

They that love
beyond the world
cannot be separated by it.
Death cannot kill
what never dies.
William Penn

The Survivors of Suicide program and this newsletter depend in part on donations from the survivor community.

We offer our sincere appreciation for recent donations in memory of Jennifer J.

SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE NEWSLETTER

is published bi-monthly by the
Macomb Crisis Center

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A Wish List for the Bereaved

1. I wish my loved one hadn't died.
2. I wish I had my loved one back.
3. If I cry and get emotional when you talk about my loved one, I wish you would know it isn't because you have hurt me.
4. I wish you wouldn't remove my loved one's pictures, artwork or other remembrances from your home.
5. Being bereaved is not contagious, so I wish you wouldn't shy away from me. I need you now more than ever.
6. I might be sad and I might cry, but I wish you would let me talk about my loved one, my favorite topic of the day.
7. I know that you think of and pray for me often, and that my loved one's death pains you too. I wish you would let me know those things through a phone call, a note, or a real big hug.
8. I wish you wouldn't expect my grief to be over in six months. The first months are especially traumatic for me, but I wish you could understand that I will always suffer the death of my loved one.
9. I wish you wouldn't expect me "not to think about it" or to "be happy." Neither will happen for a long time.
10. I know it is miserable for you to be around me when I'm feeling miserable. I don't want to have a "pity party" but I do wish you would let me grieve. I must hurt before I heal.
11. When I say "I am doing okay," I wish you could understand that I don't "feel" okay and that I struggle.
12. I wish you knew that all of the grief reactions that I'm having are normal. Depression, anger, hopelessness, and overwhelming sadness are all to be expected.
13. Your advice to "take one day at a time" is excellent. However, a day is too much and too fast for me right now. I wish you could understand that I am doing well to handle one hour at a time.
14. When I become overwhelmed, I wish you would let me find a quiet place to be alone.
15. I wish you would understand that I am not the same person I was before my loved one died, and I won't be that person again.
16. I wish you could understand my loss, grief, silence, tears, void, and pain; but, I pray you will never understand!

Kathy Freeman

Adapted from "A Bereaved Parent's Wish List" (1998)



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January/February 2011

Survivors Of Suicide NEWSLETTER

MACOMB COUNTY CRISIS CENTER

(586) 307-9100

"What If" and "If Only"

Because someone we loved didn't *have* to die as a result of a terminal physical cause, we are prone to attribute omnipotence to ourselves. We should have known; we should have done things differently, if we had only done one thing extra, we think "*then* they would still be alive."

Whatever you did or didn't do just before their death, you had done or hadn't done many times before. If you were mad at them, you had been mad at them many times before when they hadn't killed themselves. If you were gone from home when they killed themselves, you had been gone from home endless times when they didn't kill themselves. If you failed to say "I love you" before they died, you need to remember we don't go around expressing our love every minute of the day to those we love, and who we expect will be there.

A certain amount of "what-iffing" and "if-only" thinking is a good

process to help you come to grips with the fact that you probably did do all you reasonably could. We tend to idealize those we've lost, but we must remember that people who are experiencing emotional or mental distress can be very unreasonable, and often downright difficult to live with. Distressed people often have two sides to their personalities: 1) depressed and dependent, unhappy and clinging, and/or 2) irritable, angry and so touchy one can hardly talk to them. One has the feeling it is necessary to walk on eggshells to keep from "setting them off."

At a certain point, you need to look back realistically at the person who died, and remember how he or she actually was before the death. The loved one certainly hadn't the saintly image you may be trying so hard to impose on yourself. You likely are remembering happier times before they were so sick and upset. You need to remember all the things you tried, all the times

you were loving and patient, all the times you wracked your brain for one more thing that might help, all the times you gave things up for someone you loved, and nothing worked. That's right – nothing worked – and your loved one died.

It's *normal* to feel you will never be happy again, but you will. It's *normal* to wish you could just crawl in a hole, and give up, but you won't. It's *normal* to doubt your ability to relate to the rest of your family and friends, but you will. It's *normal* to hurt so much you think you won't ever recover, but you will. You will *because you have to*; you will because down the road, the future will beckon you to come back.

