

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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Jose Muriel
Daniel L. Kramer

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Welcome *from the Editor*

Hello Fall! As you read this edition of our newsletter as a hard copy or on your phone, tablet, or computer, I wanted to share some news with you. As you know, past issues of this newsletter from 2018 to the present are available on my website, www.dominicmurgido.com, under the sudSSpirit tab.

Coming Soon, we will be adding ALL the newsletters ever published from the inaugural edition in Fall 2008 through 2017. Although our newsletters are time stamped by season, the content is timeless and valuable to provide perspective, personal stories, and resources that may help you in your grief journey. I encourage you to browse the website and check out the early issues as **sudSSpirit** was just beginning. Together We Can Help Each Other Heal.

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, 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

Healing Grief,
Finding Peace: 101
ways to cope with
the death of your
loved one

by Dr. Louis LaGrand



The author describes an overview of grief, including five key components of getting through our loss that includes feeling, finding, and filling to help us heal. We are eternally connected through love. Dr. La Grand then presents short and easy ways of healing; positive messages that can help us to move forward. With over thirty years in the field of bereavement, the author provides the help we need from the heartache and brokenness to finding hope for tomorrow.

-Editor

Dominic Murgido - Editor

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Quarterly Quote

-Editor

"I suppose that the hole never really goes away, but I've learned that you can fill it with things. Good things. My memories of her are no longer just a source of pain. They are also a fountain of gratitude for the time and love we shared. I still have my days, but I don't think it would be right if I didn't."

-Walking on Water,
Richard Paul Evans

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

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)



As Fall Begins

by Dominic Murgido



It was a beautiful Saturday morning with a sky of blue and the temps in the mid 70's. I decided a walk along a familiar trail was in order. Walking among what nature has to offer cleanses the mind and provides a necessary outlet for anxiety amid the busy world that is around us. Hearing the crunch of the gravel as your footsteps become a cadence of your steps along your way combined with the birds chirping, the creek meandering along the trail to the left side, and the remnants of an old canal to your right providing a historical reference to this perfect weather day.

I was not alone because others saw the opportunity to take advantage of this early fall weather to be outside enjoying the sights and sounds of nature as it provides nourishment to our souls. Walkers, joggers, bikers, families, couples, and those of us that are venturing out on this day alone.

This trail I speak of is the Union Canal Trail in Berks County, and my choice today was the section between the Heritage Center and Reber's Bridge. Almost a four miles' round trip of beauty, stillness, and peace. I have walked or biked this trail countless times over the years, most of which with my wife Sue and at times with our daughter. Not much has changed over the years as I walk this trail. Some old trees have been replaced with new ones, but the path itself remained the same all this time.

There was not a sliver of a breeze as I walked to the turning point, and throughout that walk, I remembered my life with my wife and all the good times we shared together over the years. As I walked back on my return trip, I thought of how much I missed her and wished she was alongside me making this walk more enjoyable. That thought no sooner came to mind when a comfortable cool breeze developed on the trail followed by both of my arms getting goosebumps and a feeling of a presence around me of love and joy. I rubbed my arms to counter the goosebumps and smiled



knowing she was near. I stopped for a moment and savored the time and looked to the sky and thanked her for being part of this experience. As I continued on my walk, the breeze subsided, not to recur again for the rest of the walk.

I am fortunate that even after these many years, I still feel connected to her. I am open to the possibility to receive signs from her, and I do frequently. Today was one of those times. You just have to believe and be patient, and it may happen to you.

Connecting with nature and the outdoors has always been a way for me to feel present, in the moment. Because if you are not in the moment, you're probably thinking of the past or pondering the future. If so, you are not enjoying the now. Being present makes you enjoy life as it is right now and then with no worries of the future and no regrets from the past. It's a great time to just be. Your stress level will decrease along with your heart rate and blood pressure, and you will allow yourself to breathe easier and be calm about the life you are experiencing.

As my walk ended, I took advantage of the Canal Museum being open as well as the Gruber Wagon Works and learned a little about the history behind this area and what life was like back then for that period of time. The very trail I just walked was a tow path one time for mules to pull a canal boat along the way, transporting goods and coal to places beyond. This was actually the first time I was ever inside the museum or the Wagon Works. Sue and I never had that opportunity all the time we visited that part of the trail. I think she was with me that day. That made me smile.



Autumn Grief

by Deb Kosmer, MSW

Outside, the temperatures are changing, and we find a need to pull out fall clothing. Before too long, we will need even more warmth, and our winter wardrobe will appear. For some of us this year, it may seem no matter how many layers we put on, we are still cold. The chill we feel in our bones goes beyond warm clothing to matters of the heart. What we really long for; an arm around our shoulders, a hug, a hand to hold, someone to snuggle with on a cool crisp day; seems to be as absent as the sunshine we once enjoyed.

