

Sometimes, when one person is missing, the whole world seems depopulated.

Lamartine

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 Doug K., Kyle O., Joe L., and Jim A., and also for the Auxiliary to the Macomb County Osteopathic Society's support of the 2012 SOS Conference.

SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE NEWSLETTER

is published bi-monthly by the Macomb Crisis Center

Gary Burnett, MA, LPC, LMSW
Agency Supervisor

Jean Larch, RSST
S.O.S. Program Coordinator

Ellen Paré, BA, LBSW
Editor

(586) 307-9100



Mark A. Hackel
County Executive

The Crisis Center is a program of Macomb County Community Mental Health. MCCMH programs and services are supported and funded, in part, by the Michigan Department of Community Health and the Macomb County Board of Commissioners, and are administered by the Macomb County Community Mental Health Board. MCCMH is a CARF Accredited organization.

You are invited to join us for our Spring 2012

Five Week Educational Workshop “Understanding Suicide”

Understanding Suicide is a unique educational workshop designed to help survivors heal the intense feelings of emotional pain that often follow in the aftermath of suicide. We invite you to come learn about the complexities of suicide and the grief process. Survivors will find healing through education and sharing their experiences with others who have lost a loved one to suicide.

Workshop Topics Include:

- The Grief After Suicide
- The Suicidal Mind
- Tunnel Vision
- The Suicidal Personality
- Healing After Suicide

This workshop is presented by Jean Larch, author of *Dying to Be Free: A Healing Guide for Families After Suicide* (Hazelden, 2006). The workshop runs for five consecutive Wednesday evenings. Participants are asked to register in advance and to attend all five sessions.

When: Wednesdays
May 9, 16, 23, 30, June 6
6:30 – 8:30pm

Where: Macomb Intermediate School District
44001 Garfield Road
Clinton Township, MI 48038

There is no charge for this workshop. Donations are appreciated.

Space is limited! To register please call the Macomb County Crisis Center at 586-307-9100 (24 hour number).

Survivors Of Suicide NEWSLETTER

May/June 2012

MACOMB COUNTY CRISIS CENTER

(586) 307-9100

Getting Through the Long Nights

I can pretend through the day that Joe is away at work. Alone for the evening meal and crawling into an empty bed confirm the worst! The loneliness descends like a shroud and there is no escape. What do I do to get to sleep? And what about those long hours during the night when I wake and can't get back to sleep?

These are some of my ideas for getting to sleep and surviving the long nights. Perhaps you will think of some of your own:

Stick to a regular schedule. Have dinner with the TV news commentator. Have a set time to go to bed, an alarm to wake me at the same time every morning. Get up, regardless of how little sleep I have had. Take an early afternoon nap, not longer than 30 minutes; set the timer.

Get regular exercise, but not within three hours of going to bed. Exercise relieves stress and may help me relax and fall asleep.

Avoid caffeine and alcohol. Both can interfere with sleep patterns.

Eat lightly in the evening. Have a light meal. Have a small snack or a glass of milk an hour before bed.

Get sunlight in the afternoon. It helps my body's natural clock let me sleep at night.

Create a sleep-producing atmosphere with low lighting, soothing music, warm bath, deep breathing, visualization of a beautiful setting, relaxation of body muscles, or inspirational reading. Develop a nightly ritual of things that work for me.

Beside my bed for those long wakeful hours put dull reading material, a journal to record my feelings, note cards, a note pad for "To Do" lists, a manicure set, a radio.

If all else fails, go to the kitchen and make hot chocolate. Sip slowly, listen to the night sounds, look for the moon, the stars. Remember that nighttime is a good time for crying, and crying is healing.

Remind myself that I only need to get through one night at a time. I can do this. When I wake during the night, I will determine if I need to cry, get busy, prepare food, or just sit peacefully. Morning will come.

Marta Felber
*Grief Expressed:
When a Mate Dies
LifeWords (1997)*

HEART LINES

Two Years

Two years may seem like
a long time to you
But I'm just waking up
to the reality that
the hellish nightmare
is real
And he's gone.
Two years,
so long to you
so short to me
because,
you see,
I haven't really
been here.
Time for me
is different than it is
for you.
My heart
stopped
two years
ago
When he died.
Two years,
such a short
time
and now
such a
long time
to live
the rest
of my
life
Without him.

Virginia A. Simpson, Ph.D.
(3/1/01)

Sharing the Journey

Why the Dragonfly? by Cheryl Brown

This article and story were shared by Karen, a local survivor, who wrote: For me, this story took on so many meanings. It helped me believe that our loved ones may be gone from this world but that they are still with us. It also reminded me of the transformation that we are going through and that we can ultimately emerge as a new being – a beautiful being.

The dragonfly has great meaning for many cultures, and especially for the Zuni Indians in New Mexico. It is the messenger who carries prayers to the Spirit World. It's also a symbol of transformation, rebirth and immortality. Although it spends the majority of its life on the bottom of a pond as a larva, it always rises above that, symbolizing our ability to transform ourselves through a spiritual awakening.

The lotus or water lily closes at night and opens in the morning and is lifted above the surface of the water. This was a symbol of death and rebirth to the ancient Egyptians.

Story of the Dragonfly

In the bottom of an old pond lived some grubs; they could not understand why none of their group came back after crawling up the stems of the lilies to the top of the water. They promised each other that the next one who made the upward climb would return and tell what happened to him.

Soon, one of them felt an impulse to seek the surface. He rested on top of a lily pad and went through a transformation that made him a dragonfly with beautiful wings. In vain, he tried to keep his promise, flying back and forth over the pond. He peered down at his loved ones.

Then he realized, even if they could see him, they would not recognize him in his new body. "I guess they'll just have to wait until they become dragonflies, too," he said. "Then they'll understand what happened to me and where I went."

The fact that we cannot see our loved ones or communicate with them after the transformation (which we call death) is no proof they cease to exist.

Suicide: Finding Hope
www.suicidefindinghope.com

If you would like to share a story, a poem, or an article that has helped you along your grief journey, please e-mail ellen.pare@mccmh.net

Survivors of Suicide Support Group Meetings

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

Wednesday, May 2

Tuesday, May 15

Wednesday, June 6

Tuesday, June 19

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

May 2012

Five Week Workshop
Wednesdays

May 9, 16, 23, 30, June 6
Macomb Intermediate School District
(call 586-307-9100 to sign up)

Craft Nite, Monday, May 21, 6pm-9pm
(one week early due to holiday)

June 2012

Balloon and Butterfly Release

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

July 2012

Craft Nite, Monday, July 30, 6pm-9pm

August 2012

Memory Stone Workshop

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

September 2012

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

October 2012

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

November 2012

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

December 2012

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.