



HOPELine Newsletter ~ September 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 44th 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.

The purpose of this newsletter is to help those who have experienced the death of a loved one. Each month, we share information and ideas from bereaved people and professionals to help you through your grief journey. Please know you are not alone. HOPE is here to help you. To talk with a compassionate, caring professional, please call us today at 315-475-HOPE (4673).



“When someone you love becomes a memory, that memory becomes a treasure”.

This issue of the HOPELine newsletter is dedicated In Loving Memory of Bryan Rossi

SPECIAL NOTE: HOPE’s office will be closed Friday September 1st & Monday, September 4th in honor of Labor Day. Please have a safe, fun & peace-filled holiday weekend!



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!

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When the 'U' Word Is Missing, Grievers Suffer

Grief is messy and confusing. It's all-consuming. And it's unlike anything else you've been through. Here's where the 'U' word comes in. When the 'U' word is missing grievers suffer, and their loved ones do, too. Can you guess what the 'U' word is?

How about 'understanding'? When grievers (and their loved ones) do not understand grief, no one will escape the effects of their lack of understanding—and grief will be more difficult for all concerned.

About Grief

Grief is tough all by itself. But when you have no idea what's happening *to you or around you* because of grief – and you have no idea what to expect from grief – your road becomes much rockier.

I'm convinced that grief is a stranger to all who have not worked their way through a deep loss. You don't understand grief from a distance. You only understand it from the inside out.

Grief is not predictable. A fitting description of grief is that it's a tangled mess of emotions. And lots of ups and downs. Grief holds the power to make you feel like a stranger to yourself.

Why Understanding Matters

When you're simply trying to cope with the pain of grief – yet, at the same time, you're trying to understand what grief is and how it works – you have twice the load to deal with.

If the friends and loved ones around you do not understand grief either, they will say and do things that hurt and aggravate you. They won't know how to support you. And they'll be pressing you toward actions that may lessen their discomfort, but do not support your healing journey. In all fairness to them, they just may not know any better. When this happens, everyone suffers. And grief is prolonged for the griever.

Isolation is a typical consequence of grief. It's often easier to be alone than to deal with people who don't understand – and who try to push you in the direction they think is best. It's likely the wrong direction.

Grief is lonely. Some of the people around you will distance themselves, but even when you're with a group of loved ones, you may feel alone and lonely. Grief can do this. Understanding grief is important. I'd go so far as to say that it's crucial for your well-being.

Without understanding, you won't know what to do to work toward healing. You won't know what's normal. You'll probably think you're going crazy. And you won't realize the 'grief' path is not straight.

Understanding Grief Makes a Difference

Becoming discouraged is more likely when you don't know what to expect. When you understand grief, you'll recognize that even if you feel as though you're taking two steps forward and one step back, you are moving slowly ahead. We will all face grief because it's an inevitable part of life and love. When we make the effort to understand grief, we are helping ourselves and the loved ones around us. It's a worthwhile effort ...

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What Strong Looks Like

By Joan Norris

My 16 year old son, Matt, died instantly in a car accident. After that I had many people tell me how strong I was, but I didn't understand what they meant. I struggled with the idea of being strong, because it made me feel like I wasn't grieving hard enough for my son. I felt like a broken mess on the inside. I would get upset, cry, and fall apart (mostly in private). Grief has changed every part of me: the way I think, the way I feel, and the way I live. I had always thought being strong meant never falling apart.

Through my journey, I have learned that strength is to allowing yourself to be vulnerable enough to experience all of the emotions as they come up. Strength is being brave enough to pull the difficult thoughts and messy feelings out and then dealing with them. (One of the biggest tips that helped me is to devote just one hour a day to grief.) Strength is also being patience because grief takes as long as it takes.

I have accepted that he is gone now, and it took a lot for me get to this point. For 2 years and 2 months, Matt's room was almost exactly the way he had left it. Now all of his possessions are in plastic tubs to be saved. Matt is on my mind every day and I miss him incredibly. I blow him a kiss as I go by the cemetery and tell him I love him as I go to work and come back home.

