July – August - September 2014

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

The Raft

by Keith Swett, Matt's dad

Hunter Lake just north and west of Eagle River has a wonderful sandy beach and boat docks open to the public. But the best part for a kid was that tempting white raft floating about sixty yards out. My dad was real clear that we were not old enough to swim to the raft and should stay by the dock.

I started out swimming by the dock but the raft looked like too much fun so when my folks went to eat I headed out to the raft. Dad was wrong. I made it easily. I was jumping and diving with the big kids, but then we had to head in to shore. About half way I was out of gas. I could have floated to rest but I was too scared. I cried for help as I started to go down. Jim and Peggy each caught an arm and pulled me in to shore. I did not get to go in the lake at all for two days and I had someone watching me swim at the dock.

Entering a bereaved parents gathering there will be lots of attractive rafts out there. You so want to be like the veteran parents. They seem to do things so easily and actually seem to be having fun. Why can't you swim out to the big kids' raft? The thing is that you have to be able to swim back. That raft is exhausting. When you are hurt and afraid the swim can be overwhelming.

The other thing is you only see the surface. Under the raft it is full of weeds and muck. The big kids have learned to deal with what is below the surface. Veteran parents cry too.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:

No Monthly Chapter meeting in July - see you at the Picnic!

Sunday, July 13 - Butterfly Release & Family Picnic: 12:00 Noon Katherine Legge Memorial Park, Hinsdale - North Pavilion - see registration form in this newsletter

Friday-Sunday, July 25-27 - 2014 National Gathering for the Bereaved Parents of the USA: Sheraton Clayton Plaza Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri. Registration forms are available online at www.bereavedparentsusa.org/G_Forms.html

Tuesday, August 5 - Monthly Chapter Meeting: 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM - Open Discussion; School Supplies - bring donations of new school supplies for children in need (see article in this newsletter for details)

Tuesday, September 2 - Monthly Chapter Meeting: 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM - Small group discussions; Still time to donate school supplies for needy children.

They feel as badly as you do. They have learned to function.

With hard work you will develop the endurance to explore the raft, but for now swim by the dock. This is no race and if you call for help someone will grab you. Summer will come again and the raft will still be there.

BP/USA Chicagoland 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.

If you feel that you are ready to give back to the Chapter and would like to volunteer your time and talent, please contact the Chapter Co-Leaders Eleanor or Sally.

Chapter Co-Leaders:
Eleanor Byrne (708) 485-6160
Sally Yarberry (708) 560-0393

Send Your Email Address to Sally

We are hoping to have up-to-date email addresses for everyone in our database. Please send your email address to Sally at psyrbrry@hotmail.com.

Meeting Day and Location Reminder:

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month from 7:00 to 8:30 PM at First Congregational Church of Western Springs, 1106 Chestnut Street, Western Springs, IL, on the second floor in the youth room. Please enter the building through the north doors by the playground.

Welcome

Bereaved Parents Chicagoland 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:

- Meg Iorfida, mother of **Colt Grabowski**
- Margherita Arrowsmith, sister of **Vincenza**
- Mike & Jennifer Kowalik, parents of **Jacob**

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

♥ ♥ ♥ 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 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, **celeste_hardy@hotmail.com.**

Thank You!

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

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

To Patrick, in loving memory:
13 years later & we miss you more each day.

All our love forever,
Mom, Dad, Anthony, Therese, Adalina, Lincoln & Melissa, Joe, Tyler & Nicolette Bruno
Vincent & Debbie DeMauro

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Continued on next page

♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gifts ♥ ♥ ♥

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

In loving memory of
Matthew Corrigan
July 4, 1977 until August 12, 1991

MATT WAS SO YOUNG

He was so young, God.
So young and strong and filled with promise. So vital, so radiant, giving so much joy wherever he went. He was so brilliant. On this one boy you lavished so many talents that could have enriched your world. He had already received so many honors, and there were so many honors to come.
Why, then? In our agony we ask. Why him? Why not someone less gifted?? Someone less good? Some hop head, rioter, thief, brute, hood?
Yet we know, even as we demand what seems to us a rational answer, that we are only intensifying our grief. Plunging deeper into the blind and witless place where all hope is gone. A dark, lost place where our own gifts will be blunted and ruin replace the goodness he brought and wished for us.
Instead, let us thank you for the marvel that this boy was. That we can say good-bye to him without shame or regret, rejoicing in the blessed years he was given to us. Knowing that his bright young life, his many gifts, have not truly been stilled or wasted, only lifted to a higher level where the rest of us can't follow yet.
Separation? Yes. Loss? Never.
For his spirit will be with us always. And when we meet him again we will be even more proud.
Thank you for this answer, God.

