



SURVIVORS

after suicide A Program of Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center

JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2005 • VOLUME 18, NO. 3 • PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

Dear Ed

Rick Mogil
Studio City, CA

So, how's it goin', dear brother?

Have you run into our grandparents, Papa, Zayde, Mama or Bubbe? Has Uncle Sol or Aunt Essie looked you up? What about Taco, your iguana, or Coffee, our dachshund?

I hope things are easier for you now.

I don't quite know how to continue this letter.

I know I can't mail or fax it to you, but maybe you are here looking over my shoulder and reading this as I type.

There are a lot of things I've wanted to say to you over the past 21 months since you completed your suicide. I wanted to tell you how angry I was at first, *continued on page 2*

SAVE THE DATES

SAS Annual Summer Potluck

SATURDAY, JULY 23, 2005 • 11:30 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.

All survivors are cordially invited to enjoy a culinary feast and to learn about films, books, and techniques that will help them continue to heal. Description, RSVP, page 7

Alive & Running for Suicide Prevention 5K/10K

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2005

See Calendar of Upcoming Events, page 6

Beauty and Death: The Golden Gate

John Bateson
Executive Director,
Contra Costa Crisis Center

A documentary filmmaker spent the past year secretly filming people jumping to their deaths from the Golden Gate Bridge. His work brought attention to the fact that the bridge is

the strongest suicide magnet in the world. It also may lead to a suicide barrier, which many people feel is overdue.

Since the Golden Gate Bridge opened in 1937, there have been 1,300 documented suicides. The real number undoubtedly is higher since some bodies were never recovered.

The people who jumped have left *continued on page 3*

Didi Hirsch's Ninth Annual Erasing the Stigma Leadership Awards



Terry Bradshaw



John Head



Larry King

More than 500 people attended Didi Hirsch's Ninth Annual Erasing the Stigma Leadership Awards, held on Friday, May 13, 2005, at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. Each year, the honorees share a sense of *continued on page 5*



Meet Lyn Morris:

Didi Hirsch's New Division Director of Emergency Services and Suicide Prevention Center

For more than nine years, Lyn Morris, L.M.F.T., has been actively involved in the community Didi Hirsch serves. Most recently, Lyn directed the Adult Services programs at the Culver-Palms center, overseeing client services and staff, monitoring program effectiveness, and developing new services as needed. In April, Lyn returned from maternity leave to begin her directorship of the agency's Emergency Services Division. Lyn now oversees the Suicide Prevention Center's 24-hour Crisis Line, the Survivors After Suicide program, the Suicide Response Team, the Centralized Intake Department, and the Minority Outreach program. In addition to these new responsibilities, Lyn and her husband, Corey, are celebrating parenthood with the birth of their first child, Brandon. *Welcome Lyn, and congratulations!* ☺

SAS exists to help people resolve their grief and pain in their own personal way, and to help them move forward in their lives, positively and productively.



Tom Rankin, J.D., M.A.

Tom's Column

The annual co-facilitator and telephone support counselor training went off without a hitch in early April. Twenty volunteers were trained and about fifteen experienced therapists and survivors assisted with the training. Including staff, almost forty people spent their entire Saturday trying to help each other become better able to guide survivors through the early stages of grieving.

For me, it was a day of public speaking, coordinating, and running around between the four role-play groups to make sure everything was on track. Though I lectured for a couple of hours, that left six hours in which I played a merely managerial role. In other words, I was peripheral. Or perhaps superfluous.

There are those who would claim that good management is deeply important, and part of the reason the day went so well was that I was crucial in making the wheels of SAS turn smoothly and blah blah blah.... Nonsense. The bottom line is that it was *you* who made the day work: the

therapists who lent their years of clinical experience, the co-facilitators and telephone support counselors who shared their insights, and the survivors being trained who put themselves on the spot in front of their peers.

That is the lesson that I am perpetually being reminded of as I advance in my tenure as SAS Coordinator. There is a cadre of committed volunteers and therapists who consistently give of themselves to make the program function well. To those individuals—you know who you are—I give my heartfelt gratitude. Every time I walked into a role-play during training and saw competent, caring people sharing their wisdom, I felt relieved and reassured, not least since it was my new boss's first day of seeing me "work."

Welcome, Lyn, but be advised that in actuality it was the dedication of everyone who is actively involved in SAS that was at work. Needless to say, she was delighted. Thank you all for confusing her into believing that I'm good at my job.

