



May/June 2020

caring & sharing news
Helping rebuild lives following the death of a child

Volume 17, Number 3



Wings of Hope Butterfly Release

Sunday, August 16, 2020, 5:30 p.m.
BPUSA Memorial Garden
St. Benedict Monastery,
9535 Linton Hall Road, Bristow, VA

The highlight of the Butterfly Release will be the individual and mass release of the butterflies accompanied by music, inspirational readings and remembering our children.

We are requesting a \$5 donation per butterfly. Orders for the butterflies must be received by August 1st to Bev Ruane at 540-628-4758 or ruane.beverly@yahoo.com

Refreshments will be provided after the program and release of the butterflies. If you would like to help provide refreshments, finger foods that can withstand the heat, would be appreciated.

Please bring lawn chairs as there is no seating at the garden.

There is a meeting for everyone! Join us at one of these meetings!

Caring and Sharing Support Meetings:

4th Sunday @ 3 p.m.

(No meetings until further notice due to the COVID-19 Pandemic)

First United Presbyterian Church
14391 Minnieville Road
Dale City, VA

For more information contact:
Jodi Norman, Chapter Leader
703-656-6999 (cell)
bpusanova@gmail.com



DAVID J COBB
FOUNDATION

Life After Loss Support Group for Suicide Survivors

“Shining A Light for Those in Darkness”

1st Sunday of Each Month

1:00~2:30 p.m.

Meetings held at ACTS
9317 Grant Ave, Manassas, VA

For more information contact: Kimberly Fleming
Office: 571-377-8134 or Cell: 703-349-9184
email: kimberly.fleming@djcfoundation.org

zoom meetings

Until further notice our monthly meetings will be Virtual Zoom Meetings. I will send out an email with password and log in information prior to the meeting date.

4th Sunday at 3:00 p.m.

AMORE

(All Murdered Offspring Remembered)

3rd Wednesday @ 6 p.m.
3182 Golansky Blvd, Suite 101
Woodbridge, VA

A support group meeting for parents whose children have been murdered.

For more info contact:
Beverly Ruane
540-628-4758 (h) or 703-395-9546 (c)
ruane.beverly@yahoo.com

Overdose and Substance Abuse Support Group

First Sunday of Every Month

2 – 4 pm

Zoom Meetings until further notice.

Watch for an email with log-in information.

A support group meeting for parents whose children have died from Drug Overdose or Substance Abuse.

For more information please contact:

Jodi Norman at bpusanova@gmail.com
or call 703-656-6999

or

Kathie Kelly at tcffred@yahoo.com or 540-220-4325

Support Group for Parents with No Surviving Children

2nd Saturday of each month at 2:00 p.m.

North County Government Bldg.
Reston Police Station
12000 Bowman Towne Drive
Reston, VA

For more info contact: Nancy Vollmer 703-860-8587

Sibling Support Group

We would like to start having special support meetings for anyone who has had a sibling die. If you are a surviving sibling and are interested in these special meetings, please contact Jodi at 703-656-6999 or email: bpusanova@gmail.com.

Please Check E-mails & Facebook

Almost all of our Chapter Communication is done via email. Please check your emails at least once a week. Everything from the newsletter to Chapter Announcements are sent through email. It would also be helpful to respond to all emails sent regarding the Chapter. That lets me know that you did see the email and that I have a correct email address – a simple “got it” would be better than no response at all!

It would also be helpful if you would join our private Facebook page. Please check this page on a regular basis. A Facebook page has been set up for our chapter. Members can join our group at Bereaved Parents of the USA/Northern VA Chapter. This is a closed group for privacy purposes, so nothing posted here will go into your regular News Feed for your regular FB friends to see. Request to join the group and approval will be sent to you.

Check Out Our Website

<http://www.bpusanova.com>

I need everyone's help in updating our website. If you have not already done so, please write a bio of your child and include a photo or a collage of pictures to include in “Our Children Remembered” Section. We would like to have all the children of our chapter included on this page. Please send submissions to Jodi at bpusanova@gmail.com.

Rock-It Creations

If you would like to have a rock in the Memorial Garden in memory of your child, sibling or grandchild, we highly recommend that you order through “Rock-It Creations.” The rocks are river rocks and will last a life-time! Your rock can be personalized and customized. Please order the large size rocks, either the custom or standard rocks, for our Memorial Garden. There is no shipping charges or taxes on the rocks.

