



dominicmurgido.com

# sudS Spirit

Quarterly Newsletter



THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED  
IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

*Lesley Wegman*

WINTER 2024

Volume 16, Issue 2

## Welcome *from the Editor*

Happy New Year! As another year begins, I want to take this opportunity to thank the Exeter Community Library for allowing us to meet monthly at their location. Sixteen years ago, I had an idea about creating this support group to help others through their grief and through the kindness and compassion of the library administration my venture became a reality with their provision of a safe meeting place for those in need. I am most grateful.

I would also like to extend my appreciation and thanks to Kwik Quality Press, Inc. from Lebanon, PA. Whether you are reading this newsletter as an attachment to an email, on my website, or a hard paper copy, it is because of their outstanding service in providing the best production layout, color, and quality in everything they do. Thank you! 717-273-0005

Social media posts concerning **sudSSpirit** are now on my personal facebook 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. **sudSSpirit** stands for “*Sudden Unexpected Death of a Spouse – Survivors in Participation to Inform, Renew, Improve, and Triumph*”

We also have a list of resources for support inside that may be helpful to you. Additional grief resources as well as past issues of this newsletter can be found at [www.dominicmurgido.com](http://www.dominicmurgido.com). 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 [www.dominicmurgido.com](http://www.dominicmurgido.com)

## COMING SOON!

### New Book:

*Life Changes While Grieving:  
Three significant changes.  
One ultimate outcome.*

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.*



## Book Review - Editor

### Keep Going: The Art of Perseverance

by Joseph M. Marshall III

An inspiring well written book that fills your spirit with wisdom to get you through the toughest of times. The author provides life lessons through storytelling of his grandfather. Heartwarming and emotional while it provides comfort, strength, and knowledge. Overall, this book provides a greater understanding of life's challenges. Highly recommended.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Welcome

Coming Soon

Book Review

Quarterly Quote

Sometimes

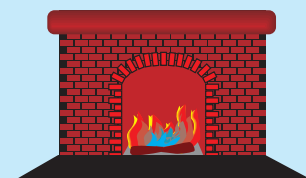
Thoughts to Ponder

Battling “What If”  
and “If Only”

An Entry From My  
Journal

Growing Through  
Grief: Freedom to try  
something new

Sudden Loss



## Quarterly Quote

- Editor

“Awareness plus gratitude places you squarely in this world, and in the life you have. It’s called the sacrament of the present moment. And for this moment, it is enough.”

*Terry Hershey,  
The Power of Pause*

## 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

<https://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)



## Sometimes *by Dominic Murgido*

It really is a new life. And that statement is very difficult for anyone to understand unless they have been there. Some people will go through their entire lives never experiencing a new life. And it's not like they need too. The life they live and lead is fine. No need to change things.

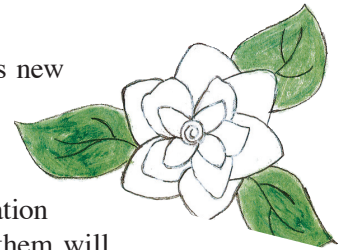
I was living a great life and had no desire or need to change. I liked my life just the way it was. No complaints. Then one day, it happened! I suffered the significant loss of my closest friend and love of my life in a heartbeat. Poof! Gone! Never to have and to hold again. No hugs, no conversation, no sharing the bed, no disagreements or cold stares in the middle of an argument.

The sudden loss of someone that close to you is heartbreaking. Everything you were familiar with is no more. Your world stops revolving while the rest of the world just keeps on going like nothing happened. Because nothing happened to the rest of the world. It was your world and the world that you shared with them that no longer exists in this time period.

It will take a very long time to come to terms with what happened and even longer time to adjust to realizing what once was will never be again. You will continue to ignore it and believe that it was a bad dream and you will actually yearn for it to come back to the way it was. You'll patiently wait for it to be over and you won't take no for an answer. You will truly believe that this did not happen to you. They are late coming home or away with a friend but they will return - you believe.

But it isn't so. Eventually you have to acknowledge that this tragedy happened to you. And to acknowledge this may involve help from others such as counselors, therapists, and support groups. You are not the only one that has gone through this although it feels like you are because it does make you feel very alone and isolated. Acceptance that this occurred is the next step. Some say accepting is the hardest part because we don't want to accept the reality. But once you are capable of acceptance it will be much easier to adapt to the new situation that is in front of you.

