

Comforting Friends

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A NATIONAL OUTREACH & SUPPORT ORGANIZATION
FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY A SUICIDE DEATH

2021
NOVEMBER



THE FUZZIES AND CARRYING FORWARD

by Catherine Greenleaf

When a loved one's anniversary arrives, the fuzzies come with it. And I don't mean the warm fuzzies. You may already know what I am talking about. There's a sense of unreality that creeps in like a fog about a week before the anniversary date (which I always seem to forget) but by the feelings of dissociation.

You can feel split off from your body and like your mind is hovering somewhere over or near you. Sounds seem louder. Your thoughts seem to take longer, like you're living in slow motion. That's the initial trauma being retriggered by the memories around the date. The season of the year, certain tastes and

smells, even the cologne that someone wears - all of it can take a survivor back to that fateful day.

We can't turn back the clock. But we can regain our sanity by immersing ourselves in the present. Simply by staying busy and involved in our lives and the community, we can foster good health, mentally and physically, for ourselves and others. Our dreams may have altered radically since the deaths of our loved ones. But we can start to nurture our new dreams - whatever they are.

Source: excerpts from Healing the Hurt Spirit, Daily Affirmations for People Who Have Lost a Loved One to Suicide, Nov 4 & 5

November: I have hazy memories of the first set of holidays after Steven died. With six small children, I remember we did have family gatherings, but I was in a fog. By the time Thanksgiving rolled around, I did not know how I could get through the holidays, but I did. I survived.

Reflecting back on that time in my life, I had many things to be grateful for: that I was able to cook the big dinner with my family gathered around. Grateful for the love and support of family, friends and my community.

I encourage you to fill out the Gratitude Wheel on page 4. Cut it out and put it on your fridge or on your bathroom mirror. Remind yourself of the goodness that exists and give yourself grace and love.



Gratefully,
Marilyn Koenig
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Support

GROUP MEETINGS

Go to our website, click on **Upcoming > Meetings**. Find your virtual meeting date and time, click on **"Register."** On this same page, you can also check for updates regarding in-person meetings.

VIRTUAL MEETINGS:

Second Monday

November 8 @ 3pm PST / 6pm EST

Third Tuesday

November 16 @ 7pm PST / 10pm EST

Fourth Wednesday (holiday date change)

November 17 @ 7pm PST / 10pm EST

Grieving Moms Groups (2)

#1 November 4 @ 6:30pm PST / 9:30pm EST

#2 November 18 @ 3pm PST / 6pm EST

Grieving Spouse & Partner

November 18 @ 6pm PST / 9pm EST

IN-PERSON MEETINGS:

Due to health protocol, please call to confirm meetings. 916-392-0664 or 800-646-7322

Cameron Park, CA

Tuesday, November 9 @ 6:30pm

Faith Episcopal Church

2200 Country Club Dr., Cameron Park CA

Carmichael, CA

Tuesday, November 16 @ 7pm

Carmichael Presbyterian Church

5645 Marconi Ave., Sacramento, CA

Grass Valley, CA

Thursday, November 18 @ 5:30pm

Hospice of the Foothills

11270 Rough & Ready Hwy., Grass Valley CA

Jackson, CA

Tuesday, November 2 @ 3:30pm

Sierra Wind Wellness & Recovery Center

10354 Argonaut Lane, Jackson CA

Modesto, CA

Monday, November 15 @ 7pm

The Bridge Covenant Church (Riverbank)

2201 Morrill Road, Riverbank CA

Legacy Survivors, UT

Wednesday, November 10 @ 6pm MST

Warehouse 22 - 1068 W 350 S

Syracuse, UT

holiday planning

Be kind to yourself. Nothing is as important as taking care of yourself. Choosing how or where to spend the holidays may be your biggest dilemma. If you are a new survivor, the holidays will be hard, no matter what you do. You may hurt, but you will survive. Some advance decision making and planning can help you get ready for the season ahead even though the thoughts of "holidays" may be unbearable at this moment. They will come and they will have to be dealt with.



Excerpted from L.O.S.S. Member letter 10/09/89 by Rev. Charles T. Rubey and Therese Gump:

"If it is unbearable to fix a turkey, don't do it. Have a ham or some other main dish. You might even go out to dinner at a restaurant or a relative's home. A change of venue helps. If you feel you cannot deprive the other members of your family of turkey and all the trimmings, go ahead with the preparations as you did in the past. A word of caution: be careful that you are not overdoing it to try to compensate for the missing member and wear yourself out in the process.

