



dominicumurgido.com

# sudS Spirit

Quarterly Newsletter



THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED  
IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

Leonard Wartzluft  
Mike Ruth  
Patricia A. Marks

SPRING 2023

Volume 15, Issue 3

Dominic Murgido - Editor

## Welcome *from the Editor*

Hello Spring!

There is nothing like connecting with someone that gets it. Someone that has been there before or are currently going through the same kind of pain and heartache that you are. That is the benefit of a support group, any support group that is catering to the anxiety that you are experiencing. Not all support groups operate the same way so you have to ask questions and seek information about them and then try one and see if it matches up to your expectations. The same goes for seeking out a therapist. Our newsletter's feature article talks about that in this issue.

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

**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. 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. Additional resources and books for suggested reading on the grieving process can also be found at [www.dominicumurgido.com](http://www.dominicumurgido.com).

Current issue is also available at [www.dominicumurgido.com](http://www.dominicumurgido.com) as well as past issues that have been archived. You may also contact the editor/founder directly at 717-866-2401 or [sudsspirit@gmail.com](mailto:sudsspirit@gmail.com) or [dmurgido@gmail.com](mailto:dmurgido@gmail.com) or <https://dominicumurgido.com>

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 grieving. *Together We Can Help Each Other Heal.*

## Mission Statement

- **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 that they are not alone with this problem and the group is available to provide infinite support.

For additional information  
[www.dominicumurgido.com](http://www.dominicumurgido.com)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Welcome
- Mission Statement
- A Cut Finger
- Quarterly Quote
- Finding the right therapist to help you with grief
- Book Review
- Spring Cleaning
- Thoughts to Ponder
- The Labyrinth of Grief
- An Entry From My Journal
- Website



## Quarterly Quote

- Editor

"A moment in life should not be taken for granted because it can never be returned or relived. Moments in life matter, and I am learning to value each one because one moment can change your life forever"

Marcus Huff,  
Everyday I'm Married

## A CUT FINGER

A cut finger is numb before it bleeds, it bleeds before it hurts, it hurts until it begins to heal, it forms a scab and itches until finally, the scab is gone and a small scar is left where once there was a wound.

Grief is the deepest wound you ever had. Like a cut finger, it goes through stages, and leaves a scar.

Source unknown

## Resources

- Editor

[www.dominicmurgido.com](http://www.dominicmurgido.com)

St Joseph's Spiritual Care  
[www.thefutureofhealthcare.org](http://www.thefutureofhealthcare.org)  
 610-378-2297

Family Guidance Center  
[www.familyguidancecenter.com](http://www.familyguidancecenter.com)  
 610-374-4963

Clear Water Wellness  
[www.cwwellness.com](http://www.cwwellness.com)  
 610-750-9096

Promedica / Heartland Home Health Care and Hospice  
[www.heartlandhospice.com](http://www.heartlandhospice.com)  
 610-373-6898 or 866-380-5874

[www.grasp.org](http://www.grasp.org) (grief recovery after a substance passing)

Circle of Life Coalition  
[www.circleoflifecoalition.org](http://www.circleoflifecoalition.org)

[www.save.org](http://www.save.org) (suicide loss)

[www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org)

Diakon / Lutheran Home at Topton  
[www.diakon.org/fls/NPLoss.asp](http://www.diakon.org/fls/NPLoss.asp) 610-682-1337 / 877-342-5667

Bennington Area VNA & Hospice  
[www.bavnah.org](http://www.bavnah.org)  
 802-442-5502

Bayada Hospice Services  
[www.bayada.com](http://www.bayada.com) 888-790-3025 610-367-1608

Pathways Center for Grief & Loss  
[www.pathwaysthroughgrief.org](http://www.pathwaysthroughgrief.org)  
 800-924-7610

[www.211.org](http://www.211.org)

[www.speakinggrief.org](http://www.speakinggrief.org)

[www.grief.com](http://www.grief.com) (David Kessler)

[www.opentohope.com](http://www.opentohope.com)



## Finding the right therapist to help you with grief

by *Dominic Murgido*



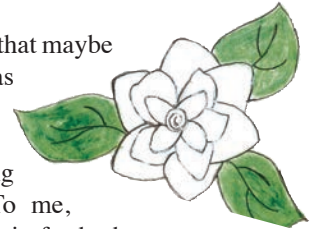
You are looking for professional help so where do you begin? I would start with your primary care physician for any referrals that they may suggest. I would also check with any non-judgmental friends or family members for any recommendations. Believe it or not, the mention of therapy or mental health issues is still not widely accepted in today's world but it is improving thankfully.

