

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).



Charles W. Rock
Jan. 16, 1942 – Oct. 12, 2019

Diane, Chip, Kathy, Austin, Ashley, Katie, Chris, Carrie, Cecelia, Carleigh, Patrick, Meaghan, Maeve and Charlie

Your hands were strong yet gentle as you held us in your care. You taught us by example every day. No matter what we needed, you were always there. We meant the world to you and you to us which is the reason it was so difficult to say goodbye. You left an emptiness inside our hearts. It seemed somehow you would always be with us; we never learned to let you go.

Your loving family,

“When you’re grieving, you need to do whatever helps you get through the day. Try to treat yourself with kindness whether you want to be alone or with other people. There is no right way or wrong way where grief is concerned.”

Linda Rao

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
HOPELine Dedication	1
Battling “What if” & “If only”	2
When Grief Doesn’t Go Away	3
News & Updates From the Staff	4
HOPE For Youth	5
HOPE For Teens	6
Special Donation/Meeting Page	7
This Halloween	8

Battling “What If” and “If Only”

By: Gary Roe

Guilt is a relentless, soul-sucking monster. Hearts groan under “What if...” and “If only...” To say that we want things to be different is a gross understatement.

Two decades had passed since my father’s sudden death. I was sitting in a counselor’s office, agitated, panicky. It was clear I hadn’t really grieved my dad’s passing.

The counselor looked at me and asked, “So, do you feel *responsible* for your dad’s death?”

I snickered, and opened my mouth to say, “No!” but nothing came. I sat there in stunned silence.

I did feel responsible.

My mind raced back to a meeting with doctors in the hospital. They explained the situation and then looked at my brother and myself. “We need your permission to turn off the machines,” they said.

I glanced sideways at my brother, who was almost 30. He looked down briefly and nodded his head. I looked back around and nodded my head. I was fifteen. For twenty years, I felt I had ended my father’s life. Some of us live with crushing guilt. We trudge around with this ball and chain, unaware. We feel responsible. It was our fault somehow.

“Guilt isn’t always a rational thing...Guilt is a weight that will crush you whether you deserve it or not”

Maureen Johnson

“If only...”

“What if...?”

We wake up in the morning, and Guilt is right there with us. It says, “Good morning, friend. It’s another day. We’ll begin again with the past - what you did wrong and what you didn’t do right. Then I’ll brief you on your agenda for the day. Just think about all the mistakes that are out there waiting for you!”

As we go through the day, Guilt says, “You’re responsible for what went wrong. Let’s go over those regrets again. Yep, it’s your fault.”

We put our head on the pillow at night, and Guilt says, “How many more mistakes did you make today? Not to worry. I’ll remind you of them tomorrow.”

For some of us, Guilt’s voice is so familiar that we’ve mistaken it for our own. Guilt isn’t content with merely coming and going. It’s greedy by nature. It thirsts for control. It wants to be the atmosphere in which we do life. In order to heal and grow, we must begin to unmask this soul-crushing villain. Here are four key things to remember about guilt:

Guilt is a monster that will never be satisfied. Left undetected, it will damage our hearts and ravage our souls. Like an infection, if not properly treated, it tends to grow and spread.

Guilt promises but never delivers. It tells us that things will be better if we feel bad about what we did or didn’t do. Guilt keeps us from taking appropriate action, like asking forgiveness and making amends. Guilt keeps us stuck.

Guilt lies to us. Guilt wants to make us responsible for everything. We mustn’t let it. Let’s take responsibility only for what’s ours. Instead of dwelling on what happened, we can focus on what to do next.

Guilt is misplaced grief. Feeling responsible keeps us from feeling the full pain of the loss, but in the end only lengthens the process. We must let guilt go. It’s time to release ourselves.

Kick Guilt to the curb. You’ll be glad you did.

WHEN GRIEF DOESN'T GO AWAY

It's normal to feel sad, numb, or angry following a death. But as time passes, these emotions should become less intense as you accept the loss and start to move forward. If you aren't feeling better over time, or your grief is getting worse, it may be a sign that your grief has developed into a more serious problem, such as complicated grief or major depression.

