

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

**sudSSpirit  
Quarterly Newsletter**

**This Issue is Dedicated  
In Loving Memory of:**  
Gerald H. Iezzi,  
Pete Keiser  
Louise Fauser  
Brian L. Davis  
Russel Ash  
Scott D. Bitler  
Vincent Jackson  
Donald L. Weidner

Dominic Murgido - Editor

**Welcome** from the Editor

Thank you for reading our newsletter. We hope you find our articles helpful and comforting. We ask that you share this newsletter with someone you know that may benefit from it or share the information about sudsspirit bereavement support group and its contact information. If you would like future copies of this newsletter mailed to you, please call us at 610-779-6809 and leave a message with your name and address or email us at sudsspirit@gmail.com with your name and address and we will send you future quarterly newsletters.

Our website www.sudsspirit.com will soon be available. We hope that our website will provide further comfort for you as well as share some important resources and links

to help you through your time of need.

**sudSSpirit** Quarterly Newsletter has been created as a direct result of the 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*"

Whether your loss is recent or it's been many years, you are welcome to be part of our group for as long as you want to be. This group's monthly meetings are continuous.

We encourage you to contact us for more information at sudsspirit@gmail.com or call 610-779-6809.



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**Coming Soon — [www.sudsspirit.com](http://www.sudsspirit.com)**

**Meeting Date Change for May:**

18

Please note the May Meeting will be held on May 25, 2009 (3rd Monday due to Memorial Day) at 6:15pm at the Exeter Community Library. June meeting will return to the 4th Monday of the month, same time and location.

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥  
 ♥ Hope is the thing  
 ♥ with feathers  
 ♥  
 ♥ That perches in the soul  
 ♥  
 ♥ And sings the tune  
 ♥ without the words  
 ♥  
 ♥ And never stops at all.  
 ♥  
 ♥ ...Emily Dickinson  
 ♥  
 ♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥



*That is the beauty  
of life in itself...  
the sharing is  
what makes it  
all so special.*



*May Meeting  
Date Changed  
to May ~~23rd~~  
18TH*

## The Change of the Season

by Dominic Murgido

Welcome Spring!

As the first day of Spring came, I am reminded of all the "firsts" we experience in our lives.

Our entire life is built upon firsts. From infancy we celebrate firsts in our lives and the lives of our family and friends. First steps, first birthday, first tooth, first day of school, graduations, first car, first job, marriage, first child, first house, first grandchild, and it goes on and on.

We celebrate firsts with those that we love. We share firsts with those that we love. We build a life of firsts with those that we love.

As the firsts happen and we continue with our lives, it's taken for granted and becomes part of our lives that all of these kinds of things will happen with a companion, a partner, a wife or husband. That is the beauty of life in itself that we are able to share events and happenings with those that we love and the sharing is what makes it all so special.

When we lose someone very close to us, the firsts of life as they continue without our loved one, are looked upon differently. It becomes difficult to be part of a first time event or situation alone. You may have friends and family with you during these firsts, but it is not the same without your partner. You feel it and it makes you very sad. At times this can become overwhelming to you that you put off these firsts because you just can not do it yet. That's ok. You will know when you are ready to tackle the challenge of dealing with something for the first time without your loved one.

Being ready will not mean that it will be easy. The first time you go to an appointment alone may even be difficult and something you avoid for a while. The first time you go grocery shopping alone or to a movie alone may be difficult. The first time you come home alone to an empty house will have its own impact on you. The first time you are out with others and there are more couples than those that are there alone will

bother you.

The calendar year will play its role with you as well. All of those first holidays, birthdays, and anniversaries without your loved one will be a struggle for you because you are use to sharing those moments with them. Sometimes the second, third, and fourth years may be difficult too. The day of the week and date of their passing may affect you.

These are all struggles that we have in common; struggles that are unknown and not understood by those that aren't experiencing this. You will eventually be able to handle all of these, some easier than others, but you will handle them. There are some things I have yet to do, go through, let go, become, visit, and talk about. But these things, in my own time frame, will be completed eventually and I will begin to look forward to the next change of season.