With a heavy heart, we sigh again, something we seem to do more and more these days. We may feel like giving up and just going back to bed and staying there till spring! After all, if bears hibernate for the whole winter, why can't we; especially this year when we are left to feel so useless and alone. Though it may be hard to motivate ourselves, it is important to find some things we can do to help us through the chill of autumn, heightened by the absence of someone we loved.

Following are some suggestions. Begin with one or two that appeal to you the most. It may help to remember we often have to act first before a good feeling can occur. If we wait for the good feeling before we act, we may be waiting an unnecessarily long time. When we act as if we want to do something or are enjoying something, our feelings frequently have a way of catching up with us.

- Make caramel apples and share them with the kids in the neighborhood or the adults.
- While raking leaves, make a house with rooms like you used to as a child. Let yourself dream a little bit.
- Buy yourself a new sweater in the favorite color of your loved one. Every time you wear it, imagine him or her smiling at you.
- Pull out a favorite piece of your loved one's fall clothing and wrap yourself in it. Let yourself believe each time you do, you are being hugged by your loved one.

- Make a batch of caramel corn to share.
- Invite a few friends over for an evening of potluck and board games.
- Pull out a favorite book and give yourself the gift of rereading it again.
- If you have grandchildren, invite them over for a sleepover. Make popcorn balls with them and tell them stories about when you were a child.
- Rent some old videos you haven't seen in 20 years or more and have a movie night with a few friends.
- Invite several friends for a potluck brunch and gabfest.
- Pick out pieces of your own and your loved ones clothing that can be used to make a quilt. As you use the quilt- think about all of the ways they continue to be part of your life today.
- Make this list your own by adding some of your own good ideas.

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An Entry From My Journal



"I miss the conversations. We always talked while we were in the car together, during the commercials while watching TV, after seeing a movie at the theater, while lying in bed."

-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
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Bennington Chapter
Bennington, VT

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-Editor



When We Blame Ourselves

by Gary Roe

"I know it's my fault. Now I'm being punished. I can't make this right. What can I do?" Melissa choked through her tears. Melissa's son Carter was her third child. He came out screaming, and (according to Melissa) never stopped talking. He grew like a weed.

One hot summer day, the family was in the back yard enjoying their pool. Melissa turned away for a moment. When she looked back, Carter was gone. She frantically searched before finally noticing him on the bottom of the pool. Carter was three years old.

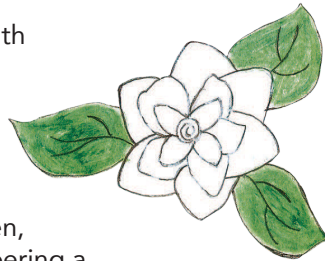
"I should have been watching. God will never forgive me for this. And I'll never, ever forgive myself. Because of me, Carter is dead," she said with a cold stare.

When we feel guilty, we punish ourselves.

When someone close to us dies, we can feel responsible. How could this happen? We missed something. We should have been there. We should have known.

We add guilt and remorse to the already unbearable pain of their death. We begin to punish ourselves, consciously or subconsciously. The shame cripples us.

Even if our faith is deep and solid, some of us have trouble raising our eyes to heaven, or even whispering a prayer.



Perhaps we see this tragedy as punishment for the things we did or didn't do. Maybe we believe our loved one was taken from us because we weren't good enough. We've messed up too much and crossed a line somewhere, and now God, karma, fate, or the universe has given us what we deserve.

Underneath it all is the shaky belief that if we had been better people, this would not have happened. We're bad, and our loved one is dead. Forgiveness is impossible.

In grief and in life, we often confuse being responsible with being in control. That never works, because it's simply not true. We influence much, but are never "in control" when it comes to relationships, other people, or circumstances. We don't even cause our own hearts to beat.

We aren't perfect. Far from it. We

aren't omniscient (all-knowing) - not even close. We're not omnipresent (everywhere at once), but limited to being in one small spot on this planet at any given time. We're not omnipotent (all-powerful) - not by a long shot. Yet we sometimes expect ourselves to be all of these.

Whatever our belief system, it must provide somehow for the resolution of guilt. Forgiveness must be included and available, or else we are lost and without hope.

Blaming ourselves is a common reaction to some deaths. But it is not healthy and hinders our recovery and healing.

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www.garyroe.com

Editor note: Condensed for space.

About the Author: Gary Roe is an author, speaker, and chaplain with Hospice Brazos Valley. He is the author of the award-winning bestsellers *Shattered: Surviving the Loss of a Child*, *Please Be Patient, I'm Grieving*, *HEARTBROKEN: Healing from the Loss of a Spouse*, and *Surviving the Holidays without You*.

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.dominicmurgido.com



Find your Support
Pursue your Strength
Fuel your Spirit

www.dominicmurgido.com