

SUDDEN UNEXPECTED DEATH OF A SPOUSE
BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP



dominicmurgido.com



Quarterly Newsletter

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED IN
LOVING MEMORY OF...

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Welcome *from the Editor*

Life Changes While Grieving. It is not only the title of my most recent book, but it is a statement. Our life does, indeed, change. And the changes that will happen can be where you are forced into the change or a change by choice. Some of us experience changes and don't even recognize them as they are happening, while others are methodical in that they look forward to and embrace the change they experience. I have written about three significant changes that have led to an ultimate outcome in *Life Changes While Grieving*. Shortly after publication earlier this year, I believe I have entered a fourth significant change that I am trying to deal with and will eventually share it with you in a future newsletter. The one thing to remember is that nothing stays the same. Life changes are part of life, with or without grief.

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

Please check out my website: www.dominicmurgido.com for more information.

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. You may also contact the editor/founder directly at:

717-866-2401 or sudspirit@gmail.com
or dmurgido@gmail.com
or www.dominicmurgido.com.

Thank you to those that have been long time supporters of our group. 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.

Dominic Murgido - Editor

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Quarterly Quote

-Editor

"Sometimes I think you are able to keep going because you aren't really yourself anymore. Something shakes you to your core, an instant so charged, so astounding, you open yourself to every atom of it – as if you've escaped your own skin and let your soul spread forth."

Kim Brown Seely
-Editor

An Entry From My Journal



"At first memories may seem too painful to think about, but if you reach through the pain and let your mind go there, memories can be a comfort. They make it feel that the separation is not as final."

-Editor



Find your Support
Pursue your Strength
Fuel your Spirit

www.dominicmurgido.com

Together, we can help each other heal



717-866-2401 / 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

www.save.org (suicide loss)

www.griefshare.org

www.grief.com (David Kessler)

www.opentohope.com

www.unitedway.org

(bereavement support)



An Apple a Day

by Dominic Murgido

While at the grocery store the other day, I decided on buying some apples. Selected a few, bagged them, then completed selecting from the rest of my list. The next day I ate an apple and I noticed the kind of apple it was: gala.



I've been buying gala apples for a long time and only gala apples. Obviously, I like the taste of gala apples, but my choice of gala apples goes beyond taste. Now that I think about it, gala apples were the preferred apples that my wife bought in all the years that we were married. Originating from New Zealand, the gala apple was the apple of choice for us to usually consume. I know she bought other kinds of apples (granny smith) for baking from time to time, but the gala apple was a constant in our lives.

Apples are good for you no matter what kind they are. Yes, apples are healthy. Apples are high in fiber, which help to regulate appetite and reduce blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol levels. Apples are also a great source of dietary antioxidants such as vitamin C, which help to protect the body and cells from damage.

In addition to their culinary versatility and numerous colors and flavors, apples are an exceptionally healthy fruit. Eating them is linked to a lower chance of getting many chronic conditions, including diabetes and heart disease. Apples may also promote weight loss and improve gut and brain health.

I've never thought about this before, but sometimes you get so used to one thing like the kind of apple you prefer, and you just keep buying that. Besides food items, it could be habits that we continue to do or places that we go that are part of a routine being daily, weekly, monthly, or even annually. Whatever we call it; habits, routine, tradition, rituals, the history behind it is not as important

as to why we do it and how it makes us feel.

As we grieve, we search for things that makes us feel comfortable, supported, and validated. We want to feel good about where we are and how we are doing each day. And it is even better once we begin to know this about ourselves and what the things are that bring this feeling within our inner being. So, create a habit or follow a routine or ritual. Begin a tradition that feels good to you that will bring a new memory to savor while reflecting on a past one. Whatever works and what makes you feel good is what you do and is what matters.

Now that I realized this about my buying gala apples, I feel better knowing that a routine purchase by my wife and I for many years has continued on through myself, and it makes me feel good. I'm open to trying other kinds of apples. I'm not like an apple snob and only worship the gala apple. But the gala apple will always have a place within my heart as a reminder and a memory of a regular purchase that began many years ago with my wife and I at the first grocery store or farmer's market we encountered.



In Search of Joy: Finding Your Way through the Darkness

by Darcie D. Sims, PhD, CHT, CT, GMS

Do you know how long it took me to allow laughter and joy to return to my life? Do you know how far it is from this side of the page to your side? Do you know how difficult it is to write about death? It was a long journey. It took me thirty years to get from your side of this page to mine...a long time...actually a whole lifetime!

I liked my other life. In fact, I loved it! I hadn't intended to be here, in your life. But then, just as it happened in your life, a single moment changed everything, and here I am ... with you now and forever. Thirty years ago, our son slipped away from his mom and dad and big sister. At peace after a lifelong battle with a malignant brain tumor, he took with him all our hopes and dreams of being an average American family.

We had two children so that no one would have to share the window or ride on the hump in the middle of the backseat. We had two children because I had hundreds of recipes that served four. We had two children because we couldn't figure out how to have the 1.6 children which is the national average. But something happened along the way to that dream, and in a moment our dreams were lost. The sounds of joy and laughter left our lives, perhaps as they seem to have left yours.

All of us know the quietness that comes when we realize we are the only source of sound in our house now. We all know that loss, that emptiness that brings us here to these pages in search of something to ease the pain; in search of something to stop the tears; in search of something to dream about again.

