



# SURVIVORS

**after suicide**

A Program of Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center

JANUARY/FEBRUARY/MARCH 2003 • VOLUME 16, NO. 1 • PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

## The Sibling— The Forgotten Survivor?

Iris Bolton

Siblings...hear ye...hear ye! Calling all siblings to find your voice! Other siblings need to hear from you... about how you survived the tragedy of your brother's or sister's death. All too often when the trauma of suicide occurs, friends and family are so concerned with the parents of the "child" (of any age) that siblings are often ignored. Your experience needs to be understood, your feelings honored and your experience respected.

Years ago when Compassionate Friends, an organization for bereaved parents, was started in this country there was no identified support for siblings. As youth were encouraged to speak about their pain, a whole new track developed at the annual conferences...just for siblings. Everyone benefited and a difference was made in the world as brothers and sisters taught us about their experience of the suicide of their sibling.

The issue of self-inflicted death is finally out of the closet and there is national and international awareness of the problem today. There is a focus on suicide prevention and on helping family members and friends deal with this

tragedy. Not much has been written about how a sibling is impacted by this event and other siblings seem to really want to read what others have written. A shared experience can benefit everyone.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SUICIDOLOGY

## Plan Now for Santa Fe!

**The Annual AAS Conference**

will be held at the  
**Lafonda Hotel and Hotel Loretto  
in Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**APRIL 23 THROUGH 26, 2003**

*The Healing Conference for survivors will take place on  
Saturday, April 26 — the final day of the conference.*

[www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org) • (202) 237-2280

So The Link's National Resource Center is putting out a call for articles, poems or writings. Take a look at Michelle Linn-Gust's new book *Do They Have Bad Days in Heaven?* about the suicide of her sister, and maybe that will inspire you. You now have an opportunity to share your experience

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## Remembering Mom

Karen Valby

When I was 18 years old, my mother, who'd long fought off the pull of manic depression, cut her wrists and took a bottle of pills. I was a freshman in college, several states away. Violent news like this does not come easily. The family gathered, beaten up and dumb in her ugly absence, then quickly retreated to our safer, scattered corners. There were messy bursts of tears—in class, in a store, at a bar—during those first few months. And then I said "Enough." I cursed her for leaving us and gave myself over to an angry numbness that 10 years later has only begun to lift.

She chose this, I told myself. It wasn't cancer or a car accident that got her. It was will. And the legacy she left was large.

I ratcheted up all the awful episodes, all the repercussions she left in her wake. Her suicide may have triggered my brother's own battles with depression. And there's my poor grandmother, who has never recovered from finding her only daughter dead in the afternoon. And me, a young woman left alone, terrified that I too was doomed to end up sad and desperate like my mother. The blame flew. I grieved for all us brave survivors, and preached the message of moving on and away. It shames me to admit it, but I hated her. I really did.

A professor, one of the many older women I've since sought out as mentors, once told me that you leave your childhood behind the moment you realize your parents are also people, more than mere extensions of yourself. I am no longer

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**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.**

## The SAS Coordinator's Column



Carole Chasin, M.A., M.F.T.

Our annual Holiday Potluck was a delightful evening. **Debbie Pikul, Susan Celentano, Becky Jordan, Jim Gilmore, James Barrett, Ester Bryant, Lois Bloom, Louis Medina, Loretta Uriarte, Rosalind Lee, Joanne Curry, Mary Gayman and Chona Herrella** all contributed to

make this an event to remember through their generosity, creativity, warmth and sensitivity. Our potlucks provide an

opportunity to share stories, tears, laughs, meet new people, and reconnect with established relationships from prior support groups.

We are now successfully past the holidays and into the New Year. Our program will be offering a training within the first quarter of the year for survivors who are interested in volunteering to co-facilitate our support groups and/or provide telephone counseling to survivors that are waiting to begin a group. Please call me at **(310) 751-5370** for information or enrollment in the training.