Love,
Matt's Family
Donna & Mike Corrigan

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

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

Happy 34th Birthday in heaven.
We think about you and miss you terribly every day.

Love always,
Mom & Dad, Heather & Meghan
Marcia & Reg McCallum

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gifts ♥ ♥ ♥

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

In loving memory of my beloved son
Thomas A. Walsh, Jr.
October 16, 1970 until July 20, 2003

How can it be eleven years since you were called home to heaven? It still feels like yesterday.

T. – Today, tomorrow and every day you are missed more and more as time goes on
H. – Heartbroken the day you died
O. – Out of sorts since you've been gone
M. – Memories of you can never be taken away
A. – Amazing son who still keeps giving me signs
S. – Son my one and only one taken away much too soon

A. – Angry at the justice system's cover up

W. – Wishing you were still here even for one more day
A. – Always in my heart and soul – you will live on forever. Til the day we meet again
L. – Love you always, my Tom Tom
S. – Screaming thoughts! Did you suffer?
H. – Heaven now has the best son ever

J. – "Justice will come" (from your favorite movie, *Tombstone*)
R. – Remembering the day you were born, how you loved your little red car, your fire engine & your big wheels. Our trips to Florida and your big smirk. Remembering so, so much about you. Oh how it hurts and missing you so, so much

Love and missing you so much,
Mom
Karen Richards

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

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*

Adam Schar - 33
Nov 23, 1976 - Jul 18, 2010
Accidental Death
Janet Schar

Aidan Samuel Wood - 4
Jul 17, 2003 - Nov 30, 2007
House Fire
Michelle & Ian Wood

Amy Elizabeth Gales - 19
Jul 18, 1975 - Mar 08, 1995
Auto Accident
Ron & Sandy Gales

Anthony Neri - 21
Jul 03, 1973 - Jun 24, 1995
Accidental Drug Overdose
Diane Neri

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

Bryce Stack - 30
Jan 26, 1979 - Jul 24, 2009
Accidental Overdose
Trish DeBauche

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

Elizabeth Nelson - 23
Jul 27, 1980 - May 31, 2004
Car Accident
Tom & Kathy Nelson

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

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

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

Katie Satkamp - 7
Jul 12, 1974 - May 12, 1982
School Bus Accident
Ronda & Steve Satkamp

Maria Elena Nudell - 14
Apr 17, 1981 - Jul 07, 1995
Horseback Riding Accident
Marilyn Cocogliato

Mariana Tunstall - 8
Dec 29, 1999 - Jul 16, 2008
E-Coli
Keith & Kristena Tunstall

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

Nicholas Carl Pica - 21
Dec 12, 1984 - Jul 13, 2006
Sudden Cardiac Death
Jane & Jerry Pica

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

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

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

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

Sarah Marie Fink - 3 1/2 Mths
Jul 11, 1977 - Nov 02, 1977
SIDS
Sue & Garry Fink

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

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

Thomas A. Walsh Jr. - 32
Oct 16, 1970 - Jul 20, 2003
Unknown
Karen Richards

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

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

Continued on next page

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 Kavanaugh - 3
May 24, 1992 - Jul 04, 1995
Hit by a Van
Maribeth Kavanaugh

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

Branden Martinez – 6 Weeks
Jun 26, 2011 - Aug 08, 2011
Infection
Kyle Martinez & Missy Babyar

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

Casey Reiter - 25
Aug 11, 1984 - Dec 15, 2009
Heart Attack
Sandy Tummillo

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

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

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

Gino Grandenitti - 20
Aug 14, 1990 - May 30, 2011
Cancer
Vic Grandenitti

Gregory Michael Humbert - 30
Aug 31, 1961 - Oct 31, 1991
Auto Accident
Marge Humbert