Tom ✨

Tom Rankin serves as the Coordinator of the Survivors After Suicide Program and as Suicide Prevention Educator. He can be reached at 310.751.5370.

Dear Ed continued from page 1

that you could do this to our family, to your wife, daughters and grandchildren. What were you thinking? How could you be so selfish and self-centered? I was wound tight, ready to lash out at the first person or thing that got in my way. I wanted to hurt someone so they would know what I felt. But I knew you didn't do this to any of us. You did it to yourself. It was the only way you could deal with the black hole you had been sucked into.

Then I wanted to tell you how grief-stricken I was, knowing I would never see you again, hear your voice or share family milestones. How I thought you had such courage to do what you had done and that I could not find the inner strength to carry out such a complete eradication of all my pains, sorrows and fears. I am resigned to continue carrying my load of crap but I hold on to the things I look forward to (grandchildren, growing old with Maggie, seeing places I've always wanted to see).

And the guilt? Let me tell you. I wondered where I went wrong. Why didn't I see this coming? Actually I did. I just thought you would drink yourself into oblivion and die in a traffic accident or of liver disease.

Could I have stopped you? Cured you? Helped you? Who knows? You were on the path of self destruction and I now know that I probably could not have changed the ending.

Probably, but I will always feel some measure of guilt.

Damn it, Ed! This is a real shitty place to be.

So, tell me, what was it like? Did you look down the barrel and see the bullet? Did you point the gun under your chin, place it against your temple or into your mouth? Did you feel any pain in that instant after the blinding light of detonation? I really don't want to know the answers. That's why I wouldn't even ask Elda or Barry the point of entry or what you looked like when you were found. I'd rather know what your last thought was as you felt the pressure of your finger pulling the trigger back. Was it of Elda and the kids, mom and dad, your brothers? Or just relief?

I was really frightened that I could follow the same path. We both had the same low self esteem issues growing up although yours were harder to come to grips with. I have been to the bottom of the pit and have thought of dying but never by my own hand. It was always a fortuitous plane crash or careening city bus that would take me out. But I would always look up and see light filtering down through the darkness and I would climb toward it, sometimes sliding back two handholds for every one up.

I am also afraid someone else in our family could take the same path. Statistics have shown that survivors are at greater risk for suicide than the general population, and I look at our brothers and their children and

continued on page 4

The Golden Gate *continued from page 1*

behind children, spouses, partners, parents, siblings, friends, and other loved ones. Whenever these individuals see the bridge in a picture or movie, they don't see what the rest of us see, a magnificent span. They see heartache and despair.

Recently, bridge directors voted to reconsider plans for a barrier. It's needed because the railing is only four feet high and easily accessible.

Opponents claim that a barrier would be unsightly. Replies Eve Meyer, executive director of San Francisco Suicide Prevention, "What's truly unsightly, that haunts anyone who sees it, is a body lying broken on the rocks, that doesn't make the water."

Another concern is the cost, perhaps \$15 million. Yet the district spent \$5 million on a barrier separating bicyclists from auto traffic, even though no cyclist has ever been killed on the bridge, and approved \$10 million for a median to prevent head-on collisions, even though fewer than 40 people have died from traffic accidents there.

Until 1993, the Prince Edward Viaduct in Toronto had no suicide barrier. Nearly 500 people have jumped to their deaths. Then a "luminous veil" of stainless steel rods was constructed above the railing. Today, there are no deaths from that location.

Suicide is often an impulsive act. Eliminating the means can deter someone from attempting it. A 1970s study of the 515 people who were stopped from jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge found that 90 percent did not end up dying by suicide.

John Kevin Hines was 18. Life was impossible, he thought. He hurled himself off the bridge.

"The moment I jumped, I wanted to live," he says.

He was lucky. He broke his back but was one of only 26 jumpers to survive the fall.

Psychologists, police, the Coast Guard, and grieving families have pleaded for years for a suicide barrier. It's tragic, they say, that one of the wonders of the world isn't safe for distraught, confused, and mentally ill individuals who find it an irresistible site for death. Bridge directors may, at last, be ready to agree. ♡

Reprinted with permission from the spring 2005 issue of 24-7, a quarterly newsletter of the Contra Costa Crisis Center.

The wise healer endures the pain. Cry. Tears bring joy.

