BEREAVED PARENTS of the USA

*Helping grieving parents and families rebuild their lives after the death of a child*

www.bereavedparentsusa.org *January – February – March 2020*

*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 (708-738-0396), Chapter Co-Leaders*

## I Never Know When I'm Going To Miss You And It Happens All The Time

~ https://unexpectedfamilyouting.com/2018/08/10/

I never know when I will miss you.

I can't ever predict just what will grip my heart with the reminder that you are gone. It could be anything. Anytime. Anywhere.

I am reminded of you everywhere.

I remember you are gone when I'm in a room full of people and I notice you are missing when I'm all alone. I feel your absence in joyful melodies and I hear your memory when the music is imbued with melancholy.

You are everywhere and nowhere all at once.

When the days are bright, I am blinded by your presence and even when the world is dark I still manage to find you. In laughter, I hear the echo of losing you. Your presence is overflowing in the tears that fall.

Now that your body is gone, everything holds your being.

I miss you in the cold depths of winter and I long for you in the thick summer breeze. You are my first rising thought in the morning and my last notion as I sink into the heaviness of the night. I thought we ran out of moments together, but every moment seems to belong to you.

How can you be everywhere when you are nowhere to be seen?

## UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:

**Tuesday, January 7 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:**
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM – General Discussion

**Tuesday, February 4 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:**
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM – Topic to be determined

**Tuesday, March 3 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:**
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM – General Discussion

**Tuesday, April 7 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:**
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM – Topic to be determined

I used to worry about facing the world because I didn't know what would trigger my heartache. I used to be afraid of every feeling, every memory, every moment because I didn't know which ones held you. Now I know you are everywhere and I think that I know why.

You're everywhere because you're somewhere inside of who I am.

I am the bearer of your life and memory. I am the keeper of your existence. Even though you're gone, I never really have to search for you.

I never know where I'll find you but you are always there. I never know when I will miss you and it happens all the time.

*You don't cross my mind,*
*you live in it.*
*~ DeepGriefGreatLoveGroupPage*

## ♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gift ♥ ♥ ♥

*In loving memory of*
**Heather Lynn Runge**
*November 21, 1989 until January 4, 1990*

Beloved Daughter, Remembered Forever.

Sandy Runge-Sand

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

## ♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gift ♥ ♥ ♥

*In loving remembrance of*
**Joseph James Craig**
*December 5, 1974 until December 15, 2009*

Love you and miss you, every day, every hour,
and with every breath.
Dad
Joseph Robert Craig

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

## ♥♥♥♥♥♥ Love Gift ♥♥♥♥♥♥

*In remembrance of*
**Roseanne Strick**
*February 27, 1969 until October 13, 1991*
In loving memory of my dear daughter,

And our friend,
**Adolph Trenkenschuh**

Ilse Strick

## ♥♥♥♥♥♥ *Love Gift* ♥♥♥♥♥♥

*In loving remembrance of our son,*
**Frank Knapczyk, Jr.**
*March 28, 1967 until October 24, 1992*
*And*
*Our grandson,*
**Garrison Haak**
*March 2, 1995 until November 23. 2017*

Forever in our hearts.
Barbara & Frank Knapczyk

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

## ♥ ♥ ♥ 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 psyrbrryhotmail.com.

## ♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gift ♥ ♥ ♥

*In loving memory of*
**Ronald Lee Gallman, Jr.**
*August 27, 1967 until January 25, 2003*

In the blink of an eye, you were gone.
We never got to say goodbye,
or remind you of how much we love you.
You are always with us, and
loved more deeply than you can know.

Mom & Dad & Stephanie (sister)

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

## ♥♥♥♥♥♥ *Love Gift* ♥♥♥♥♥♥

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

It's hard to believe that twenty years have passed
since we were together.
You are forever missed and in our hearts.

