



# SURVIVORS

**after suicide**

A Program of Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2003 • VOLUME 16, NO. 4 • PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

## Suicide in Film

Susan Celentano, MFT  
Santa Clarita, CA

Bibliotherapy, or the use of literary assignments to facilitate personal growth, has long been recognized as a valuable psychotherapeutic technique.

Similarly, films can provide an opportunity for insight, empathy and emotional catharsis. Realistic illustrations of grief have not been an uncommon theme in films, notably *Ordinary People* (1980), *The Accidental Tourist* (1988), and *In the Bedroom* (2001), but only recently have filmmakers shown not only a deeper understanding of the issue of suicide and an appreciation of its complexity, but a willingness to examine the plight of the survivor.

As a new survivor eleven years ago, I searched out movies with themes of suicide and grief, not realizing at the time that I was attempting to acquaint myself with the unfamiliar territory I suddenly inhabited. The rocky terrain was revealed to me gradually, and at a distance I could tolerate. I always knew that I could turn off the TV or walk out of the movie theatre. As I continued to glance at the landscape through fictional characters, I felt less alone, less threatened and more able to confront the facts of my own reality, a

*continued on page 3*

## Finding Balance on the Continuum and rethinking “wrong” emotions

Gretchen Kubacky  
Culver City, CA

When you enter a community as unique as Survivors After Suicide (SAS), you learn that there is a special language defining that community. The language gives you words to describe your pain and your process, and bonds you to the other

members of the group. In the parlance of SAS, I am a “multiple,” and I want to tell you what that experience has been like for me, what I have learned, and what I hope you will experience as part of SAS.

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## Banging the Drum Loudly Didi Hirsch’s Seventh Annual Erasing the Stigma Leadership Awards

Sarah Timperman



*l to r: Lois Bloom, Sam Bloom, President/CEO Kita S. Curry, Ph.D., Tipper Gore, Andrew Solomon, Patty Duke, Larry King, Event Chair Bea Stern, and Board Chair Michael Wierwille*

“It’s been 21 years since a doctor in Century City... finally one day said to me, ‘Now don’t be afraid—I’m going to tell you something. I think you’re manic depressive.’ Afraid? I wanted to throw a ticker tape parade! It has a name, and it has a treatment!” These were the words of Patty Duke, accepting her award as a leader in erasing the stigma of mental illness.

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### SAVE THE DATES

## The House of Blues Brunch

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2003

*See Calendar of Upcoming Events on page 6*

## SAS Annual Holiday Potluck

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2003

*Invitations will be coming out, so please hold the date!*

## National Survivors of Suicide Day

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2003 *See [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)*

**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.E.T.

Our annual Summer BBQ Potluck on Saturday, July 26th, was enjoyed by all in attendance. The weather was beautiful and the food was delicious (as usual). Certificates of Appreciation were given out to **Ester Bryant** and **Debbie Pikul** for their valuable contributions as volunteers with the SAS program. An activity was planned around the potluck's theme, "Hopes & Dreams." Thank you to **Tim Alexander** for coordinating this activity. **Kate Lyons** read a touching poem and Didi Hirsch staff member, **Tamar Stary**, sang a beautiful rendition of "Feeling Good," which brought the day's event to a nice close.

I would like to announce that our annual Holiday Potluck is scheduled for **Saturday, December 6, 2003** from 6:30-9:00 p.m. Invitations will be coming out and I hope to see you there.

**Lily Tomlin** was the honorary chair at the annual Alive & Running 5/10K Walk/Run on Sunday, September 21st. Proceeds from the event help support the SAS and SPC programs. I hope you were able to join us on this fun-filled day, a day filled with lots of activities for the whole family and plenty of time to connect and reconnect with other survivors.

For information about volunteering or any of the upcoming events, please call Jessica Baas at (310) 751-5373.

Carole ✦

## Banging the Drum Loudly continued from page 1

This year's awards, held on Friday, May 16 at the Regent Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Beverly Hills, were a celebration of four people—Sam and Lois Bloom, Patty Duke, and Andrew Solomon—who have candidly and openly spoken about their own experiences with mental illness.

Event Chair Bea Stern gave a warm welcome, and introduced Master of Ceremonies Larry King. Larry spoke of his own experience as a child growing up in poverty in New York City, and of stigma.

"You would think that in the year 2003 we've come far enough along to understand that people with mental health problems are no different than people with kidney problems or tonsillitis," said Larry. He then introduced Kita S. Curry, Ph.D., President/CEO of Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center. Kita spoke of the lack of support for mental health services, and the need for change.