—ERYKAH BADU

Just outside the heart of every survivor exists a barb that your words can set in motion with a twang to reopen.

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

The Gift

*A gift, I'm told, you've left behind,
That I must seek and find;
But pain too deep, and missing you
Have blocked my open mind.*

—Iris Bolton, from "The Suicide of My Son," ©1977

The idea of any gifts arising from our grief may have seemed inconceivable at first, but with time, our gifts are revealed. Later in Iris's poem, we discover that the music her son composed became her gift. Anne Langdon's son, Andrew, died by suicide on October 18, 2000. She shares her thoughts on the distinction between gifts and opportunities:

When I first heard the words "The Gift" in a survivor group relating to surviving a loved one's suicide, I found the words and the concept jarring and I thought way too premature. This was just weeks/months since the death at his own hand of my beautiful son, Andrew, who was 13 years, 7 months and 22 days old when he died.

Anne Langdon *Los Angeles/Hancock Park, California*

My husband and I asked the group facilitator if he could use a different word in reference to what we might potentially experience following what has to be the most devastating event lived by a parent. We suggested that perhaps opportunity could be substituted for the word/concept of gift.

In the 4 1/2 years since the death of my only child, I have felt blessed for what I consider the gifts and worked very earnestly to navigate a course that allowed me to perceive what might be an opportunity or a chance. For me, there is a difference.

A gift to me has a somewhat passive aspect—I did not necessarily do anything to have been the beneficiary of the "gift". A gift comes without a price tag. There could be no higher price than the death of a loved one.

By my own perspective, the gifts I have found along this journey are friends—my friends and their willingness to travel with me on this torturous road of grieving and mourning, their recognition that such tragedy must be borne by community (it's just too big to carry alone); and my son's friends who continued and still continue to love and honor my son because of how he lived his life. They did not feel the need to alter what they knew of him by how his life ended. Additionally, I will be forever grateful to a neighborhood Catholic priest who visited our home (we were not Catholics) because he thought we should know that the community was praying for and caring about us.

In contrast, the opportunities: I believe that recognizing that something "good" could come from something "bad" has an active component. If ever there was a fork in the road, the suicide of a loved one is that juncture. *continued on page 4*

The Gift *continued from page 3*

This could be the time that I would choose to inhabit a diminished, dark, small place of limitation where everything is tinged with bitterness. Another possibility could be to go in a more light-filled direction. To grow around the space my son occupies in my head and my heart—he would forever remain in me not to be reduced or compacted or minimized but that I would expand around that place. Not to move on or have closure or something that requires him to fade, but that I would grow around him where he would live for eternity in his home in me reserved only for him—the holy place, my soul, where he dwells.

The need to balance this kind of loss calls for one's expansion—that expansion is the opportunity. In whatever direction expanding or enlarging takes us—intellectually, emotionally, in community, spiritually—it is our growth in direct relationship to our experiencing suicide. However, this opportunity for growth has come at the highest price. The process of expansion will take great courage, intention and work to begin and to continue probably for the rest of our lives. From this path of expansion, I have derived insight into many areas.

My husband supported my traveling to both out-of-state and local conferences/seminars, attendance at a number of support groups, many trips to our downtown public library, endless hours of research on the internet, and the compiling of an extensive “library” on mental health issues. The areas I found specific to my loss were the subjects of suicide, depression, anxiety, psychiatric drugs, adolescence, death in our culture and other cultures. By pursuing these topics, I have some understanding of what happened with Andrew and how it happened, which has brought a measure of peace and

Dear Ed *continued from page 2*

worry that every little setback or social snub, or less than perfect score could be the precursor of their spiral into manic depression.

So, Ed. What do I do? How do I deal with the darkness and despair? How do I hold the guilt at bay? How do I keep going forward one step at a time?

Oh, yeah. One step at a time.

I have Maggie to keep me sane, grounded and laughing. I have Adam and Debbie and my grandson Russell (God, I wish you could have lived to see him) to give me purpose and joy. I have our family to keep me guessing and interested. And I have Survivors After Suicide to keep me involved and to continue my healing.

So what's missing?

You, DAMN IT!

Your loving Big Brother,

Rick ✨

enlightenment for me.

My growth has allowed me greater understanding of the mental health field and psychiatric drugs. I am able to appreciate the discernable differences in providers of mental health services, and as far as psychiatric drugs go, the risk-benefit ratio that must guide the use of such powerful substances. I believe I have been very helpful to my friends who have children struggling with psychological issues.