Your family,
The McCallums

# Annual Gathering Conference

## 25th Anniversary Year BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA National

## Gathering Conference August 7–9, 2020 St. Louis, Missouri
## Sheraton Clayton Plaza Hotel

Please join us as we commemorate 25 years of helping grieving parents and families rebuild their lives after the death of a child.

Our Gathering theme “25 Years of Hope” says it all. BPUSA has been a beacon of hope for grieving families since its beginning in January 1995.

The Gathering Conference will be a three-day event with keynote speakers, workshops, meals, entertainment and memorial ceremonies all designed to help bereaved parents and their families understand that they are not alone in their grief.

Our annual Gatherings have been praised as wonderfully meaningful experiences, life-changing in many ways. Participants come away feeling refreshed and revitalized, better informed about the grieving process, more aware of hope and promise and affirmed by meeting new friends who travel the same path. This year, our closing ceremony on Sunday morning will include a short bus trip to visit the Angel of Hope Memorial in Blanchett Park, St. Charles, MO.

It's never too early to start making plans to attend the 2020 BPUSA Gathering Conference. Hope to see you in St. Louis!!

***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 Steven Weiberg – 10 Mon**
Jan 16, 2009 – Dec 03, 2009
Spinal Muscular Atrophy
Alesha & Jim Weiberg

**Journee Marie Weiberg – 5**
Jan 13, 2011 – Mar 05, 2016
Spinal Muscular Atrophy
Alesha & Jim Weiberg

**Daniel F. (Dan) Schmid – 50**
Jan 27, 1966 – Oct 11, 2016
Heart Failure
Wm. (Bill) & Jeanne Schmid

**Ryan Vesely – 17**
Oct 03, 1974 – Jan 18, 1992
Auto Accident
Stan & Val Vesely

**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

**Brian Schrader – 13**
Feb 18, 2003 – Jun 03, 2016
Traffic Accident
Melissa Schrader

**Eric Robisch – 22**
Jun 28, 1970 – Feb 08, 1993
Auto Accident
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

**Brian Yracheta – 50**
Feb 03, 1968 – Feb 19, 2018
Cancer
Peggy Yracheta

**Ra'Meer Gordon – 23 Months**
Jan 16, 2017 – Jan 01, 2019
Cardiac Arrest
Rachel Kay & Blair Hadnott

**Colson Cole**
Jan 10, 1998 – Aug 19, 2018
Accident
Rian & Leigha Jacobi

***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*

**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

**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 13, 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

**Kara Ann Teresa Colantuono – 40**
Apr 03, 1978 – Feb 10, 2019
Breast Cancer
Dominic & Christine Colantuono

***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.*

**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

**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

**Cory Payne – 39**
Mar 27, 1978 – Oct 17, 2017
Accidental
Don & Terri Liebentritt

**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

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

***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

**Kevin Jon Ryeczyk – 8**
Mar 29, 1972 – Apr 15, 1980
Lung Ailment
Jack & Karen Ryeczyk

**Patricia Strick-Hawkins – 54**
Oct 31, 1959 – Mar 18, 2015
Ovarian Cancer
Ilse Strick

**Patrick McNaughton – 2**
Mar 27, 2014 – Apr 28, 2016
Viral Meningitis
Sheila & Ryan McNaughton

**Garrison F. Haak – 23**
Mar 02, 1995 – Nov 23, 2017
Suicide
Barbara & Frank Knapczyk (Grandparents)

**Michael (Mike) J. Klinger – 59**
Mar 14, 1960 – Aug 06, 2019
Accident
Ruth Klinger

**Heather Jacobi – 32**
Jul 15, 1981 – Mar 29, 2014
Murder
Rian & Leigha Jacobi

## Raves from Thumbuddy Special: "Your huge amount of toys were fantastic!"

Thumbuddy Special is a nonprofit organization that was started by a group of special education teachers and therapists to provide adaptive equipment for financially-challenged families who have children with special needs. Through fundraisers they procure equipment that allows special needs children to access their environment.