Adapting to this new world that is around you will be forever. Adaptation to life without them will continue on with you. Your love for them will provide you with the strength and courage to move forward at your own pace. And as you move forward, they will always be part of your life and you will never forget them but always hold a place for them within your heart.



They will be with you in thoughts, in the wind that you feel, in the sun that warms you, in the memories that you cherish, and in the gratitude that you hold for them being part of the life you made together. And if you are open to it, they will provide signs to you forever so that you'll know that they are near and guiding you along the way.

*Sometimes*, you have to take a step back and believe in yourself. The answer is within you. Only you know how to get better with the life you now have. You may not believe that, but you do. You cannot change what has happened but you can decide how you will react to it through your attitude, outlook, perseverance, and willingness to move forward. Have faith and hope on your path towards being resilient during your most difficult times.

## Thoughts to Ponder

Unreasonable grace doesn't make sense. It stops us cold because we weren't expecting it, or even looking for it. It's grace that finds you on an ordinary day and we usually miss it because we rushed through a moment. We didn't look out a window long enough to see the daffodil shoots that defies winter and sprouts from the soil. We didn't pause long enough to hear someone say, "I love you" or "You really are amazing"

**Terry Hershey, *The Power of Pause***

*-Editor*





## Battling “What If” and “If Only”

by Gary Roe



Guilt is a relentless, soul sucking monster. Hearts groan under “What if...” and “If only...” To say that we want things to be different is a gross understatement.

Two decades had passed since my father’s sudden death. I was sitting in a counselor’s office, agitated, panicky. It was clear I hadn’t really grieved my dad’s passing.

The counselor looked at me and asked, “So, do you feel *responsible* for your dad’s death?”

I snickered and opened my mouth to say, “No!” but nothing came. I sat there in stunned silence.

### *I did feel responsible.*

My mind raced back to a meeting with doctors in the hospital. They explained the situation and then looked at my brother and myself. “We need your permission to turn off the machines,” they said. I glance sideways to my brother who was almost 30. He looked down briefly and nodded his head. I looked back around and nodded my head. I was fifteen. For twenty years, I felt I had ended my father’s life. Some of us live with crushing guilt. We trudge around with this ball and chain, unaware. We feel responsible. It was our fault somehow.

### *If only...? What if...?*

We wake up in the morning and guilt is right there with us. It says, “Good Morning friend. It’s another day. We’ll begin again with the past – what you did wrong and what you didn’t do right. Then I’ll brief you on your agenda for the day. Just think about all the mistakes that are out there waiting for you!”

As we go through the day, Guilt says, “You’re responsible for what went wrong. Let’s go over those regrets again. Yep, It’s your fault.”

We put our head on the pillow at night and Guilt says, “How many more mistakes did you make today? Not to worry. I’ll remind you of them tomorrow.”

For some of us, guilt’s voice is so familiar that we’ve mistaken it for our own. Guilt isn’t content with merely coming and going.

It’s greedy by nature. It thirsts for control. It wants to be the atmosphere in which we do life. In order to heal and grow, we must begin to unmask this soul-crushing villain. Here are four key things to remember about guilt:

**Guilt is a monster that will never be satisfied.** Left undetected, it will damage our hearts and ravage our souls. Like an infection, if not properly treated, it tends to grow and spread.

**Guilt promises but never delivers.** It tells us that things will be better if we feel bad about what we did or didn’t do. Guilt keeps us from taking appropriate action, liking asking forgiveness and making amends. Guilt keeps us stuck.

**Guilt lies to us.** Guilt wants to make us responsible for everything. We mustn’t let it. Let’s take responsibility only for what’s ours. Instead of dwelling on what happened, we can focus on what to do next.

**Guilt is misplaced grief.** Feeling responsible keeps us from feeling the full of pain of the loss, but in the end only lengthens the process. We must let guilt go. It’s time to release ourselves.

