

SUDDEN UNEXPECTED DEATH OF A SPOUSE  
BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP



dominicmurgido.com



Quarterly Newsletter

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED  
IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

**Susan J. Murgido**

Her untimely death inspired the creation  
of this support group, newsletters, books,  
and a website to help others.  
Forever in love with you.



SPRING 2024

Volume 16, Issue 3

Dominic Murgido - Editor

## Welcome *from the Editor*

As the Spring season arrives, we are reminded of change. Change is good. Change brings faith and hope in a better tomorrow. I would like to note that in Spring of 2008, sixteen years ago, the first meeting of **sudSSpirit** bereavement support group was held.

My new book, *Life Changes While Grieving*, is now available directly from me or anywhere books are sold. If you haven't had the opportunity to read any of my previous books, and you are interested, may I suggest you start with this one. The book is a concise collection of the best reflection stories from *Miss Your Forever* and an abbreviated grief timeline divided into *Life Changes from In a Heartbeat*.

If you are interested in more detail afterwards, you can always check out one or both of the other books. Speaking of checking out, all of my books are available at local library systems in the surrounding counties.

Thank you to all who have been supporting my writing over the years and my efforts with helping others through grief support and resources.

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** or **dmurgido@gmail.com** or **www.dominicmurgido.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.**

## Thoughts to Ponder

"I can live for two months on a good compliment."  
-Mark Twain

"You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late."  
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

"A good cry lightens the heart."  
-Yiddish Proverb

-Editor



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## Quarterly Quote

-Editor

"There are times in life that you just have to feel terrible for a while – and all you can do is go through the agony and come out the other end. Being at the bottom, the low point, can be a gift – If you lie on the grass, you can't fall down – your only choice is to get up...eventually."

**Susan Moon,**  
**This is Getting Old**

Together, we can help each other heal



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

## Resources

### -Editor

www.dominicmurgido.com

### St. Joseph's Spiritual Care, St. Joseph Medical Center

bereavement@pennstatehealth.psu.edu  
610-378-2297

### Family Guidance Center

www.familyguidancecenter.com  
610-374-4963

### Clear Water Wellness

www.cwwellness.com  
610-750-9096

### Greater Reading Mental Health Alliance

www.grmha.org  
610-775-3000

### Circle of Life Coalition

www.circleoflifecoalition.org

### Diakon/Lutheran Home at Topton

www.diakon.org/fls/NPLoss.asp  
610-682-1337 / 877-342-5667

### Lori Kuhn, RN-BC

### Grief Recovery Method Specialist

www.lorikuhngriefrecovery.com  
610-334-9845

### Pathways Center for Grief & Loss

www.pathwaysthroughgrief.org  
800-924-7610

<https://www.211.org>

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

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

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

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

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

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

(bereavement support)



## A Honeymoon Memory

by Dominic Murgido

Another January rolled around. And for whatever reason, this was going to be a tough one for me. I felt it coming as early as the beginning of December. Something was off. Maybe multiple people asking or inquiring about how long it's been since my wife, Sue, died had something to do with the doom and gloom that was approaching me. That, combined with my deep-down personal reflection and overthinking of the subject is what led to the low point that I was now diving into. I dwelled on the answer and I couldn't shake it. Emotions and feelings of despair took over. I knew I needed help beyond my capabilities so I sought out therapy to get me back on track. It is the one thing I know from past experience that has helped me and I looked forward to seeking advice and guidance to help myself.

Eighteen years without her and counting. Wow! That's almost two decades of me living without the soul mate I married a month after I graduated from college in 1979. A lot has happened in my life (alone) in these past years. Mainly trying to survive a tragic sudden unexpected death of a woman I loved for thirty years, a woman that was the mother of our daughter, a woman that was kind, loving, compassionate, and friends with so many that loved and respected her.

I've done things I never thought I would do but doing them was because I no longer had her with me. It took years for me to even decide the next step in my life and even then, I doubted myself. From that time, having doubt became part of my life as did taking risks, making choices, failing, trying again, making decisions, worrying, having anxiety. The list goes on and that's how it is when you are trying to re-build yourself from a couple status to a new you.