Every Christmas the organization also sponsors the Polar Express Storytime Train Ride where Santa reads to children and distributes gifts.

Social workers scout out needy families who are invited to participate, and over one hundred children are given gifts, which for the last several years has included toys contributed by our Bereaved Parents chapter.

Heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated this year in our annual December Meeting Toy Drive!

http://www.thumbuddyspecial.org/"

## Warning: Grief Side-Effects May Include Building Emotional Walls

**WTF:** https://whatsyourgrief.com/building-emotional-walls/

Until you lose someone, you may not really "get" the love-grief connection thing. Or you maybe get it intellectually, but you don't get it emotionally. Then one day it hits you like a ton of bricks. You realize that when you love someone so deeply and entirely, losing that person means losing pieces of yourself, and it means your world-shattering. Grief is in many ways the price we pay for love, they do grow from the same seeds, and as beautiful as that can sound, in especially dark moments that connection can be dangerous.

On your worst days the realization that the source of the deepest, most unimaginable pain you have ever felt is there because you loved someone so deeply, can be scary. Really really scary. It means that *any* deep love you experience can also be the source of deep pain and loss. It is human nature to avoid and protect ourselves from pain, so what are we supposed to do when we realize that opening ourselves to love means opening ourselves up to pain?

For some of us, the self-protective instinct kicks in and suddenly, standing in the rubble of grief and loss, we just want to protect ourselves from ever feeling pain like this again. So we start stacking that rubble up around us until we've built a wall. It is a wall built on the sometimes conscious, sometimes unconscious, thought: *"If grief is the price we pay for love, it isn't a price I am willing to pay*."

Distancing yourself from love can take different shapes, but some common experiences are:

1. Distancing yourself from the people who are already in your life that you love and care about.
2. You refuse to open myself up to new people, for fear you will ultimately just end up being hurt.
3. You detach from the world around you in general, becoming emotionally numb to avoid setting yourself up to care about something and lose it.

It is human nature to avoid pain, so no judgment if this is something that has been part of your grief. It doesn't impact everyone, but it certainly impacts some. If you realize love can, down the road, be a source of not just a little pain, but A LOT of pain, it is no surprise you may develop an instinct to avoid love. Just reading those words – "avoid love" – is hopefully an indication of why these emotional walls can be problematic. Yes, they emotionally protect you from grief. But they also keep you from having connections, intimacy, hope, joy, and so many other things that make life meaningful. So what's a griever to do?

#### Address Emotional Walls

**Tactic One:** ***Remember, it doesn't have to be all or nothing.***

You can take it slow. For example, after losing a baby (or sometimes multiple babies) to miscarriage or stillbirth, it isn't uncommon to build a wall and say "I am never trying again" from a place of self-protection. If you have decided to look at walls you may have built, it doesn't mean overnight saying, okay, I am going to try to get pregnant again. It may mean saying, I am going to open myself to the idea or possibility. I am not going to say "I will try", I am not going to say "I will not try". Instead, I will not rule anything out, I will do some self-reflection and slowly ease into decisions on how to move forward to make sure they are not part of a problematic emotional wall.

**Tactic Two:** ***Address avoidance.***

Sometimes you don't even realize you have been avoiding people, places, or things. Addressing avoidance requires a little self-assessment. If you have been creating distance between people and things that were meaningful to you before your loss, take some time to reflect on what that is all about. It isn't always about an emotional wall, but it can be, so it is important spending some time with the idea.

Keep in mind, avoidance doesn't always mean you have cut everyone out of your life and are spending all your time alone. Sometimes we swap out inner-circle people, who we love and care about most, for acquaintances. This can be a protective way of having contact but with people who feel "safer" because they do not require you to be as vulnerable to love and potential loss.