*My best wishes to all for a Peaceful and Healthy New Year.*  
Carole ✦

## After A Suicide

Judy Arena Purcell  
Metairie, Louisiana

*These are my personal reflections, thoughts, and emotions put into words after the suicide of my brother, Gary Arena, on January 29, 1998. It is my hope that these*

*expressions will bring some comfort to those grieving a similar loss, and the knowledge that we are not alone as we continue on this journey through grief.*

Shock... Disbelief...  
Confusion...  
Chaos... Anger...  
Guilt... Grief...

A primal scream. Why? What if...? The endless cycle of unanswerable questions. "Why?" is now an eternal question, one with no answer in this life, perhaps none in the next. What terrible despair, rage, loneliness, pain did he feel at the end? Can we ever know? Did we leave him before he left us? Did he leave us long ago?

Knife-sharp pain of seeing the grief on the faces of loved ones, and rage—at self, at him, at God, at the unexplainable, at anyone, everyone, no one, at everything and nothing. Nothing to blame. From devastation to depression, a frightening desert wasteland.

Disorientation...  
Disorganization...  
Vulnerability...

Intense emotions—much more than after any other death. Tornado emotions, whirlwinds of feelings touching down at unexpected times and places, sometimes bringing destruction, sometimes not. Roller coaster emotions, up and down, chang-

ing moment by moment. Aftershocks; will they never end? Crying, not crying, crying again. Yet another cycle. All so damned yin-yang. Loss and loneliness. For a time, not caring about what goes on in the world.

Enormous sadness and grief. Then discovering ever-deeper layers. Being torn up by the very roots. Times of feelings worse, not better. Not wanting to do, see, think, go, talk, be. Healing will take forever. Wanting the company of my brother more than anyone else. Wanting to re-set the clock back to the way things were, but knowing things were not what they should have been or "this" would not have happened.

The need to know every tiny detail. The need to tell the story. Or not tell. The need to know, to understand, but realizing there will never be knowing or understanding. The need to isolate oneself, a self-defense mechanism in order to heal.

The need for a friend...  
The need to be needy...  
The need to grieve...

Suicide screams out its need. Suicide affects generations to come, rippling the water like a stone thrown into the sea. Suicide is a hole ripped in the fabric of life, of the universe, of time, of eternity. Surely God's heart is broken, too.

More thoughts of death than of life, including one's own. Major life changes for the survivors. Nothing will ever be the same—nothing should. Forced change, inevitable perhaps. What the mind thinks at war with what the heart believes. Questioning every belief, every tenet, every hope. Missing the touch, the smell, the nearness...

He has left us pain, sorrow, and vulnerability. His small child will not remember him, and he has left her most vulnerable of all. She will be affected in ways we cannot yet imagine. He should not have died before his parents, leaving them a legacy of grief in their aging years. We can no longer journey

*continued on page 4*

# Grief After Suicide

- Know that you can survive. Though you may feel you cannot survive, you can.
- The intense feelings of grief can be overwhelming and frightening. This is normal. You are not going crazy; you are grieving.
- You may experience feelings of guilt, confusion, and anger, even fear. These are all common responses to grief.
- You may even have thoughts of suicide. This, too, is common. It does not mean you will act on those thoughts.
- Forgetfulness is a common, but temporary side effect. Grieving takes so much energy that other things will fade in importance.
- Keep asking “why” until you no longer need to ask.
- Healing takes time. Allow yourself the time you need to grieve.
- Grief has no predictable pattern or timetable. Though there are elements of commonality in grief, each person and each situation is unique.
- If you can delay making major decisions, do so.
- The path of grief is one of twists and turns and you may often feel you are getting nowhere. Remember that even setbacks are a kind of progress.
- This is the hardest thing you will ever do. Be patient with yourself.
- Seek out people who are willing to listen when you need to talk and who understand when you need to be silent.
- Give yourself permission to seek professional help.
- Avoid people who try to tell you what to feel and how to feel it and, in particular, those who think you should “be over it by now.”
- Find a support group for survivors that provides a safe place for you to express your feelings or simply a place to go to be with other survivors who are experiencing some of the same things you are going through.

