

SUDDEN UNEXPECTED DEATH OF A SPOUSE
BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP



dominicmurgido.com

suds Spirit

Quarterly Newsletter



THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED
IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

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Welcome *from the Editor*

Spring is in the air and we celebrate this new season coming from the dark cold days of the winter. When seasons change, they remind us that life keeps moving. We recall good times gone by, give thanks for the present, and dare to look forward to what lies ahead.

Social media posts concerning **sudSSpirit** are now on my personal face book page:
www.facebook.com/dominic.murgido.

My second book, *In a Heartbeat*, (a memoir) is in the final stage of production being uploaded to digital platforms and being printed in both hardcover and paperback.

Stay tuned for information on a book launch, its availability, and meet the author events.

sudSSpirit was founded in 2008 to help provide a place of comfort, compassion, and hope for those that have experienced a sudden unexpected death of their spouse or significant other. Meetings are held monthly in Reading, PA and Bennington, VT. All meetings are Free and No registration is required. Additional information is within this newsletter. **sudSSpirit** stands for "Sudden Unexpected Death of a Spouse – Survivors in Participation to Inform, Renew, Improve, and Triumph"

If this is the first time you have heard about us and are in need of some help through our support group chapters, please see additional information inside about our chapters. We also have a list of resources for support inside that may be helpful to you. This newsletter is available to anyone anywhere or any social service agency, hospice, support group, church, funeral home, medical office, library, hospital, clinic or organization anywhere FREE of charge via regular mail or email. If you know of someone that can benefit from these pages, please share this with them and have them contact us with their email or address information and we will make sure that they become part of our mailing list for future publications. You may also contact the editor/founder directly at 717-866-2401 or sudsspirit@gmail.com / dmurgido@gmail.com / dominicmurgido.com

You may also access copies of this newsletter through the **Circle of Life Coalition** website at www.circleoflife.org under resources.

They have the current issue as well as past issues. Special thanks to the Circle of Life Coalition for hosting our newsletters on their website as well as information about my book, *Miss Your Forever*, and continuing on their mission to educate the community and professionals on all aspects of end of life.

Miss Your FOREVER, Reflections After the Death of a Spouse. On sale now

https://www.amazon.com/dp/1098069463/ref=cm_sw_r_awdo_navT_g_3X6YWTRD9DADAT11259E

link: <https://www.christianfaithpublishing.com/books/?book=miss-your-forever>

you tube book trailer for Miss Your Forever:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=LJ16JtSIAs>

FOUND is the title of a 4 part series for those who are grieving or who want to support someone who is grieving. It is hosted by Pam Washington and Dom Murgido. It airs on Berks Community Television. BCTV. **FOUND** involves Grief, Honor, Understand, Nurture, educate.

The mission of **FOUND** is to create a platform to build more community awareness around grief, to honor the process, to better understand it, to nurture those who are grieving, and to educate everyone about grief.

FOUND Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XEw1KBSILk>

FOUND Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9Zs5XFqBpk>

FOUND Part 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OAB4J8kx3mQ>

FOUND Part 4: Coming Soon!

Thank you to those that have been long time supporters of our group and thanks to all of those that we have helped along the way for believing in **sudSSpirit** and yourself to help you in your time of need. *Together We Can Help Each Other Heal.*

An Entry From My Journal

"My beautiful memories will keep her alive within me. I regret I can not make any more with her"

-Editor



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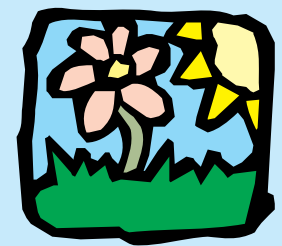
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- Editor

"There is never enough time to tell all the stories about someone you've loved and lost. People leave but love remains...we tell stories that connect us and we keep forever close heart to heart"

