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HOPEline is a **monthly newsletter** of **HOPE FOR BEREAVED**, a nonprofit organization providing support for the bereaved. The **purpose** of **HOPEline** 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 member of our peer support team, **please call us at 315-475-9675**.

Welcome our Newest Board Members!



Colby Cyrus
Senior Program Manager
Central New York
Community Foundation



Kelly Rossi
Director of Development
and Marketing
McHarrie Life Foundation



Joshua Edinger
Administrator of The
Borer Memory Life Com-
munity at The Nottingham
LORETTO

A Message from our Board President, Kristin B. Moses, LMSW

"I am thrilled to welcome three incredible new members to the HOPE for Bereaved family. Their passion, energy, and diverse expertise come at such an exciting time for our organization. Our foundation and mission remain strong — offering support, understanding, and hope to those grieving — but we're stepping into the future with new energy. We're strengthening our internal systems, expanding our services with clinical oversight and new healing modalities, and building community in fresh, meaningful ways. The heart of HOPE hasn't changed — we're just growing to meet more people where they are on their journey from grief to hope."

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Do you still want to receive our newsletter?!

Beginning in July, we will transition to a bi-monthly release and move to a digital format instead of mailing printed copies.

Please reach out to us at **315-475-9675** or **mail@hopeforbereaved.com** to provide your email address. If you don't have email, we encourage you to call us to discuss your options—we want to make sure you stay connected.

Dear Friends of HOPE,

May can be a difficult month.

Mother's Day brings fresh pain for those grieving the death of a mother, a child, or a mother figure.

It can be a day of silence in a world filled with flowers, brunches, and greeting cards. For some, it's not one day, but an entire season that stirs grief.

I lost both of my parents in less than a year. My dad died suddenly. He was my mom's primary caregiver, and the night he died, she came to live with my husband and me. She had dementia and lung cancer, and I became her caregiver. She died exactly one year and nine days after my father.

That year was unlike any other in my life. Caring for my mom was an honor, but it also revealed the quiet, aching spaces that grief carves into daily life. I am not a mother. I have never experienced the loss of a child. But I do know what it means to carry grief while still trying to live, love, and show up each day.

Here at HOPE, I am surrounded by people who *do* understand that kind of loss. People who have buried children, spouses, siblings. People who have chosen, after deep grief, to walk with others through theirs. It is humbling - and it is what makes HOPE such a uniquely powerful place.

For mothers who are grieving this Mother's Day: there are no right words. The world often doesn't know how to acknowledge the depth of that pain, and that can make the day feel even lonelier. But here, your grief is honored. Your child is remembered. You don't have to pretend you're okay.

To those grieving their mothers: your longing is valid, whether your relationship was simple or complicated, recent or decades past. Missing your mom, even at the most unexpected moments, is a kind of love that doesn't go away. We hold space for that here, too.

We see you. And we are here to walk beside you, for as long as it takes.



From Executive Director
Kelly Ocampo

With Hope and Love,

Kelly

Mother's Day Grief: Life without a mother's love

Most parents with young children have some kind of a nighttime routine. My own household is far from regimented, but we do usually operate within the same general framework. Each night there is typically some sort of winding down activity like books or a quiet television show before I shuffle my two daughters off to sleep. Without fail, I have to go back and forth between the girl's beds giving them each a grand total of two goodnight kisses and as I leave the room Ginny *always* says, "Mama? Can you check on us and send Daddy up?"

The other night I was feeling sentimental, so instead of corralling them into their own beds, I lay down with them in mine. As I lay in the middle with a little girl on each side, they wrapped their arms around me and snuggled their warm bodies in as close as possible. Before long a calm washed over me as their breathing became a rhythmic purr, and in one of those *not quite awake* but *not quite asleep* moments, my mind drifted back 25 years to a dim bedroom in my childhood home.

My father traveled often and there were a few decades where my mother had a handful of young children to tuck into bed all on her own. It was not uncommon for her to kill two birds with one stone by laying down with two kids in the same bed. It's a scene I can picture clearly. There is a sliver of hallway light peeking into a dark bedroom with white walls and blue carpet. I see me, my brother and my mother in a queen-sized bed being lulled to sleep by the ambient night music of a box fan. I can picture the arc of my mother's arm around me as she fell asleep, and I prattled on about my 7-year-old thoughts. Every once in a while I would abruptly ask, "*Are you still listening?*" and she would pretend she had been awake all along even though I knew it wasn't true.

Some nights when she had something to do, like prepare her preschool lesson for the next day or fold laundry, she would sit outside in the hall instead. Her presence in the brightly lit hallway made me feel reassured and safe knowing I'd barely have to yell if I needed her.

She spoiled us this way, which I guess is why I dreaded spending nights away from her until far later than my peers. I failed sleepover attempt after sleepover attempt, the moment of regret settling in right around the time someone else's mother came to tuck me in. A lump would form in my throat as I realized how far away from home I was. No amount of nurturing from the household's parent could fill the pit in my stomach; I wanted my mom and there was no suitable replacement.

