

**Sudden Unexpected Death of a Spouse
Bereavement Support Group**

sudSSpirit

Quarterly Newsletter

**This Issue
Is Dedicated
In Loving
Memory of
Susan Murgido**

Dominic Murgido - Editor

Welcome from the Editor

This is the inaugural edition of what we at **sudSSpirit** hope will become a quarterly newsletter for those that need to believe, be encouraged, seek resources, provide faith, quotes to ponder, an occasional book review, articles pertaining to surviving the grief process, and tips for survival during all of our times of need. We are excited about the launching of this newsletter and hope that it will become a place for you to renew and improve upon yourself as you survive the loss of your loved one.

sudSSpirit Quarterly Newsletter is

created as a direct result of a Bereavement Support Group of the same name, **sudSSpirit**. **sudSSpirit** stands for "*Sudden Unexpected Death of a Spouse - Survivors in Participation to Inform, Renew, Improve and Triumph*". This group was founded in April, 2008 by Dominic Murgido who saw the need to help those that suffer from the tragic, sudden, unexpected death of a spouse as he had. This group meets monthly. For more information, call 610-779-6809 or email sudsspirit@gmail.com



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How to Get Through the Holidays

- There is no right or wrong way to handle the day or season. Some may wish to follow family traditions, while others may choose to change.
- Set limitations. Realize that it isn't going to be easy. Do the things that are special or important to you. Do the best that you can.
- What you choose to do the first year, you don't have to do the next.
- Our greatest comfort during this time may be doing something for others.
- Keep in mind the feelings of your children or other family members during the holiday season.
- You may find hope in remembering favorite moments and funny stories about your loved one.

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Together we can help each other heal!

My Discovery of Journaling by Dominic Murgido



"It was at that time I realized I was "journaling" and did not even recognize it..."

If someone told me five years ago that I would journal some day, I would have looked at them like they were crazy. "Journaling" was something that did not appeal to me. Maybe it took a life changing situation, like the sudden unexpected death of my wife, for my opinion to change subconsciously on this topic.

Within days of my wife's passing on January 16, 2006, I found myself jotting down thoughts, fears, emotions, anger, regret, and confusion on 3x5 index cards. Each day I would complete two or three cards with expressions of pain, frustration and loneliness.

It is so common for those of us that have experienced the loss of a loved one to have feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. I found this to be a great release of my acquired sadness and depression that I was experiencing with the knowledge that I was now without my wife and the many unanswered questions concerning the rest of my life.

This daily ritual continued — and much to my surprise — I noticed that I had filled about 250 cards in about a year. It was not until December, 2006, when I made the discovery. I received a journal of blank lined pages from someone as a gift. It was at that time I realized I was "journaling" and did not even recognize it through my unrefined methods of utilizing simple index cards.

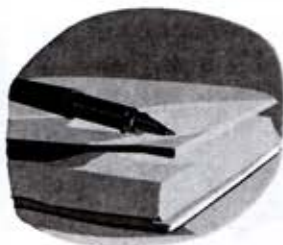
Sometimes, I would write a single word or only a few words that were written to express my feelings. Other times, I wrote incomplete sentences. Grammar, punctuation and spell-

ing did not matter when I wrote my thoughts and feelings. The content of what I was writing was what mattered. Depending on the time of year or the relevance to a special date, there are many thoughts to reflect upon or think about and, in turn, write about. I date the entries and sometimes note the weather or a significant news item that is happening along with my thoughts. I reflect on things and how different it is without my wife being with me. I often comment on "how she would say this or ask that" if she were physically here with me or "how much I miss that about her".

My writings are not all sad; they also contain happy thoughts, memories and even questions. There is something about writing down a question that makes it easier to deliberate the answer. And if you do not answer the question, it will be asked again on another day as you continue to write your thoughts. Eventually, you will answer it or resolve the conflict somehow.

I write daily now, usually at the end of the day right before going to bed. I chose this time for the silence of the night; and in a way as a ritualistic approach to going to bed alone, something that I am not used to doing. I find comfort in that time of day, pondering my thoughts and reducing my experiences to writing. I realize that putting my thoughts on paper allows me to vent, gives me a sense of peace, and provides me with an unofficial progress report at the same time.

Writings can be as simple as random



thoughts jotted down that can become priceless months or years later as you process your experiences and feelings. I wrote for about a year and a half before I even thought about looking back at some of what I had written in the past. I never read all that I have written, nor do I go back regularly — just on occasions.

When you return to the past writings that you created, it allows you to see where you were and compare that to where you are now so that you can further understand where you are going. I read things that I wrote and I cannot believe I was thinking that way. It's amazing how you can believe in something at one time, and have another viewpoint on the same thing a month or so later. I also read some parts that made me cry all over again ... or smile at my humility. This process of writing can bring tears. There is nothing healthier than a good cry as you grieve your loved one.

Whatever works for you is what you do. Some people are more comfortable with a keyboard when expressing thoughts as an electronic "journal" on a computer. I began on index cards and expanded to an organized bound book form in January, 2007.

I continue to write with a pen on blank lined pages in a more traditional journal format. This form is best for me because I can take a pen and book with me anywhere and write anyplace. I also carry a small voice recorder with me and as I have thoughts throughout the day at work, on weekends, or even while driving in the car, I record my thoughts to later put in writing in the journal. I find that when we think of things or experience an emotion as it relates to our bereavement, it is important to recognize it and jot it down. It may help us later or might mean something in the future as we continue to work through our grieving process.

When my wife passed, my life and how I viewed the world changed. This new world of mine is without her. I try to use my time of sorrow in order to grow as a new person through the art of journaling. Journaling is for your benefit and you can choose to keep it private. I encourage you to start and recognize how it can help you as it does for me.

Progress is something we all like to see in ourselves, especially in our own time of need. Our time of need combined with our grief experience will yield with time. Be patient and allow yourself to heal.



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How to Get Through the Holidays

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- If you are feeling pressured to participate in more than you can handle, "Just Say No". You don't have to explain a "No". Be kind, but be firm.
- Don't deny yourself the gift of healing tears.
- Acknowledge your grief and be patient with yourself.
- Light a candle in memory of your loved one.
- Look at the gifts of your loved one's life.
- There is a comforting discovery by many who have said that the day was not as bad as they anticipated it to be.