"Can you imagine going to your doctor with epilepsy and being told 'Sorry, that's not covered under your plan?' Well that's what can happen if you have a brain disorder that's considered mental," said Kita. "The parity laws in this country are so weak that insurance companies get around them just by excluding mental health altogether."

Larry King then introduced special guest and award presenter Tipper Gore. Tipper was gracious, and expressed her admiration for all of the honorees.

First honored were Sam and Lois Bloom, 20-year volunteers with the Suicide Prevention Center and bereavement programs. The Blooms were honored for their activism in the face of losing their own son, Sammy, to suicide.

"Within a year of Sammy's death, the Suicide Prevention Center gave us the opportunity to facilitate support groups. This began a turning point in our lives," said Lois.

Among other things, the Blooms have since facilitated bereavement groups for people who have lost loved ones to suicide and trained others to do the same, helped train volunteers on the Center's suicide crisis hotline, organized conferences, given presentations in the community, lobbied to change policy, and co-founded the Western Division of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Lois has even written a booklet entitled *Mourning After Suicide*, which has sold more than 33,000 copies to date.

"Our experience with survivors indicates that mental disorders and suicide can happen in any family, so when we give talks about suicide prevention we encourage everyone to get informed about the symptoms of depression and mental disorders, to become aware of the warning signs of suicide, and to know what to do when they occur," said Sam.

Tipper then presented the next award to Andrew Solomon. Andrew has turned his own struggle with depression into a National Book Award-winning account entitled *The Noonday Demon; An Atlas of Depression*. Solomon spoke of his experiences lecturing around the country, and the people who have shared their own stories of depression with him.

"At one point I interviewed two people, each of whom it turned out were taking antidepressants and not telling the other, and they were married," said Andrew.

Finally, Tipper presented the Erasing the Stigma award to Patty Duke. Patty, who is also an author on the subject of mental illness with her bestseller *A Brilliant Madness: Living with Manic-Depression*, has turned her Oscar and Emmy-Award winning career into a platform to advocate for those suffering from bipolar disorder.

In conclusion, Tipper Gore summed up the luncheon and encouraged the audience to help pass the mental health parity bill before Congress. ✦

## Suicide in Film *continued from page 1*

necessary prelude to healing. Although my early “connections” with other survivors were vicarious, the seraphic simplicity of shared sorrow became the cornerstone of the direction my healing would take.

Dramatization can serve to broaden our understanding of issues, clarify emotional conflicts, help us identify strengths and adaptive responses, illuminate different perspectives and develop options for coping and living with unanswered questions and an ever-present absence.

Whether or not films will be helpful to the survivor, particularly the new survivor, is idiosyncratic. I have heard survivors echo my own thoughts and conversely, I have heard them express panic as related to the often stark, raw display of emotion portrayed on the screen. Exposure to the portrayal of a death scene, a funeral and sometimes an actual suicide can trigger an anxiety reaction. It is important to recognize that the films which have the ability to facilitate growth and healing are not necessarily “feel good” movies. Some films do facilitate healing moods, for example, *A River Runs Through It* (1992), *Field of Dreams* (1989) and *About A Boy* (2002), but in many cases a “therapeutic” film does not leave one feeling warm and fuzzy.

This is the first of several columns meant to be a guide both for those who wish to view suicide and grief related films therapeutically and for those who prefer to stay away from films which contain disturbing and incendiary material. There is, after all, something to be said for escapism. If you do watch these films, try to discuss them with someone afterwards, your therapist or a fellow survivor, to “debrief” and enhance any therapeutic value.

Films which address the issue of suicide fall into two major categories: those which examine the internal world of the suicidal person and/or the survivor as the theme of the film, and those which recklessly incorporate a suicide for shock value, with no regard for victim or survivor issues. The films reviewed below fall into the former category.

***The Hours*** (2002)—The question of suicide is central to this profoundly affecting film about loss, longing and despair. A provocative ‘to be or not to be’ portrait which will sadden and enlighten as you get a glimpse into the internal world of each of the characters. If you look closely, you will experience a sense of hope and redemption. This film also takes a sensitive look at what it’s like to live with a mentally ill and suicidal person. You will witness two acts of suicide in this film.

***Love, Liza*** (2002)—This is an unflinching, relentless examination of the aftermath of suicide, and the desperate attempts of one man to avoid the pain. You will not witness

*continued on page 7*

## 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. **Gretchen Kubacky** lost her father and her brother to suicide, in 1979 and 1996, respectively. She shares her gifts:*

I lost both my father and my brother to suicide, but in losing them, I found myself. It took a few years after my brother's death for me to find my way to SAS and individual therapy, but when I did, miracles began to occur.