I didn't get to make any decisions about when or how he left this world. The decision I do have is to either make the most of the life I have left or stay inside hiding from life. I am starting to feel a kind of strength in me that I have never felt before. It makes me want to live every day to the fullest in honor of my son.





NEWS & UPDATES FROM THE STAFF

September 2023

Dear Friends— Our Remembrance Run/Walk for HOPE, held on August 5th, was a tremendous success. We had over 300 runners and walkers. Thank you to all who participated and volunteered. As usual at HOPE, there is no time to sit back and enjoy our past successes, we must now move forward with plans for our Celebration of HOPE 2023. It is wonderful that we will finally be back at the OnCenter on November 10th to celebrate HOPE's 45th anniversary of helping grieving children, adults & families of our community and beyond. We are again, looking for donations for our silent and live auctions. Theme baskets, restaurant and store gift certificates are very popular. Any donation can be in memory or honor of a loved one, with a picture or write-up of the person. For more information on donating, call HOPE at 315-475-HOPE(4673). Thank you for considering this request. More information in the next newsletter.

The staff

Youth Group Information-HOPE will begin offering a Youth Group one evening a month beginning in October. The group will take place on a Monday evening from 6:30-7:30. Children will have the opportunity to share their feelings and grief experiences with their peers. Please contact HOPE 315-475-HOPE(4673) to register a child for this group. The Monday of each month is to be determined.



WANTED: Items* for LIVE & SILENT Auctions.

It would be a **tremendous** help if our readers would: request donated items. Donate a new item or re-gift a new item. Bring items to your support group to fill a basket: *Toys, housewares, art, golf/restaurant gift certificates, sports items, antiques, collectibles, beauty products, jewelry, over-night getaways, memorabilia, etc. We can provide you with letters of request & receipts.

Some auction item ideas



Thank you so much for your support of HOPE and this much needed fundraiser.

HOPE is collecting empty ink cartridges to help offset the cost of replacement ink cartridges. If you have any, we would appreciate your donating them to HOPE. Just bring them to HOPE when attending as support group, for counseling or drop in our mailbox.

Thank you for you help!!



Please keep Therese Schoeneck, Christy Dannible, Kathy Spencer, Ann & Dan Emond, Christine Hart, Bob Kriesel, Kevan and medical staffs/essential workers, their families and all bereaved people in your prayers.



Hope
For
Youth



9/2023

Dear Friends,

The death of our loved one brings about many different feelings. Some days may be better than others. One day might be very difficult, and the next day we could feel more "normal" or even happy. Sometimes going through "ups" and "downs" can be confusing or even scary. It is important to know that this is normal. Sometimes our grief journey feels like being on a roller coaster; there will be good times and bad times. It is important to remember that a main reason for these ups and downs is that our journey through grief does not go in steps or stages. Grief does not move in one direction. Rather, our journey is more like a wave at sea; the grief will come in and go out, and slowly progresses.

LOVE, MARK



HOPE
for
Teens & Adolescents



Dear Friends,

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The death of our loved one is a life-changing event. Whether the death was sudden and unexpected, or was the culmination of a long process such as an illness, our lives suddenly become very different. We must embark upon the many tasks of adjusting to living without our loved one. We might wake up realizing our loved one is no longer with us; we may now eat meals without that person; perhaps we go about our daily routines with other people. Redefining our lives and who we are is an essential purpose of our grief. And yet our journey takes us beyond; we must then define who we become, and adapt to this different lifestyle.

*Life without our deceased loved one eventually develops into a “new normal”. Of course, we continue to love and miss that person; the new normal means we begin to work on the task of **accepting** the death. As we incorporate this into our lives, we will continue to have the many feelings that go along with grief. We still feel sad, have angry days, have some guilt over certain issues, perhaps feel occasional relief, and the entire spectrum of other feelings that may occur. However, as we gain acceptance, we also allow our deceased loved one to become a part of us in memories, demeanor, and personality. Then our loved one lives on through us in a very real way, and we become stronger and healthier. We are then fortunate that they were in our lives, and will always be.*

Take Care, -Mark

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

3 Things Never to Say at a Funeral

When it comes to grief and loss, Dr. Brené Brown, a research professor at the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work says, “Rarely does a response make something better, what makes something better is a connection.” When trying to comfort a good friend or family member during the death of a loved one we usually find ourselves searching for the right words to say, but often our words unintentionally derail the grieving process.