Reprinted from SAVE's (Suicide Awareness Voices of Education) website, December 2002. [www.save.org](http://www.save.org)

## A Cut Finger

(Source Unknown)

*A CUT FINGER is numb before it bleeds, it bleeds before it hurts, it hurts until it begins to heal, it forms a scab and itches until finally, the scab is gone and a small scar is left where there once was a wound.*

*Grief is the deepest wound you have ever had. Like a cut finger, it goes through stages and leaves a scar.*

## 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 loved one's suicide may have seemed inconceivable at first, but with time, they are revealed. Later in Iris's poem, we discover that the music her son composed became her gift. James Barrett lost his mother, Dorothy Louise Barrett, sixteen years ago. He shares his gift:*

Last year I made a film about surviving suicide loss called DIFFERENT PLACES. Since losing my mother to suicide when I was just twelve years old, I've wondered from time to time what the point was for this horrible event in mine and my brothers' lives. In thinking about it, I really do believe it was a gift in some strange way.

Through the years I've felt the impact of my mother's actions in several ways: her actions made me take my time in trusting new friends, caused insecurities in my relationships with women, and put a strain on communication within my own family. But her suicide has also opened new doors in my life, in ways I never even saw coming.

I got involved in suicide support groups shortly after attending one in 1993. I've worked closely with Susan Celentano since that time and, only recently, came to realize that my work with new survivors is what makes the experience of losing my mother to suicide have value. For years I felt like my presence in support groups might serve to confuse the new survivor—giving the impression that ‘my God... it's been so long for him... why is he still here?’

But my feelings have changed. I believe that when a survivor meets another who has made it through the crippling shock of the immediate aftermath of suicide and moved forward with life... there is some sort of hope. There was hope for me. The psychological impact on my life has lessened over time. Through talking about my loss, it loosened the grip it had on my behavior. By sharing my experience with others, I feel less like an outcast and more like a teacher.

I called my film DIFFERENT PLACES because, even though we've all lost a loved one to suicide, we're all in different places of emotional healing along our own paths. Our common bonds through sadness serve to bring us together to comfort one another. And as the years pass, our experience can help the new survivors to see some glimmer of hope at the end of a long journey. ♡

## Susan Rose Blauner



Susan Rose Blauner spoke at the AFSP conference.

On November 23, the AFSP's Fourth Annual Suicide Prevention and Survivors Conference was telecast in many cities across the nation, including Los Angeles. Susan Rose Blauner, author of *How I Stayed Alive When My Brain Was Trying to Kill Me: One Person's Guide to Suicide Prevention* spoke at UCLA, and shared some of the insights

she uses to survive her obsessive suicidal thoughts.

Many survivors worry about other family members taking their lives, and more evidence points to a link between family history and suicide risk. Last fall, SPAN-California reported this finding of a Danish research team: those who survive a family member's suicide are 2 1/2 times more likely to attempt suicide than non-survivors. Other sources tell us the figure is as high as 4x. If you or someone you know is at risk, get help immediately by calling the National Suicide Prevention Crisis Line at 1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433), or Didi Hirsch's Suicide Prevention Center at 1-310-391-1253. Ms. Blauner's book can be an excellent resource for those of us who may be struggling with our own thoughts of suicide in the wake of our loved one's loss. ♡

## After a Suicide *continued from page 2*

with him here, cannot grow content with him through life. And yet, perhaps we can. He has left us a greater good: his tenderness and easy manner, his need to set things straight, to heal and help, his love for his family and child, his gentle sense of humor and sense of wonder. This is our true legacy.