Complicated grief

The sadness of losing someone you love never goes away completely, but it shouldn't remain center stage. If the pain of the loss is so constant and severe that it keeps you from resuming your life, you may be suffering from a condition known as *complicated grief*. Complicated grief is like being stuck in an intense state of mourning. You may have trouble accepting the death long after it has occurred or be so preoccupied with the person who died that it disrupts your daily routine and undermines your other relationships.

Symptoms of complicated grief include:

- Intense longing and yearning for the deceased
- Intrusive thoughts or images of your loved one
- Denial of the death or sense of disbelief
- Imagining that your loved one is alive
- Searching for the person in familiar places
- Avoiding things that remind you of your loved one
- Extreme anger or bitterness over the loss
- Feeling that life is empty or meaningless

The difference between grief and depression

Distinguishing between grief and clinical depression isn't always easy since they share many symptoms. However, there are ways to tell the difference. Remember, grief is a roller coaster. It involves a wide variety of emotions and a mix of good and bad days. Even when you're in the middle of the grieving process, you will have moments of pleasure or happiness. With depression, on the other hand, the feelings of emptiness and despair are constant.

Other Symptoms that suggest depression, not just grief:

- Intense, pervasive sense of guilt
- Thoughts of suicide, or a preoccupation with dying
- Feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness
- Slow speech and body movements
- Inability to function at work, home and/or school
- Seeing or hearing things that aren't there

Can anti-depressants help grief?

As a general rule, normal grief does not warrant the use of anti-depressants. While medication may relieve some of the symptoms of grief, it cannot treat the cause, which is the loss itself. Furthermore, by numbing the pain that must be worked through eventually, antidepressants delay the mourning process.

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WHEN TO SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP FOR GRIEF

If you recognize any of the above symptoms of complicated grief or clinical depression, talk to a mental health professional right away. Left untreated, complicated grief and depression can lead to significant emotional damage, life-threatening health problems, and even suicide. But treatment can help you get better.

- Contact a grief counselor or professional therapist if you:
- Feel like life isn't worth living
- Wish you had died with your loved one
- Blame yourself for the loss or for failing to prevent it
- Feel numb and disconnected from others for more than a few weeks
- Are having difficulty trusting others since your loss
- Are unable to perform your normal daily activities

Written By: Melinda Smith, M.A., Ellen Jaffe-Gill, M.A., and Jeanne Segal, Ph.D.

Editor's Note: Please don't hesitate to contact a family member, friends, your doctor, a counselor at HOPE at 315-475-9675 or 911 if you are depressed or having thoughts of suicide.

News & Updates from the Staff

October 2023

Dear Friends, We are still looking for gift basket donations for our **Celebration of HOPE 2023** on **Nov. 10th at the OnCenter**. **Gift baskets, gift certificates and new items** can be donated in memory of a loved one. You may put a picture or small write-up of your loved one with the donated item. All donations need to be brought to HOPE by **Oct. 25th**. We may be able to arrange a pickup, if necessary.

WRAPSODY 2023-Our staff & volunteers have missed wrapping gifts at the mall. For the safety and care of our volunteers, HOPE will continue to offer holiday wrapping but will do so at the HOPE Center. We will offer gift wrapping on the following days: **Fridays-Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22; Saturdays -Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23; Sundays-Dec 3, 10, 17**. Please call **(315)475-HOPE(4673)** for more times & details and if you would like to volunteer. If your place of business would like volunteers to come to you, please call HOPE to set up an appointment. We will try to accommodate any request.

HOPE is the feather that reminds us we have wings

SPECIAL THANKS... to all who came out to support our annual **Remembrance Run/Walk** in August. It was a great day with over 300 participants. A **SPECIAL THANK YOU** to our **dedicated volunteers**, including the **volunteers from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church**, who worked tirelessly to make it a fun and successful fundraiser!! A big thank you to our **wonderful sponsors**, listed below. Hope to see you all in 2024!

Presenting Sponsor– St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church

- ♦ **Sponsors– HEA Appraisal; Reagan Companies Asset Mgmt.; Plis Funeral Home; JE Miller, Inc; Buranich Funeral Home; Wegmans; Price Chopper; Green Hills Farms**

A big thank you to all who ordered a Memorial Sponsorship on shirts. These sponsorships helped make the Remembrance Run/Walk a much needed financial success!