When you're fortunate enough to have an affectionate and nurturing mother, you never stop craving *her* kind of love. She's the only one who can make you feel it. After she's gone you futilely search to fill her void, but you're trying to solve a riddle without an answer.

I was an independent adult for many years before my mother died. I no longer *needed* her, but the security of knowing she was alive in the world certainly allowed me to sleep better at night. When she died it was like a meteor hit; my foundation shook, I lost the things that were *her*, and I was left with a huge un-fillable crater.

Motherly love is a story that has no end. As long as there are good mothers, there will always be children who crave their unique kind of tenderness. I will never again be on the receiving end of my mother's motherly love, but I am now the source of my daughters. I try to fill their little world with tenderness and care but sometimes it makes me sad knowing that someday they will likely know what it's like to yearn for me. But as Queen Elizabeth once said, "*Grief is the price we pay for love,*" and frankly – love is worth it.

Mother's Day can be a pretty painful day for those grieving the death or absence of their mother. Mother's Day Grief can bring up feelings of longing, yearning, sadness, loneliness, depression, anger, bitterness, alienation, and despair. For many, the day becomes about *just getting through*. Obviously, there is no replacement for your mother this Mother's Day, but there are constructive ways to deal with the day that might make you feel closer to her memory and to the people in your life. If you choose to ignore the day altogether, we support you; just try and stay away from methods that would be classified as 'negative coping'.

If you decide to lay low:

Turn off the TV: Mother's Day themed advertising and programming range from slightly agitating to rage inducing for those grieving the loss of their mother. You probably wouldn't like me if you knew the terrible things I yell at my television when it stupidly airs Mother's Day commercials, just terrible.

Skip the Mother's Day brunch: If you're prone to bitterness on Mother's Day it might be best to avoid places like brunch or the mall, where Mother's Day activities traditionally take place.

Plan a constructive and time-consuming activity: Mother's Day avoidance is the perfect excuse to get your spring gardening done, cook meals for the upcoming week, or clean out your closet. Put on your headphones, get to work and before you know it the day will be almost over.

Continued on next page

If you want to focus on your loved ones:

Spend time with the other fabulous women in your life: Why not take the day to celebrate women in general? Many of the things we celebrate on Mother's Day are in praise of traits, qualities, roles, and responsibilities that many of the women in your life likely possess.

Teach your children something your mother taught you: This Mother's Day activity reaches across three generations and provides you with the perfect opportunity to bring your mother into your relationship with your kids. It provides natural opportunities to talk about your mother with your kids and helps you to feel close to her memory.

Focus on your wife/sister/motherly friends (for the motherless guys): Make this Mother's Day special for another woman in your life.

Focus on your children: Truthfully, the only reason I really participate in Mother's Day is for my kids. I don't want them to forever associate this day with me bitterly moping around. This doesn't mean that I don't tell them Mother's Day makes me sad, I am very open about this. But I also let them know the joy being their mother brings and I don't even need to fake it when I gush over whatever trinket they've made for me.

Say thank you to your dad or another role model in your life: Mother's Day is about showing appreciation for those who have sacrificed for us and molded us. So your mother isn't here, why not take this opportunity to thank others who have guided you. In a family, the father or the eldest sibling often takes on motherly roles and responsibilities after the mother dies. You might never have thought to thank this someone for their willingness to step into very large shoes, let Mother's Day be your reason to speak up.

Send a card to another mother: Are there other mothers who you admire? A friend, aunt, in-law, or neighbor? Send them a Mother's Day card and let them know you think they're doing a great job.

Band together with those who are grieving your mother: Misery loves company and, better yet, maybe you'll end up having fun and sharing meaningful memories.

Find gratitude: This is always a beneficial exercise when you're feeling low, so look around and acknowledge that which is good.

If you want to spend time with your mother's memory:

Spend time in a place where you feel close to your mother's memory: This could be anywhere – at church, her grave, the ocean – it doesn't matter.

Spend time looking at photos or items from your mother: Most of us have a 'mom box' of sorts where we keep old cards, letters, photos, and other items. Spend a little time reminiscing and going through these things.

Have a 'mom' movie marathon: I would watch old musicals and *Tammy and Bachelor* movies. What were your mother's favorite movies? Which movies did you see together? Rent two or three movies, get some snacks and invite someone over to watch with you.

Write a letter to your mother and update her on all that's happened since her death: Obviously, you won't be able to send this letter, but sometimes writing to deceased loved ones can be therapeutic and help to continue your bond with them.

Do something that would have made your mother smile: Ride a roller-coaster, eat an ice cream sundae, volunteer your time, or read a book. Whatever you do, allow yourself to enjoy it just as your mother would have.



By: Susi Costello

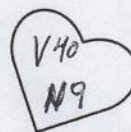
Today I wrote a note to a bereaved mother. I wanted to say don't believe all those sympathy cards. The ones that say "time heals" and "God only takes the best" and "may your sorrows be lessened." You'll only be disappointed. I wanted to say this is the most heart-wrenching, chest crushing, breath stealing tragedy on earth. I wanted to tell her there will be days she wants to die, and friends who will not understand some of the things she does or says.