Setting your intent to heal is not only a way of surviving your loss (although it is indeed that!), it is a way of guiding your grief to the best possible outcome. Of course, you will still have to honor and embrace your pain during this time. By honoring the presence of your pain, by understanding the appropriateness of your pain, you are committing to facing the pain. You are committing yourself to paying attention to your anguish in ways that allow you to begin to breathe life into your soul again. That, my friend, is a very good reason to give attention to your intention. The alternative would be to shut down in an effort to avoid and deny your pain, which is to die while you are still alive.

**Tactic Three:** ***Be mindful of making radical relationship changes quickly.***

I was in a fairly serious, but relatively new relationship when my dad died. I found my journal from that time recently and read through many thoughts I had about ending the relationship despite the fact that it was a wonderful and supportive relationship. As I peeled through the layers trying to figure out what was going on, I realized that the thought that I might also lose this person was too much to handle. It felt safer to end the relationship on my own terms at that moment to control my hurt, rather than get further emotionally invested and risk greater hurt. I am very grateful now I worked through that and didn't end the relationship, but it was definitely an emotional wall I was trying to build. Even without ending the relationship I did still create an emotional distance that took some time to resolve.

**Tactic Four:** ***Acknowledge the reality of potential loss and hurt.***

Now, you may be screaming, I KNOW the potential for loss and hurt, I have gone through it, and that's what brought me here! But when we build these walls we don't always consciously realize we are doing it to mitigate our anxiety about future pain and loss. Facing that thought head on and considering the reality of grief and loss is part of being vulnerable and taking steps towards opening back up. We can't avoid these anxieties because they will keep creeping up, so at some point, we must consciously face them. If you try to face these anxieties and find yourself stuck, this may be an important reason to see a counselor.

***Continued on next page….***

**Tactic Five:** ***Learn tools for coping with anxiety.***

No surprise, coping with anxiety and fear around experiencing hurt again is an important part of opening yourself back up and tearing down emotional walls. There are lots of general tools and techniques. But if this is a significant issue for you, seeing a counselor can make a big difference in learning specific coping tools that will work well for you.

**Tactic Six:** ***Acknowledge what you are missing.***

It is easy to feel like it is safer to stay protected inside the safety of your emotional walls and ignore all the things you may be missing on the other side. To find the inspiration, motivation, and hope required to take a risk and push yourself outside those walls, it is important to consider what is out there that you are missing by closing yourself off. Especially in the early days of grief, it can feel like none of those things are worth the potential pain of loss. But as time goes on, you find ways to manage anxiety, and you reflect on things you may be missing through avoidance and emotional walls, it can start to feel easier. You can slowly begin to open yourself up to love and hope, even with the knowledge that from the same seeds that grow love, grief may someday grow.

## Live One Day At A Time

*~ By Rabbi Earl Grollman*
*From "Living When A Loved One Has Died"*

Memories – tender, loving, bittersweet.
They can never be taken from you.
Nothing can detract from the joy and the beauty you and your loved one shared.
Your love for the person and his or her love for you cannot be altered by time or circumstance.
The memories are yours to keep.

Yesterday has ended, though you store it in the treasure-house of the past.
And tomorrow?
How can you face its awesome problems and challenges?

It is as far beyond your mastery as your ability to control yesterday.
Journey one day at a time.
Don't try to solve all the problems of your life at once.
Each day's survival is a triumph.

*Maybe it's up to us*
*to fill some of the hole they left behind*
*with all of the beauty that we can.*
*Maybe we can carry them not only in our hearts,*
*but in our way of living as well,*
*as if the love we create*
*is a vessel of their spirit.*

*~ BoneSighArts.com*

## *Many Thanks to All Who Helped Make Our Annual Candle Lighting Program a Success!*

Sunday, December 8 was our annual Candle Lighting Program, and once again it was a touching celebration honoring the memory of all of our children.

We are very grateful to those who participated including Sally Yarberry, Eleanor Bryne, Carol Zimmerman, Bob Gordon, Rose Martino-Krueger, Marilyn Dano, Jennifer Vlazny, and Ruth Klinger. And to everyone who helped with set-up or clean-up, or brought a snack to share, your assistance was invaluable!