Go to Rock-It Creations' website to order a rock in memory of your loved one,
<https://www.rockitcreations.com/>

If you have any questions, contact Jodi Norman at 703-656-6999 or bpusanova@gmail.com



There are dozens of tasks that go into running our chapter and our special events. If you feel you are now in a place in your grief journey where you can help and give back to the chapter in any little way, we would love your help. Most of us find that when we reach a point of giving back to those who come after us, we gain far more than we give.

I could really use volunteers to plan our special events (Picnic/Balloon Release, Butterfly Release and Service of Remembrance). Other areas of need are in Fundraising, Publicity, Outreach, and helping at the Memorial Garden.

If you would like to volunteer to help our chapter, please contact Jodi at bpusanova@gmail.com or 703-656-6999.

Garden News

Just want to remind everyone that our Memorial Garden is a beautiful, peaceful place to go to remember our precious children. It is open to everyone and it is a place you can go to practice social distancing and get fresh air.

This Memorial Garden belongs to all of us Bereaved Parents. It's a labor of love! We could really use your help to keep the garden maintained, weeded and watered. When you work in the garden, it's a way to honor your child.

There are now garden vases at the garden that you can use to place fresh cut flowers. Please refrain from putting artificial flowers out in the garden during the flower growing season, May to October. If you would like to plant some flowers, you are more than welcome to do so. Please plant flowers that are deer resistant.

If you have any questions about the garden, please contact Bev Ruane at 540-628-4758 (h) or 703-395-9546 (c) or email: ruane.beverly@yahoo.com.



Coping with Loss and Grief During the Coronavirus Crisis

VITAS® Healthcare

Grief is a natural response to loss, and feelings of loss can be compounded during a crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic. Sometimes, grief-related pain and symptoms—which can be emotional, physical, cognitive, and spiritual—can feel overwhelming, especially for people who are already mourning the death of a loved one.

Keep in mind that grieving during non-crisis times is a highly individual experience. There is no right or wrong way to grieve, no “normal” timetable for grieving. Healing happens gradually and cannot be hurried.

In times of crisis, however, key factors and reactions can intensify your grief and hinder your ability to heal and recover from it. These include:

- Heightened anxiety, linked to uncertainty about the future, the loss of familiar routines, and concerns about your own or your loved ones' health/well being
- Heightened sense of loss, linked to the death of a loved one or pandemic-related losses that leave you feeling overwhelmed, wondering how to put life's pieces back together
- Increased isolation and intensified grief, whether from stay-at-home orders or social distancing measures that have compromised the critical, valuable support provided by funerals, memorials, and religious services

If you are in mourning, the intensity of your reactions will vary, depending on the nature of the loss and its meaning in your life, the nature of your relationship with the person who has died, other life stressors, and your personality, coping style, and life experiences.

These Are Common Reactions to Grief

- Profound sadness, loneliness, emptiness
 - Crying over seemingly nothing
 - Despair about unrealized dreams
- Fear about getting sick (yourself or loved ones)
- Anger that the death occurred, that your loved one “abandoned” you, at healthcare institution/practitioner, at a deity or faith institution
- Short temper, irritability, or annoyance at others
- Guilt (e.g., feeling responsible for the death or suffering, regretting things that did/did not happen in the relationship, feeling guilty you survived)
- Insomnia or excessive sleeping
- Change in eating behaviors (eating less or more)
- Difficulty being with others
- Difficulty concentrating and retaining information; forgetfulness
- Re-living or re-experiencing prior losses

Generally, many grief-related symptoms will fade over time.

When and How to Get Help for Grief

If grief-related symptoms do not ease—and if you find yourself having difficulty functioning—it is important to reach out for professional help. Call your physician, a mental health professional, or your faith practitioner if you experience any of these profound symptoms:

- Intense sorrow and painful rumination about your loss
- Increased alcohol or substance use
- Inability to focus on little else but your loved one's death
- Excessive avoidance of any reminders of your loved one
- Intense and persistent longing or pining for your loved one
- Extreme difficulty accepting the death
- Numbness or detachment
- Extreme anger or bitterness about your loss
- Feeling that life holds no further meaning or purpose