"Not to acknowledge the absence of our loved one is almost denying that they ever existed. Some people include them in their "Grace" before the meal, or in a special toast, or a moment of silence. Others place the family albums in a prominent place so that those present may look through them either together or alone. These are some of the possibilities, but I can emphasize that they are not for everyone. No one can tailor-make a "Holiday Survival Kit" for each family. All we can do is to be aware of the added stress of the loss at this hectic time of the year. In the process, try to do what is appropriate for your family, not what the rest of the world expects you to do. Think of what you have been through already. If you have made it through that, you will get through this too."

Here at Friends for Survival, we have developed a resource to help with the family holiday planning. Hopefully the end result will be a holiday that is meaningful for everyone. You can download a free copy from our website or call our office and we can mail one to you. www.FriendsForSurvival.org > Support Resources > Holiday Checklist

instead of apologizing, i'm thanking

Source: 365 Days of Understanding Your Grief - Daily Readings for Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D. (November 11)

As I've been grieving, I've noticed that I sometimes apologize for being open and honest about my grief. "Sorry I'm such a mess," I might say after a crying jag in front of a friend. Or, "I'm sorry I need so much help."

But I shouldn't feel sorry about my normal and necessary grief. So now I'm switching out sorries for thank-yous: "Thank you for listening to me." "Thank you for helping me." "Thank you for being there for me."

These thank-yous honor my need to mourn and be supported in my grief. They also extend gratitude to my helpers. So much better!

Reflection: I don't have to apologize for being genuine.



GRATITUDE TURNS WHAT WE HAVE INTO ENOUGH, AND MORE. IT TURNS DENIAL INTO ACCEPTANCE, CHAOS INTO ORDER, CONFUSION INTO CLARITY ... IT MAKES SENSE OF OUR PAST, BRINGS PEACE FOR TODAY, AND CREATES A VISION FOR TOMORROW.

~ Melody Beattie



I AM
Grateful
FOR



Mom's Turkey Stuffing Still Rules

by Gloria Arenson, MFT, DCEP

Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday. It was my mom's, too. She was a wonderful cook. Her turkey stuffing was simple but memorable. In fact, my brother used to tease that he was going to make a stuffing sandwich with the leftovers the next day. I think he really did. It tasted even better on day two.

My mom died the day before Thanksgiving in 1979. Every year since then, Thanksgiving has been bittersweet for me. It is still my favorite holiday because of the family togetherness and the wonderful feast, but it reminds me of her death, too.

One of the wonderful ways we commemorate my mother's life is by making her special stuffing, which has become a family tradition. No matter how fancy the food, her simple recipe is reproduced and eaten with gusto. Over the years, my son has taken on the job of creating this dish, and he does it with love as he remembers his grandmother, too. Of course, my mother has been gone a very long time, and I no longer grieve, but it is comforting for me to think of her as we are gathered together. Her spirit is always in my heart and I recall how she bustled around, making sure that everyone was stuffed and happy.

Whenever I feel sad, I try to practice the advice of a wonderful teacher and author, Ken Keyes, who said, "To be upset over what I don't have is to waste what I do have." Ken was the personification of that sentiment. He was a quadriplegic who could only move one finger. Yet he radiated love and light, and inspired thousands of people.

When I feel carried away by negative feelings, such as loneliness, grief, or hurt, I talk to myself out loud and make a list of what is in my life right now that cheers me up. I usually start with the basics - begin grateful that I have a bed to sleep in, a roof over my head, and money in my wallet. I keep listing until I realize that I also have people who love and appreciate me, and I still have loving memories of the ones who are no longer with me.

Perhaps, like me, you have lost someone who was a great cook. You might honor him or her by making his or her special dish and sharing it with friends and relatives. With each bite, you can remember and thank that loved one. If you are still grieving, make your own list of what you can be thankful for at this time of year and see if your mood shifts to the brighter side of life.

