



HOPELine Newsletter ~ May 2023

A monthly newsletter of HOPE FOR BEREAVED, a not-for-profit community organization providing hope, support and services for the bereaved.

Celebrating 44 Years of HOPE

Our goal, in this 42nd year, is to expand our support, services and outreach to the bereaved with emphasis on helping grieving youth, and to financially solidify HOPE for decades to come.

This issue of the HOPEline newsletter is dedicated to all Mothers who died, those still with us and Bereaved Mothers. May your families remember and honor you with love & shared memories.



INTERNATIONAL BEREAVED MOTHER'S DAY Every year on the first Sunday in May, **International Bereaved Mother's Day** honors mothers who have lost a child. It's also a day to recognize women who cannot be a mother due to infertility or other health reasons. It's a day for healing & restoration. It's also a day to be sensitive to friends or family members who have lost a child. If you know of someone who has lost a child or lost the dream of becoming a mother, send them a note of encouragement or give them a hug!



Since Mother's Day is upon us, I thought of some special advice to honor mothers everywhere, and in particular my mother. I miss her every day - her love for me, her laughter and her sense of humor. ...

Jane Jenkins Herlong

Your Mother is Always with You!

By: Deborah R. Culver

She's the whisper of the leaves as you walk down the street.

She's the smell of certain foods you remember, flowers you pick, the fragrance of life itself.

She's the cool hand on your brow when you're not feeling well.

She's your breath in the air on a cold winter's day.

She's the sound of rain that lulls you to sleep, the colors of a rainbow. She is Christmas morning.

Your mother lives inside your laughter.

She's the place to come from, your first home.

She's the map you follow with every step you take.

She's your first love, your first friend, even your first enemy.

But nothing on Earth can separate you.

Not time ... Not space ... Not even death.

Share Your Story Underwriting ~ Opportunity

Do you have an article or story to share? We are always looking for articles that inspire *hope, help* and *comfort* to the bereaved.

Email us at: mail@hopeforbereaved.com

Each month, the HOPEline is sent to 1,200 families throughout Central New York and the United States. If you would like to underwrite the cost of the HOPEline for a specific month, please contact Pat Kriesel at HOPE at 315-475-HOPE (4673). It costs \$450 to underwrite the newsletter. Your donation will fund 100% of the expense of a newsletter for a month. You may include a special dedication to your loved one.

Thank you for supporting the HOPEline!

Our Feature Articles

Our Feature Articles	Page
Your Mother is Always with You	1
5 Ways to Support a Grieving Mother on Mother's Day	2
Growing Into Your Grief, Owning It & Living It	3
News & Updates from the Staff	4
Love Mark	5
HOPE for Teens	6
Memorial Day	7

5 Ways to Support a Grieving Mother on Mother's Day

written by [ASHLEE PROFFITT](#) Source: [@farmgirlflowers](#)

When a friend is grieving the loss of a baby, it can be hard to offer support when you don't understand what she is going through. What does your friend need: space to process or a shoulder to cry on? She might not tell you, so it's a game of tiptoe until you figure out how to support her as in the way she needs and when she needs it. And what do you do on Mother's Day? It's a day we honor mothers. A day that, if you have never experienced the loss of a baby, will likely breeze right by. If you're a mom, you'll get all the attention—yummy brunch, handmade crafts, silly songs, and pretty flowers—and it isn't a day you are anxiously anticipating.

Mother's Day is different for grieving mothers. It is weighty and difficult and confusing. No matter how long it has been since she experienced the loss of her baby, Mother's Day will be a hard day. She's not quite sure where she fits on this day because she carried a baby in her body, but her arms are empty and her heart is aching. The qualifier for Mother's Day seems obvious, the woman who has a child, and yet, it feels so confusing to the mother who has a child, just not here on earth.

It might seem easy to stay silent around Mother's Day because you aren't sure how to help, but it's more important than ever to reach out and offer support. Being a good friend to someone grieving is not unlike being a good friend, in general. It involves listening and trying your best to understand her thoughts and worries. It means going a bit out of your way a bit to help bring about healing and restoration. Taking a few minutes or hours out of your special day will remind her that she's loved, she's valued, she's seen, and most of all, that she is a mother.