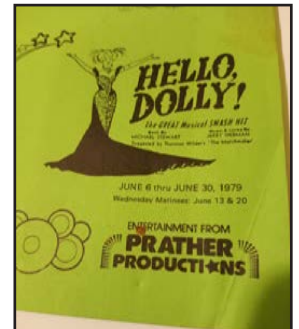
Besides creating a grief support group for myself to share my grief experiences with others, those that came would personally benefit from attending and sharing their own experiences and like a small community together we helped each other heal. I began to journal which became a life saver for me. That led to sharing some of my writings through reflections that appeared in other places like newsletters elsewhere. I began my own newsletter to share including my reflections and additional articles and resources to help others. After some encouragement I wrote a book that contained my reflections in one place and

also entries from my personal journal. My writing continued on from that point providing me with a release I needed to maintain a sense of service to myself and others who discovered my story.

Time has a way of rolling along and if we are not mindful, we become oblivious to our surroundings and how much time has passed since moments of life have happened to us. And maybe that is what happened to me this one January with the help of others unknowingly bringing that thought of time elapsing right to my face with that question / inquiry I haven't really thought about over the many years. I took a step back and looked at myself and where I was and where I've been and began to analyze and critique my actions, decisions, and my current situation and I felt really sad and sorry for myself. I was not sleeping well, lacked energy and ambition, didn't want to talk to anyone or be with anyone. I know where I was at that moment and I've been there before. I also knew that I came out of it back then and I could come out of this again.

I looked through a box of memories and found a playbill from our honeymoon.

Yes, we saved it along with cards and letters that were written by us to each other back in those



beginning years of falling in love leading up to our marriage. We had tickets to a dinner theatre as part of a weekend getaway. The play was Hello Dolly, a musical performed by a local production company. Picking up that playbill and paging through it along with some wedding pictures of us young and in love made me cry and smile at the same time. I felt like I was transported back to that weekend and how great of a time we had sharing our new life together. The dinner theatre actually sent a complimentary bottle of wine to our table in celebration of our newly married status.

I realized at that moment what was more important was the thirty years I knew her not the eighteen years that it has been without her. I had a wonderful life with her; a life of love, compassion, friendship, and adventure. Sue was one in a million to me and I will always be in love with her.

**"A Honeymoon Memory"**  
Continued on page 4



*LIFE CHANGES WHILE GRIEVING* is an overview of one man's thoughts and actions concerning his journey of grief after the tragic sudden death of his wife and the life changes he encountered and created to further his healing process. The author looks back at the life changes that brought risks and choices to his world while trying to move forward and find resilience for his future. He is guided through time, patience, and self-renewal. Not only do you experience life changes while grieving but Life, itself, changes while grieving.

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## Numbing the Pain

by Angela Clement

Over the course of my life, I taught myself to keep my emotions in check. I was often complimented on how calm and easy going I was. What others didn't see and what I have come to know is that I was really quick to swallow any emotion that came up for me. Rather than allowing myself to feel that emotion, I would brush it off and turn my focus towards something else or someone else.

The emotions that come with the process of grief are extremely intense. I have learned that over time, if we continue to push them away, the energy of emotion will continue to build in the body and ultimately resurface, perhaps when we least expect it, forcing us to feel the emotion so intensely we can hardly bear it. When this happens, some of us will find ourselves turning towards something to numb that intense emotion or sometimes we let it out in unhealthy ways. Numbing is common, and it works for a time, yet at some point the emotion will return. It is then that we must choose. We can continue to try to find ways to numb that intensity or we can face the deep, dark depths of the pain.

More often than not, there is just too much emotion with all that is going on in our own lives and around the world. Many people have chosen to go numb. They do this by gambling, drinking alcohol, smoking, shopping, eating, taking drugs and over working. These behaviors are indications that there is some underlying deep pain and emotion that needs to be addressed. If you are one of these people, you are certainly not alone. For me, it was working. I still have to watch myself. Eating is also my go to numbing agent when things get tough.

It may seem impossible to beat addiction. Yet, many have. It's not something we are meant to do ourselves. You deserve some kind and loving support after all you have been through. We all need it and we all are worthy of it. We are meant to grieve alongside someone who cares. We are justified in requesting that support. It is what we do to honor ourselves. When

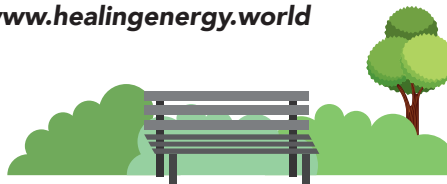
I finally decided to reach out for help, that is when I found the perfect coaches, mentors, healers and earth angels.