Source: "Open to Hope - Inspirational Stories for Handling the Holidays After Loss" by Dr. Gloria Horsley and Dr. Heidi Horsley

Support RESOURCES

Friends for Survival
www.friendsforsurvival.org

Phone: (916) 392-0664

Toll Free: (800) 646-7322

If you are in crisis and need immediate help, call the 24-hour National Crisis Line:

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Alliance of Hope

Survivor services including a 24/7 on-line community forum
www.allianceofhope.org

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)

Extensive lists of available meeting support www.afsp.org/find-support

Bereaved Parents of the USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Suicide Awareness Voices of Education
www.save.org

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)

For service members, veterans, and their families: www.taps.org

The Compassionate Friends
For bereaved parents of a deceased child: www.compassionatefriends.org

The Nat'l Center for Grieving Children & Families
The Dougy Center
www.dougy.org/grief-resources

SACRAMENTO COUNTY

This program is funded in part by the Division of Behavioral Health Services through the voter approved Proposition 63, Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).

the next 30 Days: take our November gratitude challenge and fill in your gratitude wheel.

Special Thanks

To you, dear readers, for your notes and emails. We so appreciate hearing from you.

Please share your ideas, poetry, artwork and "what helps" with us via regular mail to P. O. Box 214463, Sacramento, CA 95821 or by email at info@friendsforsurvival.org

Also, thank you anonymous donor for the office supplies. We so appreciate it!

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Enclosed is my donation of:

\$

Please use it as follows:

- Where Most Needed
- Legacy Friends

In memory of: _____

From: _____

Name and relationship

Please include my loved one in Remembrances. My loved one's name is:

DOB: _____

DOD: _____

My name and relationship:

Please send me this newsletter via email instead. My email address is:

Please detach and mail to:
Friends for Survival
P.O. Box 214463
Sacramento, CA 95821-4463

Gifts of Love

9/1 - 9/30

Alice (Lyssa) & Judson Dougherty

in memory of brothers, Patrick and Michael

Becki Hardeman

in memory of son, Fred "Paco" Lee

Chris & Dave Beeby

in memory of daughter, Maureen "Mo" Beeby

Christine Weston

in memory of father, Thomas Weston, Jr.

Cindy Iseley

in memory of husband and father, Craig

Cynthia Durfee

in memory of son, Richard Gardner

David & Kathie Abood

in memory of step-son and son, Jared Brisso

David LaRoe

in memory of Howard La Roe

Ermina Levy

in memory of husband, Keith Goodwin

Ginneil & Daniel Jennings

in memory of son, Paul Hill

Glenda Novinger

in memory of T. Chris Alderton

Ian Howard

in memory of father, Charles "Chris" Howard, from Ian & Stefan

Iva Lou Woodring

in memory of husband, Jim

Jeanne (Karen) Reinbolt

in memory of son, Ben

Jeanne Tickle

in memory of brother, John Rumler

John & Kathleen Burke

in memory of son, Andrew Burke

John Alford

in memory of partner, Daniel C. Brooks

Katalin & James DeBord

in memory of son, Jack

Linda Spies

in memory of son, Jake Spies

Marilyn Koenig

in memory of son, Steven

Maria Pinto

in memory of husband, José Pinto, from Maria and all our kids

Maria Sales Sabate

in memory of son, Marino

Marlene Beltram-Isaacs

in memory of daughter, Cloressa Isaacs

Nancy Hiestand

in memory of brother, Rob Hiestand

Nina Vasiliev

in memory of son, David

Pamela Belyea

in memory of Phillip Levine

Patricia Sholberg

in memory of husband, Dee

Paul Cox

in memory of son, Heber

Phillip Cypret

in memory of wife, Georgette Snell

Robert & Anne Meagher

in memory of daughter, Nicole

Roger & Carol Louthan

in memory of son, Doug

Stephanie Chandler-Tonstad

in memory of Chris Tonstad

Stephen & Pamela Trask

in memory of sons, Bradley & Cameron

Susan Goh

in memory of son, Nicholas

Susan J. Reynolds

in memory of cousin, Wes Lincoln

Susan Wilson

in memory of brother, Fred Squires

Susie Johnson

in memory of husband Eric

Walt & Leona Narr

in memory of sons, Walter & Paul

William & Barbara Diemer

in memory of son, Paul

Donations have also been received from:
Charlotte Herkshan,
Dr. Tobey Pitman,
Katherine Remhof,
Mary Brighton, Tami Cisneros, Tracy Oeser

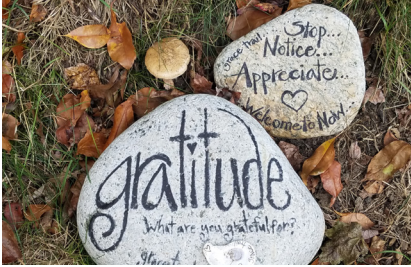
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