I was in a relationship that wasn't meeting my needs, and I began to explore the meaning of that relationship, and why I remained in it. One of the most powerful reasons was that my partner was clinically depressed and suicidal, and I was terrified that she too would kill herself. When I began to understand my motivation, and my powerlessness to control her behavior or the outcome of her illness, I was able to separate from her and develop a healthier relationship with myself.

In our culture, death is too often feared and avoided when it is merely one more part of life. I learned that death, that great taboo, was something I had a gift for accepting, talking about, and helping other people to assimilate into their lives. I am in the midst of becoming a psychologist, and this is an area in which I intend to focus my practice.

In talking about death, I also learned to talk about other taboos. My family perpetuated a culture of silence and secrecy in the guise of good manners, particularly when it came to mental illness and suicide. I know now that my life is separate from that of my family, separate from the fact of my father and brother's suicides, and that I have a right to talk about all of these things, whether my family likes it or not.

These are all powerful gifts, and I'm grateful to suicide for giving them to me. ♡

*Gretchen is currently enrolled at Ryokan College and will complete her M.A. in Counseling Psychology in June 2004, continuing directly into the Psy.D. program at Ryokan with the goal of obtaining her Psychologist's license.*

*If you'd like to submit a story for The Gift, please write the editor at [sasnews@earthlink.net](mailto:sasnews@earthlink.net).*

## Finding Balance *continued from page 1*

My father and my brother have more in common than bearing the same name, Fritz A. Kubacky. They are both “completed suicides.” *Completed suicide* is another SAS term which I use because suicide is a process, often a slow and painful one for the family. I see it as a continuum that begins with the chronic mental illness that underlies virtually every suicide and continues to the present day.

I was 13 when my father terminated his life with a gunshot to the head. It was 1979, and my parents were in the process of getting a divorce. I was angry with my father because of the pain I perceived him as causing my mother and, by extension, my siblings and me. I hated him, in fact. That didn’t change when he died. I didn’t experience a radical emotional conversion and suddenly see him as a saint. I saw him as perhaps more flawed than ever. I was deeply ashamed of the manner of his death, and the attitudes about suicide that I found in our uptight religious community didn’t help me feel better.

My mother felt that the best approach to this tragedy was to label us survivors and rarely discuss the matter. While this hindered my working through the death initially, I’ve come to see that the label survivor has a deeper meaning in the context of the Survivors After Suicide (SAS) program. Certainly, it’s a feeling and belief that is embedded in me, that I am a survivor.

Negativity was the primary feeling surrounding my father, and his death. It came from my mother, the community, and myself but there were other emotions I felt that surprised me—relief and happiness. Because I believed these emotions were wrong in this context, I felt even more guilty and ashamed and conflicted. It seemed so disrespectful to be grateful that my father was dead. I’ve learned through meeting other survivors though that these emotions are actually fairly common. Nonetheless, they seem to be the hardest ones to talk about. That’s why I want to validate those types of feelings here.

My father was depressed for as long as I can remember, which manifested in many ways, but most significantly in that he slept whenever he wasn’t working, most of both days on the weekends. He was almost entirely absent from my childhood, even when he was in the house. Our relationship barely extended beyond biology.

In retrospect, he also exhibited some manic signs, and may in fact have had bipolar disorder (manic depression). These were the good, fun, happy times with him, but also times that created conflict between him and my mother, because of his accompanying irresponsibility. There are many things that are tough to admit about suicide but one of the first things I have to say is that living with, and loving some-

## 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.

one mentally ill, is a challenge and a struggle, and anyone who has done it deserves some credit for their strength.

Of course I loved my father, and I know he loved me, but he came from a background that didn’t encourage emotional expression. He attempted to overcome his tendency to be reserved, but it was too little, too late. Our tenuous connection will never have a chance to improve, and that makes me sad. I feel that I have been deprived of the benefits of having a father, and that makes me sad too. Over two decades later, I feel this loss sharply, but infrequently. For example, I am angry and resentful right now because I have to assume care of my 93-year-old grandmother, his mother. I understand though that this is part of the continuum of suicide I mentioned initially. My emotions will subside and his suicide will again feel less like a thing that controls my life. Mostly now, I look at my father with compassion, as a man who had limited options, and an unbearable amount of pain.

There was a peace that came to me when he died, as if the burden of having to figure out how to make the paternal relationship work had been lifted from me. My father was one less thing to worry about. There were other, new worries though—financial and childcare chief among them. My mother had been enrolled in school and had to drop out and go to work immediately when my father died. As the oldest child, I had to care for my two younger siblings. This is one of the ways in which a loss to suicide has a domino effect in one’s life; I not only lost my father, I lost the balance of my childhood and adolescence.