He is everywhere, all the time. He is in the rain, the sunset, the clouds. In the feather lying on the ground, the song on the radio, the scene in the movie. He is there as the self-proclaimed mechanic when something won't work. He looks over my shoulder as I make a dream catcher, light a candle, trim the wick, feed the wild birds.

Then, one day, finally accepting the grief, realizing grief's journey is the healing, finally thinking about the good more than remembering the bad. Finally letting go of the need to lay blame. Finally letting go of the "why" and "what ifs." Finally, forgiveness. Finally thinking more about life than death. Life from death. Grace through grief. Beauty from ashes. Healing has begun.

Eternal cycles of spring after winter, life after death, dying and being born again. Here comes the sun: "I have come that you may have life, and have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)  
*Reprinted from Bereavement, July/August 2002, pages 32 and 33.*

1-888-604-4673

## Lifekeepers Memory Quilt

**We want the world to know our loved ones lived and deserve to be remembered.** All 50 states have come together in this joint effort to educate the world for the need to reduce the incidence of suicide. The two existing quilts have been displayed at national meetings, and we are currently putting together a third. A \$20 fee covers the cost of material, labor and postage necessary to create your visual tribute.

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

Send the material and instructions to me:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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

### Mail to:

C. J. Montgomery, P.O. Box 948, Redondo Beach, CA 90277  
or call Catherine at 310.316.2527 for information.

## Siblings *continued from page 1*

and your wisdom. You're not alone but it may feel like you are. There are many brothers and sisters "out there" struggling with this event which has shattered their lives. They may feel totally alone. So if you are able to put your feelings in writing, you may be tossing a life preserver to someone in need.

We'll all be grateful and feel blessed for your efforts. If this is hard to do now, maybe it will feel okay to do it later... or not at all. The main thing is to take care of yourself.

I know for me, when I think of the four "tasks" of grief, writing and sharing my experience certainly helped to make meaning out of the death of my son. Those tasks are:

1. **Tell the story of what happened.** (So you begin to believe the truth of it.)
2. **Express your emotions.** (Guilt, anger, sadness, etc. so you don't hold them in.)
3. **Make meaning out of tragedy.** (Something positive has to come out of this.)
4. **Transition from the physical presence of the person to another kind of relationship** (i.e. a spiritual connection or memories.) It's not what we wanted or expected, but it's better than nothing.

Thanks for listening...or reading...and know you are not alone. If you need to talk to someone remember you can always call 1-800-SUICIDE at the Hopeline Network. ♡  
*Iris Bolton is Executive Director of The Link Counseling Center. Send stories or poems in care of Iris Bolton at The Link Counseling Center, Sandy Springs Office, 348 Mt. Vernon Hwy., N.E., Atlanta, GA 30328-4139. The phone number is (404) 256-2919, and the website is [www.thelink.org](http://www.thelink.org). Reprinted from the summer 2002 issue of *The Journey*, a national newsletter for survivors of suicide.*

## SAS Annual Holiday Potluck



*left: Elinor Aurthur (above) and Mina Hakimi check out the star ornaments on the Holiday Remembrance Tree. The tree was donated by Becky Jordan.*



*Holiday star ornaments brought to you by: (top) Louis Medina, Loretta Uriarte, Rosalind Lee (bottom) Joanne Curry, Mary Gayman, Chona Herrella and Deborah Pikul (taking the picture).*



*Didi Hirsch President/CEO Kita Curry, Ph.D. (center) announced that Lois and Sam Bloom will be receiving the 2003 "Erasing the Stigma" award along with actress Patty Duke and author Andrew Solomon.*

More than forty attended the Annual Holiday Potluck Dinner at Didi Hirsch on Saturday, December 7th. Ester Bryant decorated the tables with holiday centerpieces, turning the community room into a winter wonderland. Lois Bloom's idea for the event theme, *Starry, Starry Night*, inspired almost everyone to bring a photo of their loved one to place on a star. People arrived with tamales, salads, chicken pot pie, spaghetti and lots of wonderful desserts.