**Kick Guilt to the curb. You’ll be glad you did.**

*Reprinted with permission: HOPELine Newsletter, October, 2023 hopeforbereaved.com*



## An Entry From My Journal

“While watching a movie I feel myself drift away. I just stare into nothing without thoughts, motives, emotion. An emptiness comes over me and goes nowhere”

-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

-Editor

## Growing Through Grief: Freedom to try something new *by Angela Clement*

After a significant loss it is common for us to pull into ourselves and go into hiding. We play small. We get into some sort of daily routine that feels safe and we fall into complacency. Over time we find ourselves bound by our own self-imposed boundaries. We also allow ourselves to be trapped by the expectations of others. At some point we realize that doing the same thing we did yesterday serves us in one way but limits us in another. This is when we might consider fully stepping into the unknown and trying something new.

When I lost Blaine I felt alone. I lived each day with a subconscious fear that I might not be able to do the things I needed to survive on my own. I realized that some of the things like fixing the lawn mower or lifting some heavy object into the back of a truck was out of my scope. Fixing the water leaks in my home and the repairs to my roof were out of my ability. I found myself having to reach out to others. I had to rely on my family to help. At the time, I found myself vulnerable and afraid and worried about my future. I think to a point I still feel a little like that.

Something happens amid a drastic change. I have spent almost two years now contemplating the fact that I am a widow. Things have changed. I have changed. The situation is leaving me no choice but to start to release any preconceived notions about how life should now unfold. I have to be adaptable to the situation I am in. I can see after my loss that in some situations there is really no control. Still, it is not easy to accept change. I am sure the butterfly and the frog feel the same way when they have to make big changes in their lives. They have no choice but to surrender to the process. It must be frightening for them too. Yet I bet that they could have never imagined what they would become!

Stepping out of one's comfort zone can create a great deal of anxiety. In the past I have been very uncomfortable with making a mistake and looking foolish. I would rather muddle through and figure things out myself than show someone else what I didn't know. In the past two years, just simply calling a contractor or asking the neighbor for help made me nervous. Blaine used to take care of such things. I was afraid of making a wrong decision and looking stupid. Perhaps I might get taken advantage of somehow because of my lack of knowledge. I think fear of stepping into something we are not used to is always there. What if I fail? What if I make the wrong decision? What will happen? What will others think of me?

What I have learned is I have been a pretty "play it safe" kind of gal until this all happened. I have a good head on my shoulders, some might say. I think that has served me well over the years so why wouldn't it serve me well in trying something new? I think at our core we want to be free. We want to be free to try something different without holding back or worrying about the outcome. Perhaps now I am ready to be a little daring and go beyond the predictable. Create something new. Try something fun and help some people in the process. Take a calculated risk. Step forward knowing I may make a mistake

from time to time and that's okay. What about you? Is it time to try something new? I believe it is never too late to try new things. Just like the butterfly, you never know how change will transform your life.

*Reprinted with permission from author, Angela Clement, a dear friend, who is a speaker, writer, healer and the creator and host of the online Awaken Your Soul's Journey series on grief. Check out [www.facebook.com/widowhoodandwoowoo](http://www.facebook.com/widowhoodandwoowoo) and [www.healingenergy.world](http://www.healingenergy.world)*

## Sudden Loss *by Gary Sturgis*

The sudden, unexpected loss of a loved one or friend can be an especially difficult experience. Loss in itself is painful... but sudden loss that gives no chance to prepare can feel intensely shocking.

You may feel cheated of the chance to say the last words you would have liked to say, or give one final hug or kiss. Feeling cheated in this way can add weight to your grief, anguish, and despair. Sudden loss can make the world feel shaky and less safe.

Sudden loss may give you three seemingly overwhelming tasks to deal with: the grief over the loss of your loved one; the sudden and unexpected absence of this special person from your daily life; and the changes in your life for which you didn't have time to prepare.

Each is a big task to take on...and each becomes a part of your mourning...and your healing.

It helps to remember that emotional pain isn't constant, and that your intense feelings of grief won't last forever.

Here's the thing...you'll love forever...but you don't need to be in pain forever to honor that love.

Keep in mind that it's important to love yourself and take special care of yourself.

You may need to say those words you didn't get to say...or find some other tangible way to say goodbye...even though they're not here.

Find support from other people. This may include relying on friends, family, or seeking support from a professional counselor. Many people who have experienced sudden loss find great help in support groups, with other people who have experienced the same type of loss.

The person you miss knows you loved them...so maybe it happened the way it did...because love means never having to say goodbye.

*Reprinted with permission: Gary Sturgis  
- "Surviving Grief"*