Adina Wroblewski
Suicide: Survivors
A Guide for Those Left Behind
SAVE (1994)

HEART LINES

My Goodbye Song

All you left me with was bills and toys
And the sweetest little boy to parent on my own
It was hard but I have captured the joy
I know you did the best with the mind that you owned.

I miss you yes, but finally I see
All the gifts you have given to me
Even throughout this sick tragedy
I am scarred but new Heather was brought to be

I have learned the ability to forgive
You have given me direction
The power to grow and love
In this life I will find more affection

So as I say these words of farewell
The seeds of darkness repel
Because I know now the truth as best as I can
Deep down, no matter what, you were a good man

Though for the rest of our lives there will be times
you will be missed
I will never forget those moments of bliss
As I let you go into the night
I free up my spirit, no longer to fight

Closing a chapter of your life I have some things left
to do
Like visiting Lavon and Red Robin too
The thought of going there used to scare me before
But I have found the desire to visit once more

I will go to the place where we had our first date
and last
And remember all the good times that had passed
If I shed a little tear, have no fear
Bear with me, it has only been a year

I'm saying goodbye because I feel ready to let go
Whatever will be, I will let it be so
I can't speak for tomorrow just for today
I love you forever, in a different kind of way

I will see you again someday, at some point in time
I will flash you the very same smile of mine
So Goodbye my sweet Dennis
Much love and God bless
Wherever you are, I hope you are best

Heather Finn

Sharing the Journey

Collected Poems
by Mary DeClerck

Morning

It was a bright morning, I remember,
Until the black asphalt of the grocery store
parking lot rose up to swallow the light.
A phone call had come.
On my knees; the shock and disbelief;
the denial; no, no, no.
Was that me screaming and sobbing?
My sister tried to comfort.
Kind strangers asked if they could help.
They were gentle, soft, afraid for me,
Handling me as if I were a fragile porcelain
teacup in danger of breaking.

I was already broken.

Get out of the Way, God

Get out of the way, God
I want my bitterness and anger.
I don't want to apologize for my contempt.
I want to wallow in the depths of despair;
To lash out, scream and sob.
I don't want to forgive or love;
Or give anything to anybody.
So get out of the way, God
So I can live in anguish and despair.

Griefsick

Like waves it washes over me.
A tidal ebb and flow without predictability;
Waves of despair, hopelessness,
confusion and doubt.
An ache that is as deep as an ocean
descends upon me.
With the ebb, I pick my way
through the tidal offerings.
Sometimes I find treasure left in its wake.

Jacket

I wore your jacket today.
Putting it on felt like putting on a hug
That insulated me from the cold of your absence.
All day I felt warm reassurance
That you are always with me.

Survivors of Suicide Support Group Meetings

(1st Wednesday and 3rd Tuesday of each month)

Wednesday, January 5
Tuesday, January 18
Wednesday, February 2
Tuesday, February 15
7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Fox Pointe Center, 46360 Gratiot
South of 21 Mile Road
Enter door at rear of building
Questions? Call 586-307-9100

Upcoming Events

January 2011

Craft Nite, Monday, January 31, 6pm-9pm

February 2011

Craft Nite, Monday, February 28, 6 pm-9pm

March 2011

Craft Nite, Monday, March 28, 6pm-9pm

April 2011

Survivors Conference
Saturday, April 9

Macomb Intermediate School District
Please save the date!

Craft Nite, Monday, April 25, 6pm-9pm

May 2011

Five Week Workshop
May 4, 11, 18, 25, June 1

Craft Nite, Monday, May 23, 6pm-9pm

June 2011

Balloon and Butterfly Release

Craft Nite, Monday, June 27, 6pm-9pm

July 2011

Craft Nite, Monday, July 25, 6pm-9pm

August 2011

Memory Stone Workshop

Craft Nite, Monday, August 29, 6pm-9pm

September 2011

Craft Nite, Monday, September 26, 6pm-9pm

October 2011

Craft Nite, Monday, October 24, 6pm-9pm

November 2011

Craft Nite, Monday, November 28, 6pm-9pm

December 2011

Holiday Program

All activities take place at Fox Pointe Center,
46360 Gratiot, unless otherwise noted.

Please watch future newsletters for additional
information as it becomes available. Events are
subject to change.