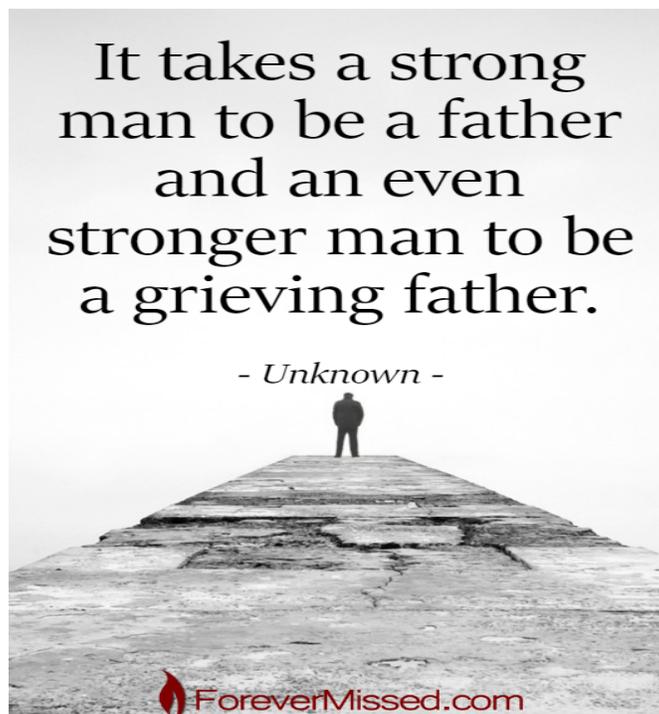
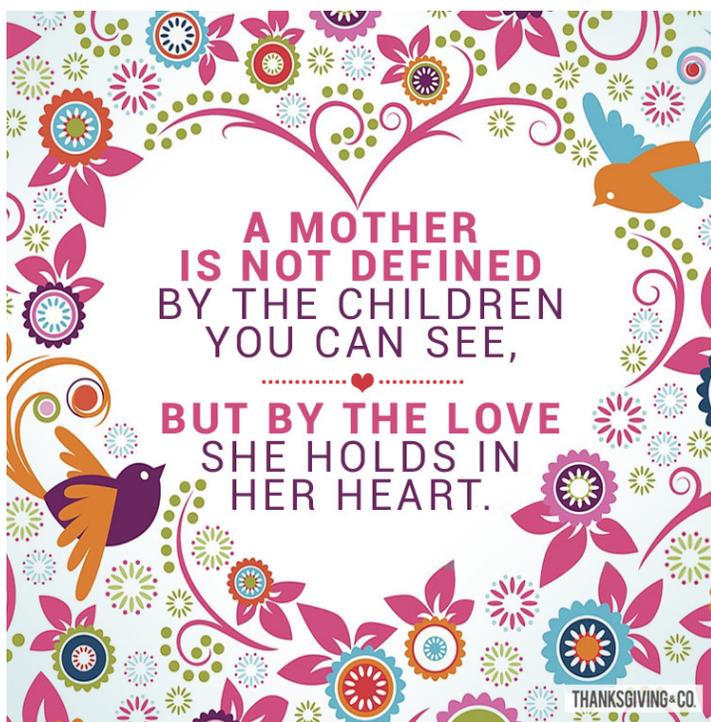


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How to Care for Yourself and Get the Support You Need

Calming your anxiety begins with learning how to process grief during a crisis. Consider these self-care tips:

- Minimize watching, reading or listening to news that causes you to feel anxious or distressed. Seek information only from trusted sources.
- Avoid unhelpful coping strategies and substances, such as tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs.
- Be careful with “what if” thoughts. Manage your worst-case scenario thinking.
- Engage in personal self-care activities that bring joy (e.g., phone/virtual communication with friends and family, reading, listening to podcasts, watching comedy).
- Practice relaxation, meditation and self-expression via books, apps and online videos (e.g., yoga, mindful meditation, relaxation, writing, music, art, dance).
- Stay in the present. Take one day at a time.
- Utilize spiritual faith resources.
- Consider telehealth for mental health support (online consultations, teletherapy).
- Eat sufficient and healthy food. Exercise when you can.
- Monitor yourself for prolonged sadness, difficulty sleeping, hopelessness.
- Remind yourself how you coped with past life challenges and enact those coping strategies today.
- Call 911 for any health emergencies or if you have thoughts of harming yourself or others.



We rely upon the generosity of our donors to help us provide support to families who've suffered the death of a child. These gifts help cover expenses and, most importantly, to reach out to newly bereaved families in the community. Thank you to the following for your generous donations:

Tom and Linda Harkness
Louise Finch
Mary Mozingo
Marlene Brumbaugh
Don & Carol Hakenson
Kathie Kelly
Patty Ray
Cynthia Williams
Sharon Austin



Bev & Dave Coffie
Christa Coleman
Miriam Alger

Melody Ridgeway
Betty Ridgeway
Diane Fulton
Glen & Linda Nielson
Ralph & Millie Mirabel
Angie Neel
Rhonda Elsmore
Gay Shelby
Carol Bryant

How to Cope with Bereavement During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Grieving the loss of a loved one may be especially challenging right now.