-Sharon Randall,
Columnist

Together we can help each other heal



717-866-2401 / dominicmurgido.com

Resources

- Editor

dominicmurgido.com

St Joseph's Spiritual Care

www.thefutureofhealthcare.org
610-378-2297

Amedisys/Compassionate Care
Hospice

1-800-777-5109 / 717-944-4466

Family Guidance Center
www.familyguidancecenter.com
610-374-4963

Clear Water Wellness

www.cwwellness.com
610-750-9096

Promedica / Heartland Home
Health Care and Hospice

www.heartlandhospice.com
610-373-6898 or 866-380-5874

www.grasp.org (grief recovery
after a substance passing)

Circle of Life Coalition

www.circleoflifecoalition.org

www.save.org (suicide loss)

www.griefshare.org

Diakon / Lutheran Home at Topton
www.diakon.org/fls/NPLoss.asp
610-682-1337 / 877-342-5667

Bennington Area VNA & Hospice
www.bavnah.org 802-442-5502

Bayada Hospice Services

www.bayada.com 888-790-3025
610-367-1608

Pathways Center for Grief & Loss

www.pathwaysthroughgrief.org
800-924-7610

Spiritrust Lutheran Home Care &
Hospice Mission Care

800-840-9081

www.211.com (United Way)

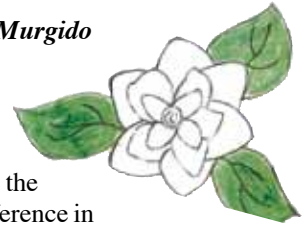
www.speakinggrief.org

www.grief.com (David Kessler)

www.opentohope.com



It Will Only Happen One Time *by Dominic Murgido*



A lot of what I have shared in the past in my newsletters, in my reflections, at my support group, in my speaking events, as well as in my books can be different than what others experience in their own grief journey. But in some instances, it can be the same. My sharing may allow someone else a different perspective or make them see things in a different light and how it may apply to their own thoughts and emotions. That is why I do it - to help others. I know a lot of what I will explain here is how I look at things, not necessarily how anyone else who lost a loved one would look at or interpret or think about.

This is the only time it will happen. It will not happen again. As I write this the current date is January 16, 2022. On this date sixteen years ago life as I knew it stopped. I lost the love of my life, my wife Sue. I was in a very dark pit of despair. I could not see myself surviving such a horrific life change that came suddenly and unexpectedly. That *today* long ago exploded within me. That *tomorrow* long ago did not exist in my world.

January 16 has repeated every year since that day full of sorrow and incomprehensible loss but on this day the date matches the amount of years it has been since it happened – sixteen. For some reason this strikes a chord within me. This is a significant negative trigger for me. A time to reflect that I have spent all these years missing her, loving her, trying to live without her. So many changes have happened in my life since that fateful day. Changes that I decided to make. Risks that I decided to take. Moves that I decided to do. And all for the quest to find a new life for me without her. Emotions ran from the valley floor to the highest of mountain peaks. Asking questions that there are no answers to. Writing endlessly in personal journals and even a few letters to heaven.

Through the years a blessing in the form of a dog named Hal was there to help me in my time of need. For twelve years, Hal was there in good and bad times always present to supply the comfort, support, and unconditional love he had for me helping me stay present in this new world I had to discover now on my own. I believe I equally helped him with his mourning of his master, Sue. Together we helped each other heal and come out the other side with a new sense of normalcy.

My life was to include the two of us growing old together and retiring to continue our adventures together. I now have such a different

life than I planned so long ago. A life that has evolved over the many years without the woman that made a difference in my life. A life created from the ashes of an old one into something that placed me in new towns doing new things in search of new beginnings. I've taken many opportunities to do just that and have rewarded myself with a new outlook, new friends, and new interests.

This personal self-discovery mission always included precious memories of my wife and my eternal love. With my reliance on faith and hope and my determination to help others survive their loss of loved ones, I pray for my own comfort with this new life and peace for all of those on their personal grief journeys.

Don't Tell Me that You Understand

by Joannetta Hendel

Don't tell me that you understand
Don't tell me that you know,
Don't tell me that I will survive
Or how I will surely grow.

Don't tell me that this is just a test
That I am truly blessed
That I am chosen for this task
Apart from all the rest.

