/>

When a loss hits us, we have not only the particular loss to mourn but also the shattered beliefs and assumptions of what life should be.

These life beliefs must be mourned separately.

Sometimes we must grieve for them first.

We can't grieve the loss if we are in the midst of "It's not supposed to happen this way" . . .

We intellectually know that bad things happen - but to other people, not us,
and certainly not in the world we assumed we were living in . . .

Your belief system needs to heal and regroup as much as your soul does.

You must start to rebuild a new belief system from the foundation up, one that has room for the realities of life and still offers safety and hope for a different life:

a belief system that will ultimately have a beauty of its own to be discovered with life and loss.

Think of a lifeless forest in which a small plant pushes its head upward, out of the ruin.

In our grief process, we are moving into life from death, without denying the devastation that came before. 🌹

GETTING THROUGH THOSE TRIGGERS!

By [Gabrielle Doucet](#), July 15, 2016,
www.OpentoHope.com

When we lose a loved one, the time we spend dealing with sadness surrounding that loss can vary daily, hourly or even minute-by-minute. As time goes by, the expectation we have and what generally occurs, is that the sad thoughts spread themselves out further and further apart. We learn to adjust to life moving on and us having to move with it. Simply said, but not easily done. What happens to us emotionally, and how we manage the “triggers” that follow our “adjustment to life” can be another matter entirely.

What is a trigger? This is an occasion, an event, an artifact, a physical resemblance or even a phrase that throws us back into the realm of missing that one person so intensely that we do another deep dive into loss, even for a little while. A trigger can crash and crush you all over again. Is this normal? Generally. Is this unhealthy? It could be, if it is extreme, prolonged and unaddressed. Is this reaction avoidable? Maybe not, but there are really healthy and helpful ways to avoid the crush of it. It can be managed in such a way that it no longer paralyzes, and can actually generate a pleasant acceptance and joy.

I have talked with so many others who plunge into some degree of depression at holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, and vacations. If the exact date is not enough to spawn sadness and withdrawal, the impending date can be just as bad for producing a reaction.

After losing my son Drew to suicide in 2011, I had a number of triggers that sent me reeling. Christmas was one, his birthday was another; and perhaps one of the most difficult of all - seeing a mother talking, walking and hugging her son. My thoughts were awful - what right does that mother have to happiness when my joy around my child was gone forever? Similarly, the holiday celebration left us with this enormous vacant space where Drew should have been. And finally, what do we do as his birthday date and his death date approached within that first year following? For many, succeeding years are every bit as heartbreaking as the first one.

So, let's get to the best answer for these very important questions. You may not embrace it right at first; but read on, keep an open mind and then allow it to reside within you, until you can see some wisdom hiding there.

CELEBRATE! Celebrate all of it. Celebrate the birthday, the anniversary, the holiday of your choice, the vacation spot, the athletic event.

Date of Loss:

Perhaps you are asking how you can possibly celebrate the date of loss; how indeed? Won't this truly hurt me even more? Isn't there something morally out-of-place about focusing on my loved one's date of passing? If you think clearly about what you may be doing now and have been doing each year, isn't it more damaging to your memory to rage angry and depressive, when the opportunity to remember gently and with a hopeful outlook actually exists? I am here to tell you that on or near the date that Drew took his life, my family practices a “pay-it-forward” in which we do something generous, healthy and memorable for someone in need. Instead of hiding, we emerge with a joyous purpose. Instead of sadness and lethargy, we shed tears of joy for others who are about to benefit from our time and energy for the better.

Birthday:

On that first birthday following Drew's death, his children, wife, sister and friends all came together with three enormous undecorated cakes. We brought every type of frosting, jimmies, candy stars, sprinkles, sugar decorations, iced lettering and 100 candles in all kinds of shapes and sizes. We put on Drew's favorite music really loud and everyone, especially the children, began decorating these cakes until they were beyond description. Lighting the candles almost set the fire alarms off from the heat! Everyone wished him a Happy Birthday and blew out every candle for him. Lastly, all of the most important people in Drew's life danced around the kitchen to the music he loved the best. Somehow we knew he was listening and celebrating with us. If a birthday remembrance such as this is not within your realm of possibility, then get a cupcake, make a list of all the most cherished and memorable birthdays from years past, then wish your loved one a joyful thought.



Continued on next page....

GETTING THROUGH THOSE TRIGGERS!*Continued from previous page....*

You may not want to do something each and every year, but that first one can be devastatingly difficult or surprisingly familiar and happy.

Holidays:

Collect memorabilia and photos from holidays past. Pass them around to your guests and ask them to comment on what they remember about those very events; encourage stories that no one knows about and would like to share. Laugh when you learn the answer to things that were heretofore a mystery. Include Christmas, Hanukkah, Easter, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving and such. Decorate the holiday/event with items that belonged to your loved one and should be on display. Art, Christmas stockings, flags, costumes, beach balls - you will know what to choose.

So many times people would ask me, "Aren't you sad when Drew's birthday comes around, or when Christmas takes place?" My response is, "I don't focus on what I don't have now. I cherish the 41 years that he was in my life and we did these wonderful things as a family. I remember it all and share it all."

How much better is that for my mind, body and spirit? Actually, it is priceless! 🌿

**A NEW YEAR'S WISH***By Sascha Wagner**I wish you gentle days and quiet nights.**I wish you memories to keep you strong.**I wish you time to smile and time for a song.**And then I wish you friends to give you love,**When you are hurt and lost and life is blind.**I wish you friends and love and peace of mind***Grief is...***From the blog of Sandy Fox:*<http://survivinggrief.blogspot.com>

Grief is laughing with your children and wishing for the absent one to make the circle complete.

Grief is crying in your car at stoplights.

Grief some days makes you brutally honest; other days, grief muzzles you.

Grief reconstructs your heart.

Grief is sadness, hope, smiles and tears rolled tightly like a snowball.

Grief makes you search past the stars and the moon for Heaven.

Grief strips you of everything you were pretending to be.

Grief gives you new priorities.

Grief opens hidden treasures from deep within your soul.

Grief allows you to empathize more deeply with others who ache.

Grief makes you unapologetically bold.

Grief is a daily companion, best dealt with by admitting you do walk with it, even after all these years.

Grief is the price of love.



*The fear that we will forget
details about our child haunts
many of us bereaved parents.*

Elaine E. Stillwell

The Death of a Child



Bereaved Parents of the USA
Chicagoland Chapter
P.O. Box 320
Western Springs, IL 60558



January – February – March 2017

| CALENDAR OF EVENTS | |
|--------------------|---|
| January | |
| January 3 | Monthly Chapter Meeting: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM - General Discussion |
| January 22 | Candle Lighting Program (Rescheduled): Doors open 6:30 PM; Program 7:00 PM, Education Building, Chapel and Parlor, 1 st Floor |
| February | |
| February 7 | Monthly Chapter Meeting: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM - Topic to be determined. |
| March | |
| March 7 | Monthly Chapter Meeting: 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM - General Discussion. |



*The heart stops briefly when a child dies
A breathless pain as you acknowledge the news.
And that one who held your hand
Moves from your outside
To your inside...
Slowly, your heart adjusts to its new weight.*

*~ Author Unknown ~ Source: A Journey Together,
Winter 2016*

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