Jason Spindelov Ph.D., Psychology Today, Apr 07, 2020

Bereavement is a painful, stressful, and difficult journey at the best of times. But grieving the loss of a loved one may be especially challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Why Does the Pandemic Create Additional Strain for the Bereaved?

We live in highly uncertain times, and we are surrounded by fear, anxiety, and illness. But this pandemic will be especially stressful if already grieving the loss of a loved one. Some of the reasons for increased stress may include:

- Being less able to receive in-person support from friends and family, potentially leading to a greater sense of isolation and loneliness.
- A decrease in activity levels which may lead to more "thinking" time and a reduced ability to use hobbies and interests as helpful distractions.
- High levels of social, health, and occupational uncertainty, reducing stability in life as you grieve, which can create difficulty planning for the future.
- More frequent reminders about illness and death, including the fear that you will experience further loss.



There will be other stressful factors but, as we can see, the coping resources of a bereaved person are under severe strain in the context of the pandemic. You must have a clear game plan to help manage the additional challenges caused by COVID-19.

Coping Strategies

Here are some suggestions to help support your well-being while grieving during the pandemic:

- Acknowledge that grieving at this time is more challenging than coping with loss outside a health crisis. You have additional sources of stress to contend with, so you must practice self-compassion. Signs of self-criticism might come in the form of beliefs like "I should be doing better than this" or "I am failing to keep it together." Failing to acknowledge the additional stress associated with the pandemic runs the risk of blaming yourself for something that is out of your control.
- Staying connected to others is very important if you are grieving AND socially isolated. Often we don't feel like talking to others after losing a loved one. If you lack this motivation, try to book times for phone calls and video chats. Arrange these conversations as appointments you must keep. Agree on times with people in advance so you are more likely to follow through.
- Alternate between "loss" and "restorative" activities. This idea comes from the dual-process approach to grief which says that people move between loss-related activities (e.g., looking at photos of the deceased, crying, talking about the person) and restorative exercises (e.g., making plans for the future, spending time on hobbies).
- Consider minimizing the time you spend watching the news. It is sensible to be aware of major announcements by government and health officials. Outside of that, don't watch the news if it increases your stress levels.

You might find it useful to think about how your lost loved one would like you to respond in these circumstances. You can use this exercise to help generate coping strategies.

Alternatively, if you could talk to this person in 10 years, what would you like to say about how you coped during the pandemic? These final two strategies may not suit everyone, so only use them if they are right for you.

Summing Up

Everyone is living under difficult and stressful circumstances. The pandemic will be especially challenging for the bereaved. Having a clear coping plan is essential, and some of the strategies suggested above may form a part of that plan.