*Donations*:
Cheryl & Mike Bartik, in memory of Stephanie Bartik
Trish DeBauche, in memory of Bryce Stack
Ruth Klinger, in memory of Michael Klinger
John Meiszner, in memory of Mia Bella Meiszner
Barbara Piegat, in memory of Andre Piegat
Frank Vlazny, in memory of Peter Vlazny

*Someone shared a*
*story about you*
*that I had never known.*

*It was like*
*standing before a*
*treasure chest*
*and finding*
*you again.*

*~ Grief to Glorious Unfolding*

*There is no right or wrong way to grieve. We can grieve in the arms of others. We can grieve in solitude. We can grieve through tears, laughter, meditation, movement, or prayer. The only rule is that we hold our hearts with the utmost care and allow ourselves the room to feel and the space to heal with no timelines or expectations.*

*~ Liz Arch, The Courage to Rise*

*Bereaved Parents of the USA Credo:*

We are the parents whose children have died. We are the siblings whose brothers and sisters no longer walk with us through life. We are the grandparents who have buried grandchildren.

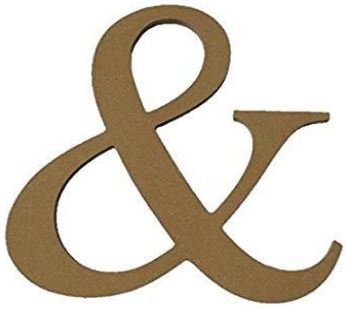
We come together as Bereaved Parents of the USA to provide a safe space where grieving families can connect, share our stories, and learn to rebuild our lives.

We attend meetings whenever we can and for as long as we find them helpful. We share our fears, confusion, anger, guilt, frustrations, emptiness, and feelings of hopelessness, knowing these emotions will be met with compassion and understanding. As we support, comfort and encourage one another, we offer hope and healing. As we confront the deaths of our loved ones, our shared grief brings us to a common ground that transcends differences, building mutual understanding across the boundaries of culture, race, faith, values, abilities, and lifestyle.

Together we celebrate the lives of our children, siblings, and grandchildren, sharing the joys and the heartbreaks as well as the love that will never fade. Together, strengthened by the bonds we create, we offer what we have learned from one another to every bereaved family, no matter how recent or long ago the death.

We are the Bereaved Parents of the USA. We welcome you.

Please be patient with me. You see, I lost my child.
And while it might seem like a long time to you,
it is everyday for me.



**DUALITY.** It is most certainly possible to feel two things at once, even sorrow and joy.

I was born to a woman who taught me by example to hold sorrow and joy. My twin brother and I were born one month after our Dad died suddenly of a heart attack. Our Mom knew sorrow yet she chose joy, laughter, and everything in between.

On the first day of my senior year of college the phone rang, it was my Mom she had been diagnosed with a Glioblastoma. She began treatment while I finished my senior year. I graduated college and moved home to honor her wishes, for her to die at home surrounded by family and close friends. This time would be gifted time. It was filled with more sorrow and more joy than I knew possible. We laughed, we cried, we talked, we planned, we reminisced, we joked, and we grieved. We were deeply connected in our sorrow and in our joy. Soon after she died, I moved to Chicago to pursue my master's degree in social work. It was there that I met and fell in love with my husband one year after she died. Our wedding was joyful, love- filled, celebratory, and yet, along with immense joy, I knew deep sorrow. I missed my Mom and wished she were beside me. I would feel this duality profoundly at the births of our children.