The words we say to the grieving are usually meant to comfort, but sometimes they become grief deflectors. We like to pull our friends and family members out of their despair and into hope, but sometimes, we just need to be present with them in the darkness. Grief, lament, sorrow, these are all part of life. In fact, the Bible has a whole book dedicated to grief and mourning called Lamentations. And it’s there for good reason. Grief and sorrow create a rich soil for our faith to grow deeper.

Here are three things we should probably stop saying to someone who’s recently lost a loved one. These simple phrases sound comforting on the surface, but they typically serve as patchwork rather than healing balm to the suffering. If you want to validate someone’s loss and give him/her permission to grieve, stay clear of these phrases and just be present, vulnerable and make a deeper connection.

1. **“They’re in a better place.”** This phrase tends to make the person who’s grieving feel like their current struggle isn’t credible because if they were truly spiritual they would know how great this moment really is! At its best, this phrase is well meaning and at its worst it can feel like spiritual abuse. When Jesus came to Mary and Martha after his good friend Lazarus died, he did one simple thing: he cried. Like a baby. Instead of saying, “At least Lazarus is in a better place,” Jesus joined the mourners. When it comes to grief, vulnerable empathy always beats the spiritual catchphrase. Resist the urge to inject a quick dose of hope and offer your solidarity instead.
2. **“At least they’re not suffering anymore.”** When you’re going through an earth-shattering loss, you’re not looking for the smallest common denominator of hope. No one wants their loved one to suffer, but you still desperately want them to be present. If we go back to Jesus at Lazarus’ gravesite, I can’t imagine him saying to Mary or Martha, “Well, at least he’s not suffering anymore.” Jesus was racked with sorrow himself and through his tears he gave others permission to grieve—human connection at its deepest.
3. **“Time heals all wounds.”** This could be true, but it’s a terrible cliché and it trivializes the present pain—pointing to the fact that it will heal... just hang in there! A person who loses a loved one is connected to them through their grief. It’s hard to separate the two—the grief from the love—during the first stages of loss. Avoid platitudes and trite phrases. Remember, it’s not your job to heal them—it’s your job to feel something deep with them and give them permission to grieve in the context of their faith. Cry, hug, pray and be present in the midst of loss. Don’t rush people through grief, because in doing so, you might help them bypass the very comfort of God.

SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

TIME 6:30 to 8:30 PM

1st Tues. Sept. 5th. Death By Drug Overdose

1st Wed Sept 6th “Young at Heart” & Young
Widow/ Widowers

2nd Tues. Sept 12th HOPE For Family &
Friends

2nd Wed. Sept. 13th Survivors of Suicide

3rd Tues. Sept. 19th. Death By Drug Overdose

3rd Weds. Sept. 20th Bereaved Parents &
Infant Death

4th Weds. Sept. 27th Survivors of Suicide

Other Support Group Meeting Times

3rd Wed Sept. 20th 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. It is held on the **3rd Tuesday**
of each month, 9-11ish .

**NOTE: CHANGE of DAY TO 3RD
TUESDAY of the MONTH.**

HOPE for bereaved

As you journey from grief to HOPE

4500 Onondaga Blvd.

Syracuse, NY 13219

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September 2023

I Wonder What She Thought

Remembering Sept. 11, 2001

I wonder what she thought
As she stood there, strong & tall
She couldn't turn away
She was forced to watch it all.

Did she long to offer comfort
As her country bled?
With her arm forever frozen
High above her head?



She could not shield her eyes
She could not hide her face,
She just stared across the water
Keeping Freedom's place.

The smell of smoke and terror
Somehow reduced her size
So small within the harbor
But still we recognized.

How dignified and beautiful
On a day so many died,
I wonder what she thought,
I know she must have cried.