I wanted to tell her she will still feel her child's presence at times, sometimes so strongly that it is as if they are dancing just at the edge of whatever activity is going on. And other times she might not feel their presence at all.

I wanted to tell her that her life will not go back, that she will never be the same, because a piece of her left with her child. And that even though the pain does not go away, somehow her soul will eventually make enough room so she can hold it all– the grief, the pain, the joy and the love. I wanted to tell her... but I didn't. Instead, I wrote this: I'm sending love, for words are pointless right now. And that is the truth.












Hope For Youth



5/2025

Dear Friends,

Our grief journey can be difficult as we learn ways to cope with the death of our loved one.  Even though each of us has our own particular journey,  we don't have to go through our grief alone.  As a matter of fact, grief is meant to be **SHARED!** There are others who miss your loved one who died, and they are hurting  too. So it might be helpful to reach out to friends and loved ones to talk about our feelings.  Perhaps we could do activities with others that help us remember our deceased loved one.  And for many of us, reaching out to meet with a professional counselor or therapist can be very beneficial.  So it is important to let trusted loved ones know how we are feeling, and it is a sign of strength  to ask for help when needed! LOVE, MARK 



for
Teens & Adolescents



Dear Friends,

Vol 4 #2 5/2025

There are elements of grief common to everyone's journey. We must all deal with a myriad of feelings that occur during grief. Common feelings that arise are sadness, anger, guilt, confusion, and relief, to name a few. All grief journeys are uneven, meaning there are many "ups" and "downs", often making the process appear unpredictable. Grief situations require us to *go through* the issues that come up, and *lean into* our grief. Avoiding our feelings and attempting to side-step our grief will only delay the process, and could cause complications. By continuing our journey through grief, we will find ways to cope, grow, and become stronger. Over time, we will eventually discover evidence of healing. To varying degrees, these aspects of grief come up in every journey!

Then what makes every grief journey unique? It is often said that grief is like a snowflake or a fingerprint; no two are exactly alike. Each one of us is individual, based on our personality, background, and (in the case of our grief) the various circumstances connected to the death of our loved one. For example, some of us may experience more anger, have more day-to-day fluctuations, or reach milestones at different times. The important thing to remember is that there is no singular way to grieve (as long as we aren't doing anything harmful); each journey takes a particular path. We mustn't compare our journey to others, nor think that we should be at a certain point at a given time. The uniqueness of our journey allows us to progress at our own pace while connecting with others about shared grief experiences. By appreciating the special qualities that we have while engaging with other people, we will enhance the healing process!

Take Care, - Mark

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

REGISTER NOW for our 2025 Events

- ♥ Golf Tournament of HOPE - Monday, June 23rd
*Memorialize your loved one by placing their photo
and/or name on a tee sign for \$100*

Deadline is June 2nd

- ♥ Remembrance Run/Walk for HOPE -
Saturday, August 2nd
*Memorialize your loved one by placing their name
on a t-shirt for \$100*

Register or learn more by visiting our website at
hopeforbereved.com or calling us at **315-475-9675**

happening at HOPE



**Friends & Family
ZOOM only**
6:30 - 8:30 PM

Tues.
May
6th

Family and Friends
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
Clay Senior Center - 4948 State Route 31

Fri.
May
9th

**Young
Widow/Widower/S.O.**
6:30 - 8:30 PM

Wed.
May
7th

Family and Friends
6:30 - 8:30 PM

Tues.
May
13th

**Left Behind
by Suicide**
6:30 - 8:30 PM

Wed.
May
14th

**Left Behind by Drug
Overdose**
6:30 - 8:30 PM

Tues.
May
20th

**Parents without
Parents**
6:30 - 8:30 PM

CANCELLED
Thur.
May
15th

**Senior
Widow/Widower/S.O.**
10 AM - 12 PM

Wed.
May
21st

**Bereaved Parents
& Grandparents**
Infant/Newborn, Miscarriage or Stillbirth
6:30 - 8:30 PM

Wed.
May
21st

**Bereaved Parents
& Grandparents**
child of any age
6:30 - 8:30 PM

CANCELLED
Wed.
May
21st

IMPORTANT NOTICE

**Re: Bereaved Parent
Support Group**

HOPE is temporarily pausing the
Bereaved Parents (all ages)
support group.

We are still offering 1:1 support
and a Bereaved Parents (infant/
newborn, miscarriage, stillbirth)
support group.



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MAY 2025

SIGN UP FOR THE 33RD ANNUAL TOURNAMENT OF HOPE

JUNE 23, 2025

📍 **SUNSET RIDGE GOLF CLUB**

Presented by *Molly Elliot*



**INFORMATION
& REGISTRATION:**
Scan our QR
visit golftoh.com
or call 315.475.9675