My growth has allowed me to know that grieving and mourning are the natural human response to loss—they are not pathological. I am more aware of how loss of many kinds affects everyone, and most of all the recognition that tragedy is a universal theme and visits so many of us. I feel more connected to people in general because I can appreciate their sense of loss.

While writing this piece, I remembered that only hours after the death of our son we were requested to write a statement that would be shared with the school population. We wrote:

“It is with profound sorrow that we inform you of the death of our beloved son Andrew. In an impulsive moment that he did not fully understand he ended his life. It is hard to make sense of the senseless. We ask for your prayers and will trust in our faith in God. *We will forever cherish the unique and wonderful gift of Andrew.*”

For me it is the people in our lives that are the gifts. Opportunity is afforded us through this dark passage of suicide, but we must find the strength and have intention to address the areas that will expand and help our lives and hopefully help the lives of others. ✨

Lifekeepers Memory Quilt

You can share your pictures and sentiments by dedicating a square in the Lifekeepers Memory Quilt, offering the image of your loved one. A \$20 fee covers the cost of material, labor and postage necessary to create your visual tribute. You will receive a cotton square and instructions on how to proceed.

Yes, I want to create a quilt square to honor:

Send the material and instructions to me:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

E-mail: _____

Enclosed is my \$20 check or money order made out to Mary Halligan to cover the cost of material, labor and postage.

Mail to:

Mary Halligan, 21422 Grant Ave., Torrance, CA 90503
or call Mary at 310-316-4392 for information.

Grief must be expressed—without the aid of alcohol, drugs

When Joanne and Bob (not their real names) came to the Center for Grief in St. Paul, Minn., after their daughter's death, they were paralyzed by loss. They couldn't sleep

or work, and their relationship was eroding.

"We also quickly discovered they were attempting to anesthetize their pain by drinking it away," said Tom Ellis, the nonprofit center's executive director and the author of an upcoming book, *The Heart of Grief: New Understandings of Loss*. "They had adopted the ritual of consuming several bottles of wine with dinner and would come to therapy exhausted, overwhelmed, and 'stuck' in the grieving process. Before we could deal with issues of loss, they needed to deal with their chemical dependency. They needed to 'clear the channels' to feeling."

"Having feelings that match reality is a sign of mental health," said John Mac Dougall, manager of Spiritual Care and the Family Program at Hazelden. "Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., said, 'I tried to drown my sorrows, but they floated.' Drugs and alcohol suppress, distort and interfere with all feelings, including grief. Whenever you have to do something painful, it's better to do it sober so the 'real you' can show up at your appointments."

Mac Dougall maintains that our bodies are not well designed for the storage of feelings, but they are well designed for the expression of feelings. Grief doesn't go away, and the longer it is denied, the more powerful it can become. Mac Dougall said that trying to ignore loss is like throwing an overdue bill in a drawer. "The problem doesn't disappear. It grows bigger as the interest accumulates."

Mac Dougall and Ellis concur that having a solid support system is critical for grieving persons. While talking to friends and family can be comforting, it may be more helpful to connect with your mutual-help group, a qualified therapist or counselor, or a spiritual advisor when you experience deep loss.

"Most people discover that their address book changes as they attempt to navigate the grief process," said Ellis. "There is often an expectation that family and close friends should understand or share the same feelings, and a deep disappointment when that isn't the case. Talk to someone who has a background that pertains to your issues, someone with whom you can be honest and vulnerable and who will not judge you or your way of grieving."

"Some friends send 'shut up' messages framed as support," cautioned Mac Dougall. When well-meaning friends tell you "your husband wouldn't want you to be so sad," or "at least you can have another baby," they are really saying 'I

want you to move on; your grief makes me anxious.'"

Sometimes family members insist that a grieving elderly relative take medications to "get them through" the difficult times after the death of a loved one. These drugs may make the family feel better, because they won't have to see Mom or Grandpa hurting. But anything that separates us from reality is not helpful in the long run, said Mac Dougall. Often, they just need someone to talk to. While a sleep aid may be appropriate for the first night or two, it is particularly dangerous for chemically dependent people to medicate their emotional pain, because it can put their sobriety at risk, he said.