Once you have established a few names or practices, begin the process of obtaining some basic information such as affordability and availability. Communication is key through phone calls, email, and websites. It may also be prudent to check for expertise and educational backgrounds of therapists relative to specialties they may have. But one of the most important factors is whether or not the one chosen is a good fit with your personality. You won't know that until there is a phone conversation or an introductory first meet-up. Even then, this may not be known till a few visits later, but you will know if you feel like there is a good relationship between you and them. Feeling comfortable talking with them and sensing their interest in you and your needs will help you get the most out of therapy. A strong relationship will lead to a better outcome.

It is important that the therapist understands the context of what your needs are as well as how they provide feedback to you. Share with them your preferences of how you would like feedback from them. How is validation used and is there a solutions-oriented or structured approach that is primarily their process.

Make sure between you and them that success, your success, will be defined the same way. You should agree on the goals of each visit and the overall long-term goal of how you want to improve. Are they like-minded and can they help you broaden your perspective. I remember that at the end of each visit I felt so much better walking out of the office than I did when I arrived and then

it was me who suggested that maybe I didn't have to come as often because I was feeling better and eventually stopped going by my own choice. To me, that was progress and a win for both myself and my therapist.



Finally, please know that finding that right fit and that right provider can take some work and time on your part. This process is much more important than finding a contractor for your home. You are looking for someone to help you personally get through some tough moments of life. Be patient, don't get discouraged, and don't quit during the process. The first therapist I went to just didn't work out for me and I was one of those that was going to quit. I was encouraged to keep looking for one that I felt good about and the next one sought after was the right one. The right one makes all the difference between getting better and struggling in your grief.



### The Rainbow Comes and Goes: A Mother and Son on Life, Love, and Loss

by *Anderson Cooper & Gloria Vanderbilt*

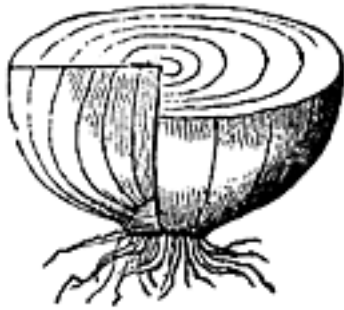
It's like opening a box of letters but in this case emails of correspondence between a mother and a son getting to know each other all over again. An unconventional life of an artist, writer, and famous designer woman with honest, in- depth year long conversation with her son who is a nationally known journalist, anchor, and author provides the reader with a glimpse into their lives while moving through tragedies and triumphs.

From private thoughts to questions never asked they share their most intimate exchanges of relationships and life stories that made them who they are and how much respect and honor they have for one another. With each having distinct personalities, it is clear to see their different viewpoints of the world while they still want to learn about each other. Two incredible lives sharing the love and loss they have encountered.

-Editor



## Spring Cleaning *by Colleen Kristula, D. Min. BCC, Chaplain.*



My favorite image of the journey of healing we call grief is that of an onion. Just when we think we are done “peeling”

our grief, there’s another layer. And, of course, when peeling those layers, we cry a lot. The psalmist David once wrote: “How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? (Psalm 13:1-2a, *ESV*)

When we’re in the midst of peeling the onion, we can hardly wait until we’re done. But grief isn’t measured by time, it’s measured by task. And in a sense, it never fully ends, for we are reminded day to day both of our loved one’s absence and of their presence with us in new ways. At the same time, there’s often a point that comes and goes almost without notice, when we are able to reinvest in our lives: we begin to go out more with friends, sleep and appetite improve, and our energy begins to return. We have not forgotten our loss, but our grief no longer overtakes our lives. We have worked through the important tasks of grieving: accepting and deeply feeling our loss, figuring out how to adjust to life without our loved one, and re-entering that life without them.

This time of year is the time that many people engage in “Spring Cleaning.” I don’t know about you, but this time of year when I face my closet, I often consider what to keep and what to give away. I haven’t worn that dress in years because I outgrew it, but I love it, and I *am* trying to lose weight, so I think I’ll hold on to it one more year. Perhaps I’ll finally get around to planting a vegetable garden this summer, so the canning jars stay on the shelf. But my now-grown children’s stuffed animals are going to be given to a child who can enjoy them, and that ‘70s fondue pot...well, you get the picture.