Here are a few easy things you can do to help a grieving mother on Mother's Day.

1. Acknowledge She Is a Mother

Give her a call and tell her over the phone. Or just show up on her doorstep. Look her in the eyes and say "Happy Mother's Day. I know this day is so incredibly hard. I want you to know that you are still a mother. I'm so proud of you. And I'm so grateful for you."

2. Send a Card

It can be a simple, "I know this day hurts, but I love you and am thinking about you" card or a handwritten letter about how much she means to you and how your heart breaks watching her grieve. The gesture will show she is not forgotten and will bring so much comfort to her aching heart.

3. Send Flowers

Flowers may seem simple and obvious. But she will most likely feel left out and un-acknowledged on Mother's Day. Giving her the gift that most mothers receive is a thoughtful way to remind her that you are supporting her as a mother.

4. Treat Her to Her Favorite Breakfast

Many families plan a brunch on Mother's Day, so why shouldn't she? Drop off her favorite breakfast and cheers a mimosa to how strong she is and how proud you are of her. If you're not nearby, order her favorite brunch delivery and let her enjoy it from the comfort of her home.

5. Ask How She's Doing

Just talk to her. One of the best gifts you can give to a grieving mother is the opportunity to talk about how she is doing. Ask her how she is feeling and listen when she tells you. Remind her that you know this must be hard for her and you care and want to help. Starting this conversation may feel awkward and uncomfortable, but knowing you are thinking about her around this difficult day will be incredibly meaningful.

Remember, being a friend to someone grieving is hard because those who are grieving often don't know how to put their feelings into words. Even if your gesture doesn't go over as planned or you do not get the response you would expect, know that it still mattered to her. Just don't give up on her. Navigating grief is hard and messy and unpredictable, *but* her grief *will* get easier to navigate and on the other side, your friendship will be stronger than you could have imagined.

Growing into Your Grief: Owning It and Living It

By Alice Wisler



You have to grow into your grief. No one can tell you how to do it.

At first after Daniel died, I was going from one train of thought to another. *Is this me? Is this what I believe? Is this what I think? Is this what grief is to me?* I wasn't sure how I was to be as a grieving Christian. Some told me to be happy that Daniel was safe in Heaven with Jesus. Did that phrase comfort me? Others said that our children are only on loan from God. Did that mean I should have realized that my other children could be gone from me at any moment, that they have a Due Back By date stamped on them?

I fluctuated between the ideas and concepts many held at my local chapter of The Compassionate Friends and those of the church. Sometimes these concepts about God were at odds: God didn't allow Daniel to die; it was a work of the Devil. God allows bad things to happen. God has our days numbered. God has no control over when a person dies. God does not take away our suffering, but he walks with us in it.

As I tumbled into grief's pit, all of these concepts/truths/thoughts/ponderings made me dizzy.

What did I believe? What did I need in order to make sense of Daniel's death and get through the muddling? And the most daunting question: Who was I now?

Over the years, you grow into grief, like a new skin. At first, you don't know where you stand or how to adjust to the "skin" until time passes—time where you've sufficiently grappled. During the grappling stage, your thoughts bounce around: *I don't like this new skin. I want my old life back. Where is God? What will I do? What works for me? Why is this skin so itchy? I miss my child.*

It's a time of insecurity, this early grief. But then, you slowly come into knowing who you are—who you have become, shaped by grief. You know which platitudes bug you and why they do. You understand that half of the things society says about moving on are just to make others feel comfortable in their discomfort. People are scared and trying to make sense out of your tragedy. You represent to them that not only did your child die, but that theirs can, too. Quickly, or from an illness that goes on for months. You recognize when you need to leave a function because you're tired of superficial conversations. You do say your deceased child's name and don't feel the need to apologize for bringing up the dead. Or for sharing about the time he slid down the snowy bank in a recycle bin.

Over the years, you have worked hard. Now you have a time-tested grief. You own it. You know exactly what this grief is because it is part of you. You don't settle for what others expect grief to be for you. If you want to go to the cemetery and lift balloons to Heaven, you do it. You make no excuses. You live your grief out loud in its fullest which sounds ironic and crazy, but that's how grief has to be lived.