No one is immune to grief and loss, so Mac Dougall said it makes sense to put strategies in place now that will protect us when loss does hit. Start thinking about how to nurture friendships so you can talk about 'real life' issues when you need to, he said. Learn what community resources are available in case you or a loved one

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Erasing the Stigma Leadership Awards from page 1

purpose in letting the world know that mental illness is as common as diabetes and heart disease and that effective treatment exists.

Terry Bradshaw was one of three Leadership Award recipients this year. Terry spoke candidly, even enthusiastically, about discovering that the unexplainable anxiety attacks, mood swings, and bouts of depression he experienced in college and during his career with the Steelers could be helped. He addressed the stigma that keeps men from talking openly about mental illness, saying, "I'm proud to be the whipping boy for all those macho guys who won't talk about it." Bradshaw earned four Super Bowl rings during his history with the NFL.

John Head, who also suffers from depression and is not shy when it comes to speaking about it, has been a journalist for the *Detroit Free Press*, *USA TODAY*, and the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. He has written several books and was selected for the 1999-2000 Rosalynn Carter Mental Health Journalism Fellowship, during which he wrote about mental health for the *Journal-Constitution*. Currently, he is a member of the Advisory Board of the Rosalynn Carter Mental Health Journalism Fellowship Program and the Board of Trustees for the Atlanta Foundation for Psychoanalysis.

Larry King was honored for his commitment in making a difference to so many lives by helping to take away the stigma of mental health and many other disabilities. Larry has interviewed many famous people such as Tipper Gore and Patty Duke who openly discussed their mental illnesses on his show, CNN's *Larry King Live*. Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center is proud to honor each of these fine men with the 2005 Erasing the Stigma Leadership Award. ♡

Contributions 2/1/05 - 4/30/05:

A million thanks for your generosity!

IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

Beth Gallamore from Nancy Walsh
Brett Newman from Josephine Pete
Carolyn Kanno from Sue and John Kanno
Daniel from Martha and Adolfo Soria
Darwin Freeman from Barbara Freeman
Harold Leichhardt from Melinda Pike
Janie Phear from Nina and James Brown
Joshua Erman from Andrew Erman
Joshua Korkowski from Sandra Hughes
Karen Raiford from Lisa and Nick Rail, Mrs. Lee Voegtlen
Katrina Schibig from Nicolas Gennoau
A friend from Robin Fuld

Grief must be expressed

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should need such services in the future. And if you are in recovery from addiction, be certain your physician, dentist, and pharmacist know it so they won't prescribe anything that threatens your sobriety.

We grieve because we love, and when we attempt to numb our grief with alcohol or drugs, we also dull our ability to feel love and joy. Grief is a messy, imperfect, and non-linear process with no rules or time limits. Honoring our grief is a way to honor ourselves. We

don't have to do it perfectly, and we don't have to do it alone. ♡



Reprinted with permission from the April 18, 2005 column of Alive & Free, a health column that offers information to help prevent and address addiction and substance abuse problems. It is provided by Hazelden, a nonprofit agency based in Center City, Minn., that offers a wide range of information and services on addiction and recovery. For more resources, call Hazelden at 1-800-257-7800 or check its Web site at www.hazelden.org. Direct your inquiries to mduda@hazelden.org.

Book and Movie Recommendations

See the latest recommendations at www.suicidpreventioncenter.org. Click on "Lost A Loved One?" then "Recommended Resources."

Help SAS reduce postage—receive potluck invitations and other announcements via email. Please send an email with your full name and SAS Newsletter in the subject to jbaas@didihsch.org

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, 90% of all people who die by suicide have a diagnosable psychiatric disorder at the time of their death.

Survivors After Suicide is privately funded by generous contributions from individual donors, proceeds from the Alive & Running for Suicide Prevention 5K/10K, and grants from private foundations and corporations such as Daniel Freeman Community Trust.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

JULY 16-17, 2005

Out of the Darkness National Overnight Experience in Chicago

AFSP designed this national walk event to help raise awareness about depression and suicide. Go to www.afsp.org for online registration. To attend this event with others from Southern California, please contact Susan Celentano at 661.260.3119.

SATURDAY, JULY 23, 2005

SAS Annual Summer Potluck

11:30-2:00 p.m. at Didi Hirsch, 4760 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City. The quilts will be displayed.