I truly believe everyone should have someone to check in with, no matter what their situation. Even if we perceive ourselves to be healthy in all ways, we still should have a coach, an advisor who cares, someone to confide in, get advice from, and someone to let us know that we are loved and valued. No one goes through life without challenges. We all can use guidance. This support has to be from someone you trust and look forward to meeting with. This direction should happen at scheduled, regular intervals. I also believe that different supports will naturally come into our lives at different times, depending on our needs. Why not consider investing in your future? Let your heart guide you to the support your soul desires, wherever that may be.

Sending you so much love, Angela.

**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)**



### An Entry From My Journal



"Sometimes, as I enter my car, I just sit there for a while and think, stare, wonder, meditate, with no ill will or attention to anything, anyone, or anyplace. Just me, alone, in a car somewhere."

-Editor

**sudSSpirit**  
Bereavement  
Support Group  
meets monthly.

**Berks Chapter**  
Reading, PA  
4th Tues. of the month  
6 PM

Exeter Community Library  
4569 Prestwick Drive  
Reading, PA 19606

sudsspirit@gmail.com  
dmurgido@gmail.com

www.dominicmurgido.com  
717-866-2401

**Bennington Chapter**  
Bennington, VT

sudsspirit.vt@gmail.com  
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www.dominicmurgido.com  
717-866-2401

-Editor



## As I Sit in Heaven

As I sit in heaven and watch you everyday,  
I try to let you know with signs I never went away.

I hear you when you're laughing,  
and watch you as you sleep.  
I even place my arms around you  
to calm you as you weep.

I see you wish the days away, begging to have me home.  
So I try to send you signs so you know you are not alone.

Don't feel guilty that you have life that was denied to me.  
Heaven is truly beautiful, just you wait and see.

So live your life, laugh again, enjoy yourself, be free.  
Then I know with every breath you take  
You'll be taking one for me.

**Hazel Birdsall** wrote this poem for her late sister far back in 2008. She started to share it online at the time and surprisingly, As I Sit in Heaven has been used and shared thousands of times with an 'unknown author' on many platforms. We would like to send the author our respects and give her proper credit for creating such a wonderful poem.

-Editor

## "A Honeymoon Memory" Continued from page 2

I had to do something that I knew would make my heart feel good. I watched Hello Dolly, the movie, starring Barbara Streisand and Walter Matthau. Watching that story unfold with the musical numbers, singing and dancing brought a feeling of warmth to my soul. Reliving that experience with the history of our honeymoon experience was a feeling I can't describe. As I watched this movie, I felt myself smiling throughout the film and my heart swelling with beautiful memories of a couple that fell in love during college and shared decades making each other happy.

*"Memories can be both friend and foe; hard ones spring to mind as easily and unexpectedly as the good ones. The hard ones land with a thud and often attempt to dig in and roost. (I've had my share of hard ones, believe me.) Good memories whisper softly, linger briefly, then drift away on a gentle breeze. If your good memories outnumber the not-so-good memories and you can summon a good memory to the forefront at will, you have been blessed. Remember that."*

-Lori Borgman



## Something to think about.

### Grief and Mourning:

The majority of people tend to use the words grief and mourning synonymously. However, there is an important distinction between them. We have learned that people move toward healing not by just grieving, but through mourning.

Simply stated, Grief is the thoughts and feelings that are experienced within oneself upon the death of someone loved. In other words, grief is the eternal meaning given to the experience of bereavement.

Mourning is taking the internal experience of grief and expressing it outside of oneself. The specific ways in which people express mourning are influenced by customs of their culture. Another way of defining mourning is to state that it is "grief gone public" or "sharing one's grief outside of oneself."

In reality, many people in our culture grieve, but they do not mourn. As opposed to being encouraged to express their grief outwardly they are often greeted with messages along the lines "carry on," "keep your chin up," and "keep busy." So, they end up grieving within themselves in isolation, instead of mourning outside of themselves in the presence of loving companions and those that understand what they are going through.

-Editor

## Book Review

### Conscious Grief: Transforming Pain into Evolution and Growth by Tara Nash



An inspiring and insightful book that provides the reader with the author's personal story of loss and grief and how trauma associated with loss can be harmful if not dealt with consciously. The book is divided into three sections that include awareness, expression, and transformation. Tara includes words of encouragement and inspiration from countless speakers and experts that she has interviewed over the years in her Conscious Grief Series. Post traumatic growth is addressed as is the ten pillars of conscious grief. The book contains a great list of resources that will be helpful to many. Highly recommended.

-Editor