You know that when a school shooting happens and the news anchor says two days later, "They are still grieving," that he doesn't get it. Because any parent who wears the itchy skin of grief knows that using the word still is almost laughable. *Still* grieving after two days, really? You want to be that news anchor for a moment and tell the viewers this: These students, teachers and parents will grieve these losses for the rest of their lives. They have just begun the journey of growing into grief.

~ Alice J. Wisler is the author of a number of novels and the devotional *Getting Out of Bed in the Morning* (Leafwood Press).



Thank you Alice, for permission to reprint your article!



NEWS & UPDATES FROM THE STAFF

May 2023

Dear Friends— It is a very busy time at HOPE, with our upcoming events-spring time opening of the Butterfly Garden, continuous calls from new clients for counseling sessions, contacting volunteers for the PGA Championship in Rochester, our Tournament of HOPE, Remembrance Run/Walk For HOPE and on May 9th, Delmonico's Italian Steakhouse Anniversary Party. This year our Celebration of HOPE will be in person and back at the OnCenter with a tentative date of November 10th. This year's celebration will commemorate HOPE's 45th year of serving grieving children, adults and families of our community and beyond. So mark your calendars with the following dates:

May 9th- **Delmonico's Italian Steakhouse Anniversary Party, 4:30-close.** Call (315)445-1111 for priority seating.

May 15th-21st— PGA Championship, Oak Hill Country Club, Rochester NY-HOPE Volunteers will man a concession stand on the 18th hole.

June 26th-Tournament of HOPE Golf Tournament at Sunset Ridge, Marcellus

August 5th— Remembrance Run/Walk for HOPE at Long Branch Park.

November 10th(?) Celebration of HOPE 2023, OnCenter

Volunteers, golfers, runners, walkers and hungry persons are needed - if interested or want more information, please call HOPE (315)475-HOPE(4673) Registration forms for **golf, runners & walkers on HOPE's website** hopeforbereaved.com

NEW YOUTH GROUPS—Beginning in May HOPE will hold 2 Support Group for children. The 2 groups will meet one night a week for four (4) consecutive weeks. Registrations will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis. Space is limited: each group will have a maximum of 12 participants. Children will have an opportunity to talk with facilitators about their grief, as well as participate in activities with other children who are experiencing grief. The facilitators have many activities planned for each session. Please consider this group for your child.

GROUP 1: Ages 8-12 Tuesdays— May 23, 30, June 6, 13 Groups will meet 6:30-8:00pm

GROUP 2 Ages 13 & up Thursdays-May 24, June 1, 8, 15 Groups will meet 6:30-8:00pm

Support Group Facilitators are Margi Doran & Lynn Marinelli. For more information or to register your child, please call HOPE at (315)475-HOPE(4673). Registration must be in by May 8, 2023



Please keep Therese Schoeneck, Bob Kriesel, Christy Dannible, Kathy Spencer, Christine Hart, Ann & Dan Emond, Kevan and all our first responders, medical staffs, essential workers, the victims and their families of recent mass shootings in your prayers during these difficult days.




















Hope
For
Youth



5/2023

Dear Friends,

Our grief journey is a long and difficult one that takes us to many places.  We may find ourselves  in angry  or sad  places, and we also go to places of comfort or joy.  Spring is a time  when the weather may reflect our journey. Some days can be rainy and stormy , while some days can be sunny and warm . It is important to know  that we need BOTH of these types of days in order for plants  and animals  to live and grow. The rain  and the sunshine  helps everything to become strong  and develop. It is the same  in our grief journey; the tough times and the pleasant times **BOTH** help us to grow, become stronger, and love  better!
Love, Mark 



**for
Teens & Adolescents**

Dear Friends,

Vol 2 #2 5/2023

The process through grief leads us to many places on our journey. Some places can be difficult to endure, some can be soothing places of comfort. We may have painful days of intense anger and sadness as we ache to be with our deceased loved one. And yet there can be pleasant times when we recall a nice memory or reminder of our loved one who died. These peaks and valleys can be prolonged into days or weeks; they can also be short-lived, as we may undergo highs and lows within hours or even minutes. Changes in mood and demeanor are a common and **normal** part of our grief. It is good to remind ourselves of this fact, especially when we experience a particularly rough time during our grief journey.