AUGUST 17-21, 2005

The World Gathering on Bereavement

Vancouver, BC. Judy Collins, who lost her son to suicide, will be a keynote speaker. Several workshops on the subject of suicide will take place throughout the week. The Compassionate Friends plans to hold their 4th International Gathering there as well. See www.worldgathering.org

AUGUST 19-20, 2005

NAMI California Annual Conference

NAMI California's Annual Conference 2005 will be held at the Irvine Marriott in Irvine this

year. Our theme is "The Many Faces of NAMI California: We're All One Family". See www.namicalifornia.org

SEPTEMBER 4-10, 2005

National Suicide Prevention Week

See www.suicidology.org

SEPTEMBER 8-10, 2005

SPAN USA's National Awareness Event

This event is held each year in Washington, DC, to raise awareness about the toll of suicide and the need for suicide prevention initiatives. "Grassroots" suicide prevention advocates remember those lost to suicide, receive advocacy training, and visit members of Congress to educate them about suicide and suicide prevention. The Lifekeeper State Memory Quilts will be displayed. Register online at www.spanusa.org

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2005

World Suicide Prevention Day

See www.med.uio.no/iasp

SEPTEMBER 13-16, 2005

International Association for Suicide Prevention's 23rd World Congress

Durban, South Africa
See www.med.uio.no/iasp

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2005

Alive & Running for Suicide Prevention 5K/10K

Annual race to benefit Didi Hirsch's Suicide Prevention Center. See www.didihsch.org for more information, or call 310.751.5426.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2005

NOPCAS (National Organization for People of Color Against Suicide) and NAMI of Atlanta, GA

This one day conference on suicide and mental illness in minority communities is tentatively scheduled for October. Confirmation on the date and time will be announced shortly. See www.nopcas.com

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2005

7th Annual National Survivors of Suicide Day

Preparations have begun for this year's National Survivors of Suicide Day. See www.afsp.org, or call 1.888.333.2377.

APRIL 28 - MAY 1, 2006

American Association of Suicidology 39th Annual Conference

Seattle, Washington
See www.suicidology.org or call 1.202.237.2280.

Important Phone Numbers and Resources

HELP LINES

Suicide Prevention Center Crisis Line:

Toll free in LA County: 1.877.727.4747, 1.877.7CRISIS

Suicide Prevention Center Crisis Line:

Outside LA County: 1.310.391.1253

Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center:

1.310.390.6612

Trevor Helpline (Suicide Hotline for gay, lesbian, bisexual and questioning youth): 1.800.850.8078

National Suicide Prevention Crisis Line: 1.800.SUICIDE (800.784.2433), 24 hrs., connects with local certified help

New National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

1.800.273.TALK (8255). See www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

RESOURCES

AAS — American Association of Suicidology (professional training/education/research/prevent/survivors): 1.202.237.2280, www.suicidology.org

AFSP — American Foundation/Suicide Prevention (research & education): www.afsp.org, 1.888.333.2377

Compassionate Friends/South Bay, LA: 1.310.368.6845

Compassionate Friends, Inc. (parents grief): 1.630.990.0010 www.compassionatefriends.org — chat room 10am-11:00 pm

NAMI — National Alliance for Mentally Ill: www.nami.org 1.800.950.6264

NAMI-California: namicalifornia.org, 1.916.567.0163

NOPCAS — National Organization for People of Color Against Suicide, www.nopcas.com, 1.866.899.5317

SPAN-USA — Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network: www.spanusa.org, 1.202.449.3600

SPAN-California: www.span-california.org, 1.760.753.4565

SAVE — Suicide Awareness/Voices of Education (depression and suicide information): www.save.org, 952.946.7998

Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Project, Light for Life International: www.yellowribbon.org, 1.303.429.3530

SAS Annual Summer Potluck

**Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center
4760 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City, CA 90230**

SATURDAY, JULY 23, 2005 • 11:30 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.

The Summer Potluck will feature speakers who will educate survivors about the ways they can continue to heal after finishing an eight-week SAS group. Therapist and SAS group leader Susan Celentano, LMFT, will discuss a number of films that address the topic of suicide survivorship. Group leader and survivor Nina Gutin, Ph.D., will explain desensitization techniques that help survivors cope with intrusive images or painful memories. Debbie Pikul, SAS newsletter editor, and Rick Mogil, frequent newsletter contributor, will host a table full of wonderful books written about suicide survivorship, and will describe the most helpful books. Bibliographies of books and films will be freely available.