*continued on next page*

## SAS Annual Summer Potluck

Carole Chasin presented two Certificates of Appreciation on July 26: Ester Bryant and Debbie Pikul received plaques commending them for their outstanding leadership, professionalism, and dedication to the Suicide Prevention Center's Survivors After Suicide Program.



Corinne Nagdimon Leong checks out the party in the courtyard.



Tim Alexander stands beside the "Hopes and Dreams" display he coordinated for the event.



Ester Bryant holds a much-deserved Certificate of Appreciation.



Tamar Stary sang a beautiful rendition of "Feeling Good" and brought the day's event to a nice close.

## Finding Balance *continued from previous page*

My brother, who was 10 at the time, immediately began to exhibit behavioral problems that I could neither understand nor control. He had academic, substance abuse, legal, and other problems throughout the rest of his childhood and teenage years. He was hyperactive (what would now be labeled Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), and we assumed his problems stemmed from this condition.

Eventually, as a young adult, he was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. This explained everything and nothing. His life adjustment problems continued, occasionally improving when he was compliant with medication (which he didn't like—he complained he didn't feel like himself when taking it), but mostly he worsened, until the night he hung himself in 1996. He was 27 years old.

Suicide is the worst kind of déjà vu imaginable. All of the emotions I had repressed for nearly two decades came to the surface, explosively. I was more emotionally fluent than I had been as a child, but I still really had no idea how to handle the level of grief, rage, sadness, pain, fear, shock, denial, and shame that appeared in me again instantly. It was not until I found SAS a few years later and completed an eight-week program that I really began to process both deaths. The first two or three meetings, I cried more than anyone there. I also started individual therapy about the same time, and the combination was effective in allowing me to finally assimilate the nature and meaning of these deaths. I strongly encourage anyone who has experienced one or more deaths by suicide to take whatever action is necessary to understand and work through it. I know it is painful, but it's also worth it.

I learned, after my brother's death, that my paternal grandmother had lost two of her brothers to suicide when they were in their twenties. I have a familial legacy of suicide that

colors the way I think today, the way I interact with people I think might be depressed, and even my choice of careers. I would never have chosen this experience, but it has forced me to learn and grow, and enriched my life immeasurably in many ways.

SAS was so valuable to me that I became a support group facilitator and telephone outreach counselor, and have assisted with training for new volunteers. I have friends from SAS who share these unique experiences and this special type of pain. This community understands the complexity of emotions associated with a death by suicide, and supports me in my feelings—the ugly ones as well as the socially acceptable ones. They keep me moving through the process of this grief, which will always be present to some degree. When I call the newly bereaved for the first time and tell them that someday, perhaps in the not too distant future, they will laugh about some aspect of suicide, they find it hard to believe, but I think it's important to be aware that there is hope for your life to return to "normal"—forever altered, but rich and full of happiness, joy, and pleasure.

My family is imperfect, and I can never forget the tragic nature of my father and brother's deaths. Suicide highlights the fact that life is precious, and fleeting. It reminds me to stay present, and to cherish each human being. It reminds me that the natural cycle of life is sometimes interrupted, but doesn't have to remain forever broken. It also reminds me that I have a lot of resources, both internal and external. I have learned that it is possible to live with the fact of one or more suicides in your life, and to live well. It took a lot of time and hard work to get to this perspective, but I know SAS is an amazing resource and source of support in this endeavor, and I am grateful for all that I have learned in the process. ♡

*Thank you, Gretchen for an honest and hopeful original article!*

# Contributions 5/1/2003 – 8/31/2003: *A million thanks for your generosity!*

## IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

**Alex Zingaro** from Alfred and Patricia Zingaro  
**Barry Fitzmorris' brother** from Asghar Etebari  
**Betty Leichhardt** from Melinda Pike  
**Chuck Anderson** from Linda Anderson  
**Danielle Cox** from Kita S. and Peter Curry  
**Dougie Sweet** from Rosemarie and Allan Brandt, Doris Carter, Pauline and Jack Maxwell  
**Eric Spencer** from Roberta aka Bobbie Mathers  
**F. Joshua Korkowski** from Phyllis and Douglas Adams, Ruth and Robert Ashton, Susan L. Blasco, Loretta and Michael Bosserman, Ellen and Chris Coddington, Susan and Perry Drogo, Angela and David Duda, Lenor and Warren Fichtel, Flowserve Wynnwood Sales Office, Margaret and Forrest Freeman, Sandra Hughes, Christine Jamison, Kellie Kido, Virginia Koontz, La Seda Elementary School, Chris Paiement, Bonita and Oscar Sanchez, Igor Shpilskiy, Lori and John Spiering, Mildred and Horace Upton, Julia Weber, Kathleean Williams, Dr. John Zimmerman