We Remember Our Children

Who have Birthdays and Death Dates in May and June

Zaria Jasmyn Nevaen Agee	1/28/04 ~ 6/09/19	Daniel Franklin Houston	8/10/68 ~ 6/13/16
Charles (CJ) Angelos, Jr	5/28/85 ~ 11/18/06	Ethan Humphrey	6/23/16 ~ 7/22/16
Zachary William Arnold	9/23/84 ~ 5/11/14	Adrienne Leigh Ingram	6/25/79 ~ 12/2/07
Mielen Garlit Arquines	12/01/68 ~ 6/04/08	Derrick V. James	6/01/74 ~ 5/28/05
William Bruce Austin II	5/11/84 ~ 4/10/18	Rasheem Kuwan Jenkins	5/04/82 ~ 9/09/09
Brandon Scott Bailey	6/21/79 ~ 5/31/99	Kashif Johnson	3/15/87 ~ 5/01/07
James "Jimmy" Barnette	7/11/98 ~ 6/03/06	Robert Andrew Larson	3/14/94 ~ 6/30/10
Donald "Donnie" Barrett	5/14/76 ~ 5/03/02	Nicole Michelle Lee	6/22/89 ~ 1/26/08
Kimberly Ann Barrett	9/08/86 ~ 5/04/02	Robert Loiseau	8/22/72 ~ 5/27/93
Jamie William Billek	6/25/06 ~ 6/25/06	Robert Henry Maples	6/07/76 ~ 7/05/18
Joseph Brendan Birkebile	6/26/89 ~ 1/11/11	Ian Patrick McDonald	5/05/89 ~ 1/12/15
Parker Evan Boyd	9/15/98 ~ 6/04/08	Christian Paul Norman	2/04/85 ~ 6/03/01
Brian Brumbaugh	11/09/83 ~ 5/02/07	Josephine Pennefather	6/21/03 ~
Brandon Bundy	5/19/84 ~ 8/24/08	Timothy Michael John Peyton	6/13/68 ~ 2/09/17
Cole James Clark	5/11/13 ~ 5/15/17	Vernon Santmyer, Jr.	8/24/79 ~ 5/17/11
Baby Combo	5/08/16 ~ 5/08/16	Courtney Sharee Shelby	11/23/93 ~ 5/14/01
Brandon DeWulf	6/20/85 ~ 6/29/09	Mark Alexander Slough	6/26/96 ~ 10/08/15
Corey Martin Dill	7/25/90 ~ 5/03/07	Colby Thomas Smith	5/25/04 ~ 10/11/15
David John Drumheller	8/30/89 ~ 6/20/16	Adam Charles Sorge	5/12/94 ~ 1/04/14
Raven Gileau	6/23/90 ~ 4/23/10	Kevin Michael Stanphill	3/12/80 ~ 5/09/09
Jacob Charles Glushefski	5/23/77 ~ 2/21/11	Michael "Ryan" Stevens	7/07/87 ~ 5/30/07
Dwayne Eddie Gonsorcik	5/26/74 ~ 4/26/13	Beckett Josef TePaske	4/04/12 ~ 5/12/15
Christina Gordon	5/08/13 ~ 5/08/13	Christopher Andre' Waters Jr	5/31/97 ~ 12/23/07
John Gregory	9/21/73 ~ 6/03/13	Josh Weaver	6/17/82 ~ 9/09/09
Kourtney Michelle Hale	5/29/80 ~ 3/14/10	Kyle Robert Wilson	5/25/82 ~ 4/16/07
Gabrielle Nicole Henderson	5/28/86 ~ 6/17/99	Tommie J. Wonnun III	6/14/84 ~ 6/30/03
Olivia Rose Cecilia Henry	5/27/02 ~ 5/26/12	Franklin Conner Woodward	5/15/08 ~ 5/17/08
Desmend Holmes	6/16/06 ~ 7/21/15	Stephen Wesley Wright	6/06/89 ~ 11/21/13
Quincy Holmes	5/18/05 ~ 7/20/15		

We apologize if there are any mistakes in the "We Remember Our Children" section. If we spelled any names incorrectly, have any dates incorrect or your child's name is not listed and has a birthday or death date during the months of May and June, please provide us with your child's information so they can be included correctly in future newsletters

Bereaved Parents of the USA Credo

We are the parents whose children have died. We are the siblings whose brothers and sisters no longer walk with us through life. We are the grandparents who have buried grandchildren.

We come together as Bereaved Parents of the USA to provide a safe space where grieving families can connect, share our stories, and learn to rebuild our lives.

We attend meetings whenever we can and for as long as we find helpful. We share our fears, confusion, anger, guilt, frustrations, emptiness, and feelings of hopelessness, knowing these emotions will be met with compassion and understanding. As we support, comfort and encourage one another, we offer hope and healing. As we confront the deaths of our loved ones, our shared grief brings us to a common ground that transcends differences, building mutual understanding across the boundaries of culture, race, faith, values, abilities, and lifestyle.

Together we celebrate the lives of our children, siblings, and grandchildren, sharing the joys and the heartbreaks as well as the love that will never fade. Together, strengthened by the bonds we create, we offer what we have learned from one another to every bereaved family, no matter how recent or long ago the death.

We are the Bereaved Parents of the USA. We welcome you.

Chapter Contact Information:

Jodi Norman, Leader
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bpusanova@gmail.com



Bereaved Parents of the USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Someone Cares About You

If you are receiving this newsletter and have never attended one of our meetings, it is because someone who cares about you feels that our newsletter may help you on your journey through grief. We're sorry for the reason you are receiving this newsletter but invite you to attend our monthly meetings. We cannot take away your pain but we can offer friendship and support.



Attention: If you do not wish to continue to receive this newsletter or be on our mailing list, please let us know by mailing back the address label from this newsletter, by emailing bleachermom2000@aol.com or calling Jodi at 703-656-6999.

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