The night began with a screening of the film *DIFFERENT PLACES*, directed by James Barrett, and later Jay Nagdimon discussed the Suicide Prevention Center's latest outreach

efforts. Kita Curry announced that Sam and Lois Bloom were chosen to receive the 2003 "Erasing the Stigma" award in honor of the many years they've spent helping other survivors and raising national awareness of the problem of suicide and the need for its prevention.

Lois led us in the final ceremony with a discussion of the life of Vincent Van Gogh and the survivors he left behind. Lois and Ester closed the evening playing Josh Groban's version of *Starry, Starry Night*, a song Don McLean wrote in honor of Van Gogh and the painting that became famous years after his death. ❖

**Perhaps they are not the stars, but rather openings in heaven where the love of our lost ones pours out and shines down upon us to let us know they are happy.**

*Inspired by an Eskimo Legend*

# Calendar of Upcoming Events

## **FEBRUARY 27 & 28, 2003**

### **Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program® (YRSPP)**

#### **Regional Trainer's Workshop**

Westminster, Colorado.

See [www.yellowribbon.org](http://www.yellowribbon.org) or call

303.429.3530.

## **APRIL 23-26, 2003**

### **American Association of Suicidology 36th Annual Conference**

Lafonda Hotel and Hotel Loretto

Santa Fe, New Mexico

See [www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org) or call

1.888.333.2377.

## **APRIL 26, 2003**

### **American Association of Suicidology 13th Healing Conference**

Santa Fe, New Mexico

See [www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org) or call  
1.888.333.2377.

## **APRIL 30, 2003, 1:30-4:30 EDT**

### **Living with Grief:**

#### **Coping with Public Tragedy**

Hospice Foundation of America

Tenth Annual Living With Grief

Teleconference

Moderated by Cokie Roberts.

See [www.hospicefoundation.org](http://www.hospicefoundation.org).

## **MAY 2003**

The first week of May is National Suicide  
Prevention week.

## **MAY 16, 2003**

### **Erasing the Stigma Leadership Awards 2003**

Didi Hirsch honors Lois and Sam Bloom,

Patty Duke and Andrew Solomon at its

annual event at the Regent Beverly  
Wilshire. For further information please  
call ONE EVENT MANAGEMENT at  
310.273.7513.

## **MAY 2003**

### **NAMI Walks for the Mind of America**

In Delaware, Florida, Louisiana, Maine,  
Maryland, Missouri, New Hampshire, New  
Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, and  
South Carolina. Part of NAMI's "Campaign  
for the Mind of America," a multi-year  
effort to promote investment in recovery  
and to prevent the abandonment of  
Americans with mental illnesses to neglect  
and hopelessness. See [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).

## **SUMMER, 2003**

### **SPAN USA's 8th Annual National Suicide Prevention Awareness Event**

Washington, D.C. See [www.spanusa.org](http://www.spanusa.org).

# Contributions 9/10/2002 – 12/4/2002: *A million thanks for your generosity!*

## **IN LOVING MEMORY OF:**

**Alex Ryan Zingaro** from Vicky and Paul  
Bock, Nina and William Simmons,  
Anonymous, Catherine and Lawrence  
Carapellotti, Linda White Daniels, El  
Toro High School Athletic Boosters,  
Anthony Ferruzzo, Patricia and  
Thomas Kincaid, Patricia and Gary  
Marzolo, Joan and Al Massucci,  
Nancy and Henry Melgares, Sharon  
O'Connor, Patricia and Rick Podley,  
Karen Ritter, Kathleen and Carmen  
Spagnola, Rob and Willi Stinson, Sue  
and Sam Sutton, Frances Jean  
Tannehill, Alfred and Patricia Zingaro