Don't come at me with answers
That can only come from me,
Don't tell me how my grief will pass,
That I will soon be free.

Don't stand in pious judgment
Of the bounds I must untie,
Don't tell me how to suffer
And don't tell me how to cry!

My life is filled with selfishness,
My pain is all I see,
But, I need you now,
I need your love, unconditionally.

Accept me in my ups and downs,
I need someone to share,
Just hold my hand and let me cry,
And say, "My friend, I care."

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How To Deal With Anger

Grief and anger are a more common combination than those of us in the midst of grief would like to admit. We often think of people who are experiencing grief because of crime or because of someone's negligence as having the most likely reason for anger. However, it is also common and normal to experience anger toward God, the person who died, toward people who say the wrong thing, toward people who don't say anything at all, and toward the world in general.

Grief and Anger at God: God often gets the blame when bad things happen—after all an all-powerful being should have been able to prevent our pain. If your anger is directed at God, you are not alone. In fact, a great many Biblical writers expressed anger at God. You might want to check out the website section on using the Psalms of Lament for the grief journey. King David, writer of much of the Psalms, was called a man after God's own heart. So obviously God does not reject people on account of anger.

Dealing with Anger: Anger that is not acknowledged and worked through can fester inside and become a way of life. What is behind so much of the violence in our society? Is it not angry people who never found healthful ways to deal with their pain? So, take some time to reflect on your life. Although grief is probably a more extreme situation, you will likely remember other times when you were angry and found ways to deal with it. What worked for you? Did vigorous physical exertion help you release pent up emotions? Is gardening a soothing balm for your soul?

"Why me?" . . . "Why them?" We will stay most angry when we are focused on our own pain and loss. And, again, this is legitimate reason to be angry. But in order to not be consumed by your anger, you might start to ask yourself, "Why them?" What pain exists in their life that caused them to do what they did? In my situation, I had to wonder how bad can a man's life be that he is on the road drunk at 9:00 in the morning? It does not make his actions okay, but it helps me move outside my own pain. My goal is to deal with my anger so I don't spend the rest of my life passing it on to others. So I will let myself imagine the pain this man carried with him as he drove down the road that day.

Creativity to Heal Grief and Anger": Many people find creative outlets to be very healing for both grief and anger. As I have said in the past, during my own grief journey, emotion often felt like it was frozen within me. Taking time to do grief journaling, write grief poems,

or spending time wandering in the trees dealing with grief by taking photos were all powerful means of thawing the emotion and getting it outside my body.



Turn Anger into Positive Action: Mothers Against Drunk Drivers was created by a mother whose daughter was killed by a repeat drunk driving offender. I recently read a blog by a woman whose husband was killed because of negligent safety standards at his workplace. She is working to get policy changed so that it won't happen again. You may even be doing something that doesn't necessarily seem like it is going to be helpful to others at the time you are doing it. I wrote poetry to express my grief and anger. Now it has become Seasons of Solace and I am being asked to give poetry readings in various venues. It is helping people connect with their own grief and anger and the beauty to be found in living life to the full. It may take some time to track down the positive action that is a good fit for you. But if you keep your eyes open, you will find something.

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Our Mission

sudSSpirit wants to provide you with a supplemental group experience in addition to professional therapy and / or counseling sessions that are currently happening in the lives of those interested.

sudSSpirit does not take the place of professional guidance and we encourage you to seek therapy as required.

sudSSpirit wants to provide a comfortable setting with a sense of community among those in attendance. People should feel free to communicate and share feelings as it pertains to their journey through the grieving process.

sudSSpirit wants those in attendance to realize they are not alone with this problem and the group is available to provide infinite support.