There’s a spring cleaning to grief, I think, when we begin to inventory the things that we have accumulated together with our loved one, and we experience a thaw from our grief, our numbness, and our pain. That’s the time when a

favorite item can be gifted to a family member, the local library, our church or his/her favorite charity to honor our loved one’s memory. We find the things and the feelings that, this year, we are ready to let go of, and somehow, the grace and strength to do so. At the same time, we choose the things and feelings we are not yet ready to give up, and hold them for another time. The coming of spring to our hearts, no matter what the season is outside, is when we are ready to let go of our grief and celebrate our life: past, present, *and* future.

Things you might do this Spring on your grief journey:

Create a memory box or memory book for others in the family or friends, with mementos that represent your loved one’s life. Don’t forget the photographs! To make it even more meaningful, create it together with each family member participating.



Plant something lasting--a butterfly garden, a tree—in a public place where others can enjoy it and you can go to remember.

*Reprinted with permission from author*

### Thoughts to Ponder

“Life begins when a person first realizes how soon it will end”

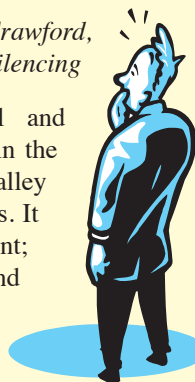
*Marcelene Cox, Columnist*

“It is impossible not to be grateful for the solidarity of these voices” (reference to a support group)

*Lacy Crawford,  
Notes on Silencing*

“Hope is the joyful and confident expectation in the center of the deepest valley of trouble. Hope abides. It continues to be present; it lasts, endures, and survives”

*Dave Hess,  
Hope Beyond Reason*



-Editor



**sudSSpirit  
Bereavement  
Support Group  
meets monthly.**

**Berks Chapter  
Reading, PA.  
4<sup>th</sup> Tues. of the month  
6 PM**

Exeter Community Library  
4569 Prestwick Drive  
Reading, PA 19606

[sudsspirit@gmail.com](mailto:sudsspirit@gmail.com)  
[dmurgido@gmail.com](mailto:dmurgido@gmail.com)

[www.dominicmurgido.com](http://www.dominicmurgido.com)  
717-866-2401

**Bennington Chapter  
Bennington, VT**

[sudsspirit.vt@gmail.com](mailto:sudsspirit.vt@gmail.com)  
[dmurgido@gmail.com](mailto:dmurgido@gmail.com)

[www.dominicmurgido.com](http://www.dominicmurgido.com)  
717-866-2401

## The Labyrinth of Grief by Mary Friedel-Hunt, MA, LCSW



A **labyrinth** is a single path that twists and turns back upon itself in an elaborate circular pattern. Unlike a **maze**, which is meant to be a challenge and a puzzle to be solved, the path of a labyrinth is designed to guide the walker from entrance to center. It can be used in many different ways, but primarily the labyrinth is intended to induce contemplation and thought as visitors slowly make their way along its winding path.. *The author uses the labyrinth as a metaphor for walking the journey of grief.*

It is a labyrinth.

Those who grieve, walk its path  
as it winds back and forth,  
in and out, day after day,  
winding back upon itself and out around its edge  
then back to where the path began.

How long does it take to get to the heart of it?  
How many times do we turn and feel as  
if we are back where we began  
or that we walked through these feelings once before?

And what is it that is in the center?  
Just where am I on this long circuitous path?  
So difficult to know.

This labyrinth so often feels like a maze  
with dead ends that trap me,  
seemingly leaving only one recourse-  
to go back, to retrace my steps.  
But there is no turning back.

I must draw on my wisdom,  
that inner voice reminding me that  
what seems familiar is just an illusion.  
I must honor the wisdom that says...  
you can keep going, that is not a wall, this is not a dead end.

How much pain can one soul handle?  
What am I to learn from this teacher (grief) that invaded my life?  
Where am I going? Who am I?  
How broken I am! How lost. How empty. How sad.  
As I walk this labyrinth of grief.

*Reprinted with permission: thegrieftoolbox.com*



### An Entry From My Journal

“It takes longer than you think for the mail to stop coming in their name or the email from places they signed up or requested information. At times it is painful to receive them and when necessary, equally as painful to respond they are deceased.”



-Editor

Find *your* Support  
Pursue *your* Strength  
Fuel *your* Spirit  
**dominicmurgido.com**