**Barry Fredricks** from Charlene and  
George Pellin

**Ron** from Marlene Wallace

**Daddy** from Marilyn Sperka

**Daniel Johnson** from Joann Yates

**Deborah Lynn Beardsley** from Donna  
and Ronald Harris

**Dion Harkness and Abraham  
Leighton** from Steven Leighton

**Dougie Sweet** from Jill and Donald  
Drain, Lauren and Maria Hall, Erica  
and Brad Watkins, Garry and Teri  
Williams

**Dr. Christina Barone** from Anthony  
Bartholio

**Drew Wickline** from James and  
Barbara Wickline

**Ed Bushnell** from Marian Williams,  
Ph.D.

**Fred Lee Calhoun, Jr. & Sr.** from Jean  
Calhoun

**Hanspeter Pertschi** from Gay and Allan  
Schneiderman

**Harry Fujita** from Dorothy M. Fujita

**Jason Mervel** from Roz Mervel

**Jay McCreary** from Faye and John  
McCreary

**Jeff and Chris Pikul** from Dorothea and  
Edward Pikul

**John Tarascio** from Shorey Wilson

**Johnathan Sewell** from Judy and Doug  
Sewell

**Joseph Loniero** from Venira Virzi Cook

**Joshua Erman** from Andrew Erman

**Judith Hanson Argyres** from Steven  
Hunter

**Ken Stranger** from Dorothy Stranger

**Lanny McCommon** from Mary Halligan

**Laura Roanne Cole** from Barbara and  
Mel Cole

**Mary Kay Bergman** from Jennifer and  
Josh Davis

**Matthew Werber** from Kathy Werber

**Max Wisot** from Pamela and William  
Irwin

**Pandora Dalrymple** from Henri  
Wadsworth

**Paul Sharples** from Madeline Sharples

**Penrhyn Jorgensen** from Stacy  
Jorgensen

**Peter J. Sole** from Karin Diorio, Elinore  
and Joseph Vitale

**Rob Wesley Littlejohn** from Mr. and  
Mrs. Robert Littlejohn

**Sammy Bloom** from Sam and Lois  
Bloom, Suzanne and Barton Edises,  
Kathleen and Frank Edises, Susan and  
Joel Ford, Ginny Hicks, Tillie  
Markham, Robert Miller, A.B. and  
R.W. Morris, Mr. and Mrs. George  
Richardson, Jayne and Stanley  
Teruya, Debra Underwood, Joan and  
William Williams, Lisa and Donald  
Williams

**Sarah Loring** from Susan and Jonathan  
Loring

**Shelly Heffner and Jeffrey** from Linda  
Siegel Kane

**Stephen Lelewer** from Jan Lipschutz,  
Irma and Henri Van Dam

**Strit Stritmatter** from Walt Walston

**Tate Richard Crane** from Angela  
Leighton

**Tim and Barbara Kearns** from Robert  
Lott

**Wayne Griffin** from Lisa Holloway

## **IN HONOR OF:**

**Barbara Hornichter** from Dr. and Mrs.  
Sidney Rosin

**Lois and Sam Bloom** from Mr. and  
Mrs. Gerald Weyrauch

**Lois Bloom** from Mr. and Mrs. Frank  
Nicolino

*To make a contribution, please use the envelope enclosed in this newsletter*

## The Suicide Prevention Center's Minority Outreach Program

In its ongoing efforts to educate the community about warning signs, risk factors and interventions to prevent suicide, the Suicide Prevention Center's Minority Outreach Program, funded by the California endowment, provided presentations to the following schools and agencies between September and December of last year:\*

Project Connections  
 Project Connections  
 Project Connections  
 KTNQ 1020AM Radio  
 David Isiah Basketball Tournament  
 Peninsula High School  
 Moments of Meditation Baptist Church  
 "A su Salud" Savon Drugs Community Outreach Program  
 Bienestar Hollywood Center  
 Heart of Los Angeles Youth  
 Department of Mental Health  
 Lennox Middle School