-Editor

**sudSSpirit
Bereavement
Support Group**
meets monthly in the
following locations:

Berks Chapter
Reading, PA
4th Tues. of the month
6 PM
Exeter Community
Library
4569 Prestwick Drive
Reading, PA 19606
610-406-9431

Bennington Chapter
Bennington, VT
3rd Tues. of the month
6 PM
Bennington Free Library
101 Silver Street
Bennington, VT 05201
802-442-9051

For additional
information,
Please email or phone:

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dmurgido@gmail.com

717-866-2401
-Berks, Pennsylvania
sudsspirit.vt@gmail.com
-Bennington, VT

dominicmurgido.com

-Editor





When Grieving Slows *by Ellen Perry Berkeley*

It seemed too soon after Roy, my dear husband, died that I considered my grieving to have slowed, almost disappearing. I was embarrassed and apologetic. But grieving does slow, and there's no need to apologize.

I'd already done my heavy grieving while Roy was still alive, when I knew he would soon be departing from life -- and from me. His death, though, when it came, was still a shocker. I know that grieving honestly was important. I was therefore eager to grieve as fully as possible, and as fully as I needed to. I sought out other people who had suffered a loss, and I wasn't afraid to talk about him even to people who weren't comfortable talking about someone who had just died.

But Roy had prepared me for his departure in many ways. He had said repeatedly that he'd had "a good life," made so in large part by his meeting and marrying me. That didn't increase my difficulty when he was no longer with me. On the contrary, it increased the happy memories I had about our time together. How unselfish was his doing this. I wish I could have told him how generous was his gratitude to me.

When he died, I turned to the wonderful memories that our 43 years together had given us. I didn't think about what we could no longer do together. This included how we had looked to each other for approval, how we had made small changes from the gentle suggestions given to us by the other one and how we had encouraged each other. The memories crowded out everything else, it seemed. I was often smiling, to remember how we had loved each other. Friends seemed baffled, ready to improve my outlook but only finding that my outlook was already climbing.

What was happening, I wondered. I joined a grief group and could barely believe my positive outlook, sharing this with the group, while these individuals shared their reasons to be weeping.

It would seem that those in the grief group had found it necessary to honor the ugly things of their shared lives, while I wanted to honor the beauty of our love. Those people wanted to share what they hadn't had the time or the will to share while the spouse was still living. To me, the sharing with a spouse made sense because it increased the closeness between the two. It also reduced our need to choke down any disagreements. We

accepted our disagreements, just didn't make them the source of noisy arguments.

He died peacefully. His pain was reduced to nothing by the pain pills given to him by the hospital during his final two weeks, spent there, and his pleasures were increased by my presence alongside him for hours each day. The hospital provided for my comfort as they had provided for Roy's (but not with pain pills). When I drove home each day, after my eight to ten hours with Roy, I recalled the many ways that the nurses, and other staff, helped me to manage this never-before experience of mine.

I grieved, yes, I surely did. But at a certain point (and I don't recall when) I felt that the grieving had slowed. Had I begun to forget Roy? Hardly. Or had I just wanted to return to my old self? Perhaps so. And when I realized that Roy would have wanted me to go back to my cheerful and optimistic self, I went there as soon as I could. I often have sad moments thinking about my loss, and Roy's loss, his not having the years in which he could have done wonderful things.

When grieving slows, go with it. You'll get back to your life and you'll know that this life of yours, continuing on, will be the richer for all you learned from the years with your exceptional spouse.



Book Review - Editor **Finding Joy After Loss: My Journey Through Grief**

by Wendy Benning Swanson

The author has written a heart wrenching account of the sudden loss of her young husband that will give others comfort, coping skills as well as a map to move through the death of one they love.

Life is full of many hardships and Swanson's ability to share her vulnerability but perseverance to still live life to its fullest, is a lesson our world not only needs to hear but instill in their own lives.

Wendy Benning Swanson's life was forever changed when her husband passed away from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning in 2009. She had already experienced a traumatic loss when her mother had passed away a year earlier, and now she was left with a one-year-old son and a new path that she had to forge alone.

With deep emotion and pure honesty, the author tells her journey through grief helping others cope with their own.

Five Links to Know

www.whatsyourgrief.com

www.mindfulnessandgrief.com

www.refugeingrief.com

www.centerforloss.com

www.modernloss.com

-Editor