The concept of duality is familiar to those who are grieving. At any moment one can feel deep sorrow and also authentic love, joy, even hope. You are here. You are alive. Whenever possible choose joy, choose hope. When you lose someone you love, someone you respect, life becomes bittersweet forevermore. Your work, your daily practice, is to feel and acknowledge the bitter while choosing and growing the sweet. This does not mean there won't be dark days. Dark days are normal and completely okay. Just don't get stuck in the darkness. After all, the greatest way to honor your loved ones, your teachers, your friends, is to live forward in their light. Honoring their memory with love while creating new memories in their honor, on behalf of how they lived their lives. By choosing to live in such a way that their life, their values, continue to have meaningful impact on the world.

This is the legacy work of holding sorrow and joy. Their light continues to shine through your acts of kindness, compassion, self-care, and advocacy. You have the ability to live with and hold both sorrow *and* joy. To grieve *and* to live. It is possible to feel sad, depleted, scared, overwhelmed and not give up. To continue to experience life, connection, love. To find and experience purpose and meaning.
It is important to acknowledge the duality in your life. To not be defined by or give power to any one emotion or experience. This allows you to create space in your thinking for what challenges and what carries you. This recognition, that life happens in the gray, can give you a greater sense of balance, the grace of acceptance, as well as gratitude for what IS good even as you struggle. This duality can anchor you to your resilience, to your ability to hold both sorrow and joy.

You must never lose sight of hope even as you struggle. Hope is the reconciliation that the intense pain of deep grief is temporary even though the missing, remembering, loving and honoring is everlasting. Hope is the clarity that remaining in deep grief perpetuates suffering and that it is worth the effort to try and live forward with courage, strength, and faith in yourself and in your life. It is possible to feel more than sorrow, you are not your grief, you have the ability to carry your loved one's memory as you continue on.

Sorrow depletes, joy fuels**.** Self-care is essential for creating balance as you hold both. Where do you find peace? How do you self soothe? Is it through prayer? Is it losing yourself in nature? Journaling? Work? Do you feel comfort when getting a massage or reiki? Do you find respite in meditation, exercise or dance? Take a moment and think of something you can do each day to take care of yourself. To self soothe. To buffer your pain and sorrow.

For me nature provides great respite. I find comfort and security in the order of nature. Nature is restorative, reminding me of our ability to change, adapt, grow, transform. Nature reflects back our inherent resilience.

Positive remembrance is an integral part to living forward through grief, for remembering well, for integrating loss and honoring the love, for holding sorrow and joy.

**There are many ways to remember:**
Scrap booking
Legacy writing
Contributions made in your loved one's honor
Enjoying their favorite foods, rituals, music

The holidays and special days can hold both sorrow and joy for those we love and wish were here. Making their recipes and honoring their traditions can bring comfort as well as a deeper sense of connection. Sharing memories while creating new memories is bittersweet yet so very meaningful.

Self-care, positive remembrance, recognizing the power of duality and holding onto hope helps us to accept sorrow, as a companion, not a barrier, to joy.

*~ Jennifer Stern, LISW www.transformativegrief.com*

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

January – February – March 2020

| CALENDAR OF EVENTS | |
|---|---|
| **January** | |
| January 7 | **Monthly Chapter Meeting**: 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM – General Discussion |
| **February** | |
| February 4 | **Monthly Chapter Meeting:** 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM – Topic to be determined. |
| **March** | |
| March 3 | **Monthly Chapter Meeting:** 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM – General Discussion. |
| **April** | |
| April 1 | **Monthly Chapter Meeting:** 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM – Topic to be determined. |

**BP/USA Chicagoland on the Web:**
http://www.bpusachicagoland.org/index.html

Like us on Facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/Bereaved-Parents-of-the-USA-Chicagoland-Chapter-706510502840344/

As far as I can see, grief will never truly end. It may become softer over time, more gentle, and some days will feel sharp. But grief will last as long as love does – forever.
It's simply the way the absence of your loved one manifests in your heart. A deep longing, accompanied by the deepest love.
Some days, the heavy fog may return, and the next day, it may recede once again.
It's all an ebb and flow, a constant dance of sorrow and joy, pain and sweet love.

*~ Lexi Behrendt, Scribbles and Crumbs*