RSVP to Jessica Baas at (310) 751-5373 or jbaas@didihirsch.org; please bring a salad, entrée, or dessert to feed six.

INTERNET SUPPORT

www.suicidepreventioncenter.org: OUR WEBSITE, Survivors After Suicide newsletter, current issue

www.spanusa.org: helplines, prevention information and resources for mental health, etc.

www.span-california.org

www.sprc.org: to receive the Suicide Prevention Resource Center's online newsletter, go to www.sprc.org/thespark

www.bereavementmag.com: *Bereavement* magazine online

health.groups.yahoo.com/group/SurvivorsAfterSuicide: created by a member of our survivor community, this group can be used to post photos and chat with other survivors

www.friendsforsurvival.org: Friends for Survival, Inc., Sacramento, CA

www.1000deaths.com: SOLOS survivor support and suicide prevention

www.groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/parentsofsuicides: submit your email to join the mailing list

www.parentsofsuicide.com: support for parents of suicides

www.fiercegoodbye.com: based on the Hallmark documentary focusing on suicide survivors

www.nopcas.com: national organization for people of color against suicide

www.thetrevorproject.org: promotes tolerance for gay and questioning teenagers, aids in suicide prevention

www.yellowribbon.org: teen and youth suicide prevention

www.twotoomany.com: SAS Editor's website, lost two brothers to suicide

www.beforetheirtime.org: a musical resource to provide comfort to people after the death of someone close

www.siblingsurvivors.com: Michelle Linn-Gust's website

www.survivorsofsuicide.com: a website dedicated to those who have lost a loved one to suicide

www.nameastar.net: Name a Star's Memorial Star™ can be given as a memorial in remembrance of a loved one

www.nostigma.org: a public service campaign to educate the public about mental health issues and eradicate the fear, shame and stigma commonly associated with mental illness

www.suicidewall.com: honoring Vietnam Veterans

www.heartbeatsurvivorsaftersuicide.org: a peer support group offering empathy, encouragement and direction following the suicide of a loved one

www.friendsandfamiliesofsuicide.com: an international site for support

www.suicidememorialwall.com: a tribute to lost loved ones

www.suicidediscussionboard.com: open for the purpose of suicide awareness, support, and education

www.suicidereferencelibrary.com: provides helpful information to those who are involved in suicide awareness, grief support, and educational activities

www.med.uio.no/iasp: International Association for Suicide Prevention

www.webhealing.com: articles of interest

www.griefnet.org: grief support; a system that can connect you with various resources

REPRINT POLICY

You are welcome to reprint material from our newsletter if you are a nonprofit support organization that produces periodicals. We do require the item include the author's name and title and the following:

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Also include the issue date and year the article appeared. Kindly send us a copy of any reprints for our authors to the attention of Deborah Pikul, Editor. Thank you.

SAS Monthly Meetings

Everyone who has completed an eight-week Survivors After Suicide Support Group is invited to attend monthly meetings at any of the locations listed below. There is no charge.

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

Sherman Oaks Hospital, 4929 Van Nuys Blvd., Sherman Oaks. Meetings are held in the doctor's dining room on the 1st floor.

2nd Saturday 11:30 am – 1:00 pm.

Meeting dates: **Jul 9 Aug 13 Sep 10 Oct 8**

SOUTH BAY

Little Company of Mary Hospital, Center for Health Education Building, Earl Street, Torrance. Please check the bulletin board inside door for meeting room. **3rd Monday 7:30 – 9:00 pm.**

Meeting dates: **Jul 18 Aug 15 Sep 19 Oct 17**

WEST LA

Didi Hirsch Culver-Palms Center, 11133 Washington Blvd., Culver City, 1 block east of Sepulveda on the north side of the street.

3rd Wednesday 7:00 – 8:30 pm.

Meeting dates: **Jul 20 Aug 17 Sep 21 Oct 19**

View this newsletter online at www.suicidepreventioncenter.org.
Click on *Lost a Loved One?*

SURVIVORS AFTER SUICIDE NEWSLETTER

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4760 S. Sepulveda Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90230
(310) 751-5324

SAS Program Number:
(310) 751-5370

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(310) 391-1253

Editor: Deborah Pikul
(sasnews@earthlink.net)

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SAS-SPC
4760 S. SEPULVEDA BLVD.
CULVER CITY, CA 90230

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