I can't think of anything else I'd rather be doing right now than living. But that wasn't always true, especially after our child's death when there were days when all I could do was think about dying, to join him and to relieve my pain. But I lived through

that, just as you are right now, by grasping every day and claiming it as my own.

Each of us will, one day, rediscover whatever we cherish about life. Each of us will find the laughter that echoed throughout our life with our loved one...if we will look for it.

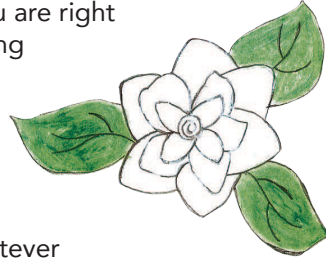
I'm here on this side of the page, not to tell you how to be happy, but to tell you that you deserve to be happy again. It's a different kind of happy, however. It's a happiness robbed of innocence, born out of fire, forged by a flame that has the power to destroy everything in its path – but only if we let it!

How did I do it? How did I get to now? I got to where I am today because of healing, with time and a commitment to rediscovering the joy in living. Must we dwell in the darkness forever? Can we begin to understand that our loved one's death was but a moment, a split second of horror? And can we remember, instead, our loved one's life? Is it possible that one day we will begin to understand that joy can return?

We cannot find words to soothe the hurt...there aren't any! We cannot shield ourselves from the twists and turns of living. We cannot protect ourselves from experiencing life. We can, however, build supports and safety nets. We can create cushions and pockets of comfort: places where we can rest, momentarily, gathering strength to re-enter the crashing tides. We can learn to smile again, maybe even giggle, and return laughter to our lives.

Cry all you want, but remember to laugh when you can. Your life with your loved one was filled with moments of laughter! Remember them, enjoy them again and again. Between the tears, allow the joy to return. What I bring you in this article is a message with hope, a gift of remembrance, a love letter of laughter. Read this article

*"In Search of Joy"
Continued on page 4*



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
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-Editor



**"In Search of Joy"
Continued from page 3**

as if we were sitting together, across the kitchen table, trying to help each other through the valley. Whether you are a bereaved parent, a widow or widower, a sibling, an adult bereaved child, a grandparent, friend, or simply someone who wants to know how to help, I hope you will find information, education, and support in these words. They are written from my heart to yours, each word carved out of experience as well as professional education.

I am a psychotherapist and a grief management specialist by trade, a mother by choice, and a grieving person by chance. Our hearts speak the same language, the language of grief. We hold the same fear of never getting over this and forever having to live with the terrible pain of having someone we love dearly die. Come with me, across the stepping-stones of grief, finding your way through the darkness, reaching for each touchstone as you can.

There are no timetables for grief and no one right way to grieve. There are as many ways to grieve as there are people

grieving. Know your pain is real and that you have the right to hurt and to ache and to continue loving your loved one. No one can tell you how to grieve or when to heal. I just want to let you know you can find hope and healing and you can find joy once again. Our loved ones lived and we loved them. We still do. But sometimes we cannot wait for fun and joy to be presented to us. We must make it happen! Insist on joyfulness and silliness being a part of each day. What the world needs now is a paper airplane that carries our message of love and hope and laughter to friends, family, and everyone!

Become an aviator right now and run your own flying circus. Make your own "Happy Planes" to send everywhere: to your mother who is trying to understand (or just "trying"), to your best friend who hasn't spoken to you since the funeral, to the neighbor who didn't bring a tuna casserole (bless her), to a child who needs some fun, and to yourself— just BECAUSE! Sail these messages through the air mentally, verbally, and physically.

Fold the paper airplane right now and let the joy of your loved one's life begin to take the place of the hurt and anger of his death.

Note: In memory of Darcie Sims— Her grief articles have become a great source of hope and inspiration for thousands of bereaved people throughout the years. God bless her for all that she did throughout her life to help others—with great compassion, love, empathy and understanding to all who needed hope.

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Thoughts to Ponder

"I know that I have lost, but also gained, namely perspective, as I've learned to see myself for who I am, without comparing to who I was. When I look at myself, I see a complete person, not half of a former couple. I see wholeness, not a fraction."
-Maggie Smith

"There are as many nights as days, and the one is just as long as the other in the year's course. Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness, and the word happy would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness."
-Carl Gustav Jung

-Editor



Grief Speaks Out

by Julian Barnes

"Part of love is preparing for death... Afterward comes the madness. And then the loneliness: not the spectacular solitude you had anticipated, not the interesting martyrdom of widowhood, but just loneliness. You expect something almost geological – vertigo in a shelving canyon – but it is not like that; it's just misery as regular as a job...There's no glory in it. Mourning is full of time; nothing but time...Have some more time. Take your time. Extra time. Time on your hands.

Other people think you want to talk. 'Do you want to talk?' they ask, hinting that they won't be embarrassed if you break down. Sometimes you talk, sometimes you don't; it makes little difference. The

words aren't the right ones; or rather, the right words don't exist. 'Language is like a cracked kettle on which we beat out tunes for bears to dance to, while all the time we long to move the stars to pity.' You talk, and you find the language of bereavement foolishly inadequate...You do come out of it, that's true.

After a year, after five. But you don't come out of it like a train coming out of a tunnel, bursting through the Downs into sunshine and that swift, rattling descent to the Channel; you come out of it as a gull comes out of an oil-slick. You are tarred and feathered for life."

-Editor