IT WAS A GREAT DAY!
(even the race crasher enjoyed the day)



Please keep Therese Schoeneck, Reenie Hayes, Bob Kriesel, Christy Dannible, Kathy Spencer, Christine Hart, Lanie Moses, John Tubbert, Ann & Dan Emond, Kevan and all our medical, front line workers and their families in your prayers for good health .
















Hope
For
Youth



10/2023

Dear Friends,

This time of year brings about many types of weather. We can have warm, sunny days  or cloudy, cool and windy days.  There can be scary thunderstorms , and once in a while, even snowflakes!   This time of year can be very gloomy , or it can be incredibly beautiful with Fall foliage.  During this time of year, the very different kinds of weather can change  from day to day. Our journey through grief can reflect the weather. We can have dark and gloomy days , and then we might have warm and pleasant times . It is good  to know that our grief journey contains all kinds of days and feelings. If we allow  ourselves to experience these, we will continue to grow.

LOVE, MARK 



Dear Friends,

Vol 2 #7 10/2023

*Our journey through grief is a long and complex process. Since our loved one died, we experience many feelings, changes in our routines, and constant adjustments in our lives. It is easy to become overwhelmed, even with our usual endeavors. We may find that “everyday” things we do constantly have now become difficult to accomplish. It can become hard to finish relatively simple tasks as we deal with the pain of our grief. Of course, this inability to maintain our previous level of functioning only makes us feel worse; in other words, something must be “wrong” with us. It is important to know that in fact there is **nothing wrong** with us! We are going through a very intense and chaotic time as we deal with our loved one’s death. We may feel confused, unable to concentrate, and vulnerable during this time of grief. It is **normal** to go through these tough (and often exhausting) periods. How do we navigate through these “storms” in our grief journey? We must not avoid these feelings. As a matter of fact, it is vital that we do the opposite and **lean into** our feelings of grief. By **going through** these difficult times, we learn ways to cope better and improve our survival skills.*

Recognizing and embracing the pain of our grief will cause us to further come to terms with the loss of our loved one, grow closer to them, and gain important life lessons. We can then appreciate more fully the many gifts life has to offer!

Take Care, -Mark

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

What a delightful surprise!! Matthew, Michael & Liam walked into HOPE's Center and presented HOPE with a gift card from Wegman's with the following note: "Have a great day, we are doing random acts of kindness!" These young men are amazing kids with great futures ahead of them. From all of us at HOPE-

Thank you Matthew, Michael & Liam



SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

TIME 6:30 to 8:30 PM

1st Tues. Oct. 3rd. Death By Drug Overdose

1st Wed. Oct. 4th HOPE for Widows/Widowers,
Engaged & Significant Others

2nd Tues. Oct. 10th HOPE For Family & Friends

2nd Wed. Oct. 11th Survivors of Suicide

3rd Tues. Oct. 17th Death By Drug Overdose

3rd Weds. Oct. 18th Bereaved Parents &
Infant Death

4th Weds. Oct. 25th Survivors of Suicide

Other Support Group Meeting Times

3rd Wed Oct. 18th 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.

For **ZOOM** support group meeting
information go to HOPE's website
Hopeforbereaved.com

**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 and spend time
with friends it is held on the 3rd
Tuesday of each month at 9am**

HOPE for bereaved

As you journey from grief to HOPE

4500 Onondaga Blvd.
Syracuse, NY 13219
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For you or to share

OCTOBER 2023



Thought For the Day



This Halloween, when passing out candy: when a teenager comes to your door, please give them candy without saying, "Aren't you too old to be doing this?" They could be out doing things much worse: drinking and driving, vandalizing, or drugs. It is far better that they are knocking on our doors, asking for candy and having safe and legal fun than having them do dangerous things.

Let them be kids as long as they can be; they are growing up way too fast. Please don't refuse a child candy because they aren't dressed up. Some children are on the autism spectrum or have sensory issues that make dressing up highly uncomfortable, if not unbearable.

Also size doesn't always determine mental age or special needs. One last thing please don't ask "Are you from this neighborhood?". Some children live in areas/neighborhoods that aren't safe to go trick or treat. Just because they aren't from your area/neighborhood don't turn them away. Please don't be judgmental-BE KIND

(Repeated from last year, but bears repeating)