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

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

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
Meningitus
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

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

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

Brian Eck - 39
Sep 08, 1971 - Nov 08, 2010
Enlarged Heart
Kathy Eck

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

Continued on next page

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*

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

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
Brain Tumor
Michael 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

Richie Chow - 27
Dec 22, 1983 - Sep 30, 2011
Unknown
Joyce Chow

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

Butterfly Release & Family Picnic
Sunday July 13, 2014; 12:00p.m. (noon)
Katherine Legge Memorial Park – North Pavilion
60th and County Line Road, Hinsdale

Donations $12.00 per adult, or $20.00 per couple, plus $5.00 per child
1 butterfly included with adult donations
Extra butterflies: $12.00 each

To safeguard the butterflies, they will be released at 12:15…….don't be late!

Beverages and utensils will be provided by BP/USA

Please bring a dish to share:
A-H Bring a dessert to share (serving 12)
I-Z Bring a side dish to share (serving 12)

Please RSVP with donation by July 6, 2014:
Sally Yarberry
708-560-0393
psyrbrry@hotmail.com
BP/USA Chicagoland Chapter
P.O. Box 320
Western Springs, IL 60558

Name: _____

No. of People (total): _____ No. of Children Included: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Back to School Shopping

A Chicagoland Chapter charitable project

For the past several years we have collected donations of school supplies for children in need. If you would like to participate in this optional charitable project in memory of your child ***please bring your donations to the August or September Chapter meeting****.*

If you feel like going "back to school" shopping for your child, and you would like to help poverty level children, here are items on my students' school supply list. Some of my students reside at Chicagoland race tracks and attend Drexel School. These are children of the employees who care for the horses. An entire family lives in one room. Arlington Race Track buses their children to Cicero, a one hour bus ride.

> > Crayola markers (tropical or classic colors)
> > Fiskars scissors
> > Crayola colored chalk
> > Crayola colored pencils
> > Pencils
> > Pink erasers
> > Elmer's glue sticks
> > Spiral notebooks
> > Pencil sharpeners
> > Crayola crayons
> > Colored yarn

The children get excited over the smallest things. They see me in the hall and exclaim, "Art is my favorite subject! I can't wait until Thursday when we get to weave."

I find out which students can't afford their supplies from the homeroom teachers. The children will find a bag of supplies in their lockers. "Santa came early"

The homeroom teachers and I thank you for donating to these appreciative children.

Suzi Scott
Art Teacher
Lincoln and Drexel Schools
Cicero

Suzi Scott, joined our Chapter after her daughter, Kate Pranno, died in 2002.

How to Plant a Monarch Butterfly Garden

Donna Corrigan, Matthew's mom
Chicagoland BPUSA

The Monarch butterfly population has been decreasing each year. 2014 has shown the largest decline in several decades. Droughts, extreme weather, and illegal logging in the wintering grounds contribute to their decline. But perhaps the most significant injury has been done by large-scale commercial farming and the use of damaging herbicides. These practices have nearly destroyed the milkweed plants which are so vital as the habitat for the monarchs to lay their eggs.

What can we do create a healthy environment for the Monarch butterflies and increase their population?

- Plant milkweed *Asclepiads spp*. There are many different varieties available in your garden center. The Monarch will only lay their eggs on milkweed plants.
- When the butterfly emerges from the pupa stage they will feed on brightly colored nectar plants. Butterflies hop, so plant clumps of flowers - plan for continuous blooms. They taste through their feet and will dance among the many flowers.
- Hang a fruit feeder (a few pieces of cut fruits in an old pie pan, replaced ever few days)
- Create a puddling pan – moist sand and water (an old pie pan)
- Provide flat stones for warming in a protected area in the sun

Most important: Do not use herbicides in your garden!

Before long, you will see butterflies in your yard.

Taking Care of You

by Mary S. Cleckley, from I Walked A Mile With Sorrow, Centering Corporation, 2006

We sometimes do all the wrong things as we try to get our lives back on an even keel. Typical complaints are about not being able to sleep or eat or maintain any kind of organized pattern. I guess we expect our systems to go on automatic pilot and that we have no obligation to help in any way, WRONG!