Weather can often influence how we feel; this can be especially true in the Springtime. This time of year can often feature dark periods of thunderstorms or cool rainy weather, and yet can be followed by refreshing sunshine and comfortable warmth. There may be times when the weather matches our mood, or moments when we feel out of sync. There may be comfort in feeling “blah” on a “blah” day! Remember that an element of the healing process is to continue to progress in spite of the discomfort of grief. Even should we feel crummy on a nice day, persevering through these tough times will enhance our growth; we will become stronger in life as a result!

Take Care, -Mark

Please forward your questions, comments, and ideas to mail@hopeforbereaved.com

Memorial Day is a good time to reflect on the sacrifice of many soldiers, sailors and airmen and women. It is the perfect holiday to share with the entire family and to promote an appreciation and respect for those who died so selflessly. We hope that this year, you will take advantage of one of these many opportunities to reflect on the holiday and to celebrate it with intent.

- **Attend a Memorial Day event** . You may want to tune in online or on television and watch parades or attend in person.
- **Watch the National Memorial Day Concert.** This year, the National Memorial Day Concert will be held on the West Lawn of the US Capital. The concert is part of a three decades-long tradition where stories are matched with performances by the National Symphony Orchestra and guest artists. The concert will air on PBS, May 28th at 8:00PM and will be available live on Facebook & YouTube.
- **Fly the American flag at half-staff.** On Memorial Day, it is appropriate to fly the flag at half-staff from sunrise until noon. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs then recommends that it be briskly raised from noon until sunset in honor of the nation's battle heroes.
- **Place flowers and flags on graves.** This is an opportunity to pay tribute to those who served and to honor their families. Placing flowers brings us closer to the original traditions of Memorial Day here in the U.S.
- **Be there for a friend who may be grieving the loss of someone in the military.** Amid barbeques and days at the lake, those who have lost a loved one in service of our country may feel lonely and isolated. This is a good opportunity to support friends who may need a friendly ear or shoulder to cry on.
- **Participate in the National Moment of Remembrance at 3:00 p.m.** The National Moment of Remembrance is a single minute where all Americans are invited to reflect on the noble and sacred reason for the holiday: honoring those who died in service to our nation. You may want to merely be silent or you can listen to taps.

SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

TIME 6:30 to 8:30 PM

1st Tues. May 2nd Death By Drug Overdose

1st Wed. May 3rd HOPE for Widows/
Widowers, Engaged & Significant Others

2nd Tues. May 9th HOPE For Family & Friends

2nd Wed. May 10th Survivors of Suicide

3rd Tues. May 16th Death By Drug Overdose

3rd Weds. May 17th Bereaved Parents &
Infant Death

4th Weds. May 24th Survivors of Suicide

Other Support Group Meeting Times

3rd Wed May 17th 10am to noon (seniors)

**DAYTIME GROUP FOR WIDOWS/
WIDOWERS**

Masks are optional

Meetings are held at HOPE's Center,
4500 Onondaga Blvd. Syracuse

All meetings held at HOPE's Center are
in person & by ZOOM.

One-on-one counseling- Call HOPE (315)
475-4673 (HOPE) for an appointment.
Can be done in person or by phone. No
charge for counseling, but donations are
welcome.

If you would like to help collate the
HOPELine newsletter, spend time with
friends & enjoy some coffee or tea, it
is held on the 2nd Tuesday of each
month, 9am to usually 11am.

HOPE

for bereaved

As you journey from grief to HOPE

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May 2023

MEMORIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Each year HOPE offers a variety of opportunities for you to honor the memory of your loved one;

- ◆ purchase a brick for the Butterfly Garden of HOPE;
- ◆ sponsor a team, put together a team or make a memorial dedication to your loved one at the Tournament of HOPE;
- ◆ participate in the annual Remembrance Run/Walk for HOPE; **have your loved one's name printed on the event tee shirts**
- ◆ donate an auction item/ theme basket in memory of your loved or attend the Celebration of HOPE dinner.

The funds raised from all of these events support HOPE in offering their core services - support groups, on-on-one counseling and newsletter free of charge to the bereaved in our community and beyond.

For more information visit our website at www.hopeforbereaved.com or call our offices at 315-475-HOPE (4673).