## Things Have Changed Since Then

by Kathleen Jacques

Two years ago, I rented out my house and took my nine year old daughter and my eleven year old son to Europe for the summer by myself. Nine years ago, I never would have fathomed such a scheme. Nine years ago when my husband died, I barely made it through the necessary routines of the day. Oh, how things have changed since then. I remember wishing I could go to sleep and accelerate the healing overnight. It was the hardest work that I ever did – to contain my grief and simply function. I didn't deny my grief – I let it run its course. I experienced all its variants; the anger, the sadness, the raw fear. Somehow, the intensity of these emotions diminished little by little. I don't know when or how the pain lessened and my inner resources grew, and my pleasure in life returned. But somehow the light returned.

I still miss my husband. I haven't remarried. Sometimes I'm lonely and anxious but there is once again laughter and delight in my world, where nine years ago, I thought I was banished forever. There was no magical turning point when

suddenly I was at peace. There were only moments of peace here and there. Some days more, some days less. All the while I guess there was a strength developing; a strength derived from the knowledge that I'd made it through yet another day.

I discovered that the second time I had to face certain events or people after his death was easier than the first. Surviving these first encounters made me realize that I would survive the next ones, and I became less apprehensive. You endure, and that gives you something to hold on to. Endurance itself is an accomplishment.

I would say it took me a full two years to merely stabilize. By stabilize, I mean to just be conscious of things other than his death for most of the day. After two years, my days were not dominated by thoughts of my husband's death. A shaky balance was restored. I could look back and see how far I'd come. After three years, I'd begun to make new friends, and for the first time I felt I could really interact, not just observe. I was able to give something of myself in a relationship and not just worry about protecting myself from additional harm. I had spiritual and emotional energy to spare. This was a milestone.

In nine years I've learned much about myself, and people in general. I've acquired some humility. I know how easy it is to be smug and selfish. And I know what it is to really feel someone else's pain because I've been there, too. Life is a process; nothing ever stays the same. You won't feel exactly the same next year as you feel today. This terrible pain you are feeling now will redefine itself as time goes on. With hard work, you will find the burden easier to bear. Like exercised muscles grown strong, you will acquire the substance to withstand your loss. You will accumulate layers of understanding, acceptance, and forgiveness. And in time, you will find peace. But you must give yourself all of the time it takes. This will be your hardest journey, and no two paths follow the same course.

*Kathleen Jacques is an Editor of the HOPE FOR BEREAVED Handbook and a freelance writer. Reprinted with permission from Hope for Bereaved, Inc., Syracuse, NY*

## Spring — HOPE's Own Season

by Patricia Ward

It's easier to feel hopeful when spring is near. The cold, dark, short days of winter give way gradually to light, warmth, and new growth. It is this growth that is most important for those of us who have known loss.

For we all must go through the winter of sadness, guilt, and grief. It must come. There is no detour. If we try to rush or ignore what we feel, it will remain with us, clouding our lives. It is scary to give in to those emotions, though. We don't want to be unhappy, and nobody wants an unhappy person around for very long – especially when they can't understand exactly what's causing it. It would be easier, we think, to simply refuse to acknowledge the emptiness and just go on with life as usual. It certainly seems as if this is exactly what is expected by those around is in a very short time.

I can tell you from experience that it does not work! The best way, the only way out of grief, is through it. Just as we must experience January to appreciate March, so must we experience loss to be able to grasp the hope of healing. Spring can not come before winter.

Slowly, pleasant memories and laughter replace sadness and tears, as new leaves appear on the trees. We have not really lost our loved one, for their presence and influence remains with us; not as a sad reminder, but as a color in our personal rainbow. Just as the crocus blooms bravely each year at the same time, sometimes surrounded by snow, so healing replaces grief. It will come, as long as we acknowledge the grief and work through it. Then, in time, as tulips stretch toward the sun, we can reach to the joy!

May this season of new growth and sunshine help us all in our journey towards healing.

*Pat Ward is a freelance writer from East Syracuse, NY. Reprinted with permission from Hope for Bereaved Inc., Syracuse, NY*



### SUDSSPIRIT

Bereavement Support Group  
meets monthly on the 4th  
Monday at 6:15pm  
at Exeter Community Library.  
For more information, call  
610-779-6809 or  
E-mail: sudsspirit@gmail.com