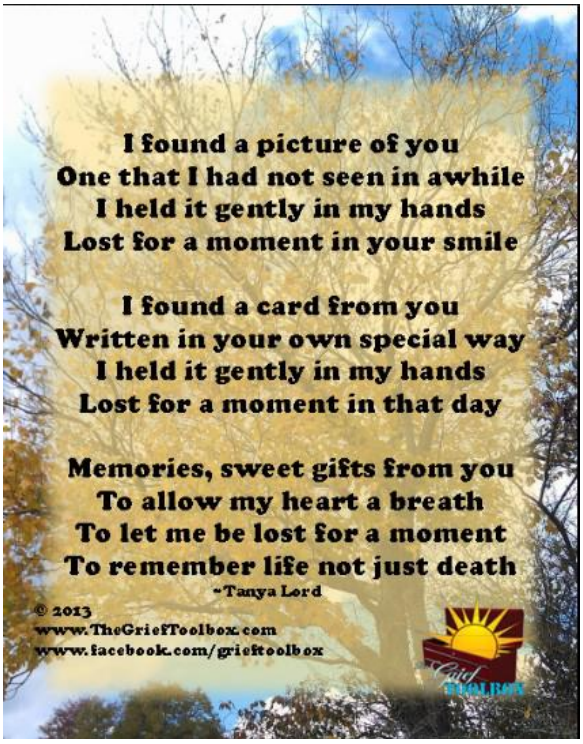
What we have here is a brain that is doing its best to continue functioning in some fashion, and what do we feed it? Junk food. Whatever is convenient, that's what, and often not enough of that. Most make no move to leave the house, and instead sit in a chair all day, so that certainly cuts out any chance for exercise. There we sit, doing all the wrong things smoking, drinking too much coffee (or too much something) and making every effort not to make an effort.

There is a lot that you are going through now over which you have no control, but more important, there are some things that you can do to help yourself. They include:

- Eat some of the basic food groups each day. If you have no appetite, just eat small amounts several times a day and make it a well-balanced diet.
- Leave off some of the coffee, tea, and soft drinks with caffeine, particularly late in the afternoon or evening.
- Go for a walk several hours before you retire. Studies show that exercise taken about six hours before bedtime helps you to fall asleep faster.
- Don't go to bed and just lie there for hours. If sleep doesn't come, try reading in another room. Many people use this time to add to their journals. Even if no one else reads your journal, it helps to put your feelings in words and it also helps you to recognize your progress as it is made.
- If you don't have a radio that you can program to play for an hour, get one. Things seem worse in the dead of night and having something going on in the background distracts you from your compulsion to go over and over the events that led up to your child's death. That way, you can drift off to sleep and not have to worry about turning off the radio.
- Some find talking about their anxieties with an understanding friend helps to defuse them and allows them to sleep better. Try unloading some of your stress by talking with another bereaved parent whose common sense you trust.

There are probably ways you can think of to help yourself—things that have helped in the past when you've had sleepless nights. Help yourself. Try some new ways of dealing with the trauma of grief.

Isn't it good to remember that some of the things that are bothering you now won't always bother you? Things change as we go along. We learn to eat and sleep in normal patterns again. I hope that time come soon for you.



Anger As An Accessory

By: Jeanne Cacciatore
SIDS Alliance Regional Executive Director for AZ
Reprinted from Arizona State SIDS Newsletter
July/August 1998

The throat begins to tighten. The eyes begin to burn and fill with tears as you inhale deeply in an attempt to overcome the newly inflicted wound. Someone has just attempted to ease your pain with a casual comment about what they believe was "meant to be" and you are withholding your reaction to counter the remark.

I remember the feeling early in my grief years. Oh, the first few time I handled it very well. I believe it was surprise that allowed me to be so hospitable to those besieging me with platitudes. It took time to digest their comments. By the time I did, they were long gone. But as time passed, I found the anger and bitterness intensifying. With each passing remark, I got closer and closer to reacting. Until one day it happened. I exploded with anger at one individual who paid the price for dozens of hurtful clichés. I walked away from the incident feeling cleansed—like I had purged myself of a flesh-eating disease. I was certain after that the word "mercy" was no longer part of my vocabulary. I was on a mission to educate them all.