Delta Center  
 Fullerton Family Resource Center  
 Fullerton Family Resource Center  
 California State University, Los Angeles  
 Cambodian American Association  
 Centro de Ayuda  
 Centro de Ayuda  
 Clare Foundation  
 Cypress College  
 Centro de Ayuda  
 Women Helping Women  
 BCMS  
 Hollywood Sunset Community Clinic

South Hills High School  
 Children's Baptist Home  
 San Gabriel Valley High School  
 Venice High School  
 Center for Pacific Asian Families  
 Lynwood High School  
 Lynwood High School  
 Hollenbeck Middle School  
 Indochinese Program - APCTC  
 Rosemead High School  
 Jewish Family Service - Orthodox Counseling Program  
 Torrance High School  
 Lynwood High School

\* Agencies visited more than once are so listed.

## Remembering Mom *from page 1*

a young girl and have begun to put my sense of righteousness to rest. All that anger just burned itself out. I had been too caught up in anger to remember that what was most tragic wasn't that we were left, but that she was gone. And I realized that my mother probably wasn't thinking of her children or her ex-husband or even her parents when she decided to kill herself. Her suicide wasn't an act of punishment, any more than it was one of mercy for a family worn out by madness. I imagine now that she was thinking only of herself that day, of her sadness and sickness and the possibility of sweet relief.

And I miss her. Pictures that were put away long ago are back on the shelves. I'm thirsty for anything of hers—swatches of handwriting, a recording of her voice, anything that makes my memory fuller and richer. When I think of her now, which in itself is a gift after a decade of aggressive forgetting, I remember a woman with lovely shoulders and hands and a young girl's laugh. A woman with bright black hair and fine manners, who hated chatter of all sorts. This new stage of grief has such a sharp sweetness. It feels a little like falling in love. ♡

*Reprinted from Real Simple, May 2002*

## American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

AFSP is proud to announce the creation of the first ever Survivor e-Network.

The goal of the e-Network is instant communication to the survivor community. Through the

e-Network, survivors can learn about new resources and initiatives and play a vital role in mobilizing support for research and education. Addressing the full range of topics of interest to survivors, including upcoming healing conferences and other events, research developments and advocacy opportunities, the e-Network will be a tool both for communication and for action. It will help create a sense of community and empower survivors who wish to become active in the work of suicide prevention.

JOIN TODAY. Just complete the information below and return to AFSP, 120 Wall Street, 22nd Floor, NY, NY 10005. Or send your information by email to: [enetwork@afsp.org](mailto:enetwork@afsp.org).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a survivor? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the name of the person/people you lost? \_\_\_\_\_

Your relationship to them: \_\_\_\_\_

What was the date(s) of the suicide(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

# Survivor e-Network

[@www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)

**AFSP**  
 American Foundation  
 for Suicide Prevention

## 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:

**"Reprinted with permission from the Survivors After Suicide Newsletter, a Program of the Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center: Suicide Prevention Center, 4760 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City, CA 90230"**

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: **Jan 11 Feb 8 Mar 8 Apr 12**

## SOUTH BAY (TORRANCE)

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: **Jan 20 Feb 17 Mar 17 Apr 21**

## WEST LA

Didi Hirsch Culver/Palms Center, 11133 Washington Blvd., Culver City, 1 block east of Sepulveda on the north side of the street. The parking lot is in the building. Drive up to the gate and it will open outward.

**3rd Wednesday 7:00 – 8:30 pm.**

Meeting dates: **Jan 15 Feb 19 Mar 19 Apr 16**

*View this newsletter online at [www.suicidepreventioncenter.org](http://www.suicidepreventioncenter.org).  
Click on Bereavement.*

## SURVIVORS AFTER SUICIDE NEWSLETTER

A quarterly publication of Survivors after Suicide (a support group for those who have lost a loved one to suicide), a program of the **Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health: Suicide Prevention Center**  
4760 S. Sepulveda Blvd.  
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