Anger was one of the most difficult emotions to overcome after Cheyenne's death. I wore my anger like an accessory. I was prepared to do verbal battle at any time. I tried to explain why the clichés hurt and how I wanted to be supported through this grief. A few people listened and respected my wishes. Most chose not to respond. That is when I decided to proactively determine who the "real" friends were.

What I discovered was that strangers became friends, and some friends became strangers. My anger accumulated quickly when some of my former "friends" chose to ignore me, placate me, and whisper behind my back. I knew if I didn't do something with this anger it would adversely affect my journey through grief. So, I separated myself from those who disregarded my request for empathy and support. I surrounded myself with other grieving families or friends who did not change the subject or leave the room when I wanted to discuss my daughter's death. I spoke honestly to my family about my needs and my anger. I explained that although they may not understand some of my feelings, I needed their respect.

Finally, I discovered what types of physical outlets were helpful for me during periods of debilitating anger such as walking, writing, visiting the cemetery, swimming, or hiking. I would always do these activities alone so I could really concentrate on my feelings of anger. Instead of repressing or denying them, I would acknowledge the feelings and validate them. I would say to myself, "I have a right to be angry. My child died." I have earned this anger.

I don't know at what point during this journey that the feelings of heightened anger began to subside. I didn't notice when it happened, although I am sure it was quite gradual. But I became aware of the newly acquired patience the other day. A friend of ours was over having dinner. This is a person who was not in our lives in 1994, when our daughter died. However, it is not possible to know the Cacciatore family without also knowing about Cheyenne. Thus, this person knew about our baby girl. During dinner my husband, Paul said, "I have changed so much since my daughter died." Our friend responded with surprising horror in his voice, "You had a daughter that died!?" Paul and I looked at each other in astonishment, knowing he was aware of Cheyenne's death. "Yes, of course" I said "remember we told you about our baby". Feeling a bit confused he replied, "Oh! I knew about her but I thought you meant you had a real child — like a five- or a ten-year old that died."

Being the more outspoken of the two, Paul looked at me, waiting to see which plate I was going to hit him with. Much to his surprise, I just smiled and calmly said, "Well, I wish I would have had her for five or ten years!" We went back to our meal, without a hint of annoyance or spite.

I didn't think about the incident again until he left. I then realized that Paul was not the only one surprised by my lack of reaction. I surprised myself. Clearly, my more tolerant attitude did not come overnight, but I am glad to see it nonetheless. I am happy to say I have removed my coat of arms and put down my sword. The art of true wisdom is knowing what to overlook. One more of the many gifts our child had left for us.

Bereaved Parents of the USA
2014 National Gathering

Register Online at:

www.bereavedparentsusa.org/Gathering-online.html

Sheraton Clayton Plaza Hotel
7730 Bonhomme Avenue
St Louis, Missouri 63105

For more information contact:
Jodi Norman, Gathering Chairperson
703-910-6277

e-mail: bpusagather@gmail.com

National BP/USA Website:
http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS	
July	
July 13	Butterfly Release & Family Picnic: 12:00 Noon Katherine Legge Memorial Park, North Pavilion; Please RSVP
July 25 - 27	2014 National Gathering for the Bereaved Parents of the USA: Sheraton Clayton Plaza Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri.
August	
August 5	Monthly Meeting: 7:00 PM – Open Discussion; School Supplies – bring donations of new school supplies for children in need (see article in this newsletter for details)
September	
September 2	Monthly Meeting: 7:00 PM – Small group discussions; Still time to donate school supplies for needy children.

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

Angel

from WINTERSUN by sascha
(L.A.R.G.O. Inc. 1996)

Hope is the melancholy angel of grievers,
elusive and beautiful.
Hope is the light from nowhere,
telling us that we must reach
for the unknown promise
that waits to be fulfilled,
in a future we do not yet understand.

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

BEREAVED PARENTS of the USA ®

July – August – September 2014