**James Bagby, Jr.** from Kita S. and Peter Curry  
**James Fitzgerald** from Patrick Fitzgerald  
**Jay McCreary** from Faye and John McCreary  
**Jonathan Jacoves** from Mr. and Mrs. Ira Jacoves  
**Justin Peterson** from Jill Peterson  
**Kevin Flanagan** from Sharron Gibson  
**Madison Owens** from Loretta Owens  
**Martin Alberico** from Jaime Alberico  
**Michael** from Ray Ramirez  
**Michael Behrend** from Mr. and Mrs. Michael D. Updike  
**Patrick Laden** from Marilyn Laden  
**Peter Jones** from Kita S. and Peter Curry  
**Rick Vazquez** from Josie Shahabi  
**Ricki Harris** from Hannah and Jacob Keren, Louise and Michael Robbins  
**Robert Bagby** from Kita S. and Peter Curry  
**Robert Curry** from Kita S. and Peter Curry  
**Shari Jane Potter** from Mr. and Mrs. Chuck Potter  
**Stephen Lazarus** from Barbara and Andrea Lazarus

**Stephen Lelewer** from Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Lelewer

## IN HONOR OF:

**Lois and Sam Bloom** from Melinda Pike, Mr. and Mrs. Allan Chasin

## *DON'T TELL ME*

*Don't tell me that you understand  
Don't tell me that you know.  
Don't tell me that I will survive  
Or how I will surely grow.*

*Don't tell me this is just a test  
That I am truly blessed,  
That I am chosen for this task  
Apart from all the rest.*

*Don't come at me with the answers  
That can only come from me.  
Don't tell me how my grief will pass  
That I will soon be free.*

*Do not stand in pious judgement  
Of the bonds that I must untie.  
Don't tell me how to suffer  
And don't tell me how to cry.*

*My life is filled with numbness  
My pain is sometimes all I see.  
But I do need you, and your love,  
I need the love unconditionally.*

*Accept me with my ups and downs.  
And when I need to share,  
Just hold out your hand, let me grieve,  
And say, "I am sorry for your many  
losses, I care."*

*—adapted from a poem by Joannetta  
Hendel, Bereavement Magazine, with  
minor changes to reflect the many  
losses of Arthur Neil Borgquist—  
"the last of the Borgquist family...  
the last of my line."*

*Editor's note: If you believe in the power of  
prayer, please say a prayer for Art and his  
wife, Mimi. Art's sister, Sherry, died by suicide  
in June of this year, the third suicide in Art's  
family. His tragedies also include his mother  
and his brother. Additionally, Art has lost many  
Vietnam buddies to suicide. He is the  
strongest man I know.*

*Survivors After Suicide is privately funded by generous  
contributions from individual donors, proceeds from the Alive  
and Running 5K/10K Walk/Run, and grants from private  
foundations and corporations such as the J.M. Long Foundation,  
Million Dollar Round Table Foundation, and TRW ECHO.*

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

### SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2003

#### The House of Blues Brunch, 1 p.m.

This AFSP event includes live music and an all-you-can-eat Southern style buffet. Tickets are \$55 per adult and \$35 per child. Those interested can contact Susan Celentano at (661) 260-3119.

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2003

#### AFSP'S 5th Annual National Survivors of Suicide Day

A satellite broadcast will reach thousands of survivors in three dozen cities nationwide. Small workshops will be held in the afternoon. See [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org), or call 1.888.333.2377.

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2003

#### SAS Annual Holiday Potluck

6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.

At Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center in Culver City. Invitations and details to follow.

### APRIL 14-17, 2004

#### American Association of Suicidology 37th Annual Conference

See [www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org) or call 1.202.237.2280.

### APRIL 17, 2004

#### American Association of Suicidology 16th Healing Conference

See [www.suicidology.org](http://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

**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

## RESOURCES

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

**AFSP** — American Foundation/Suicide Prevention (research & education): [www.afsp.org](http://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](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) — chat room 10am-11:00 pm

**NAMI** — National Alliance for Mentally Ill:  
[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org) 1.800.950.6264

**NAMI-California:** [ca.nami.org](http://ca.nami.org), 1.916.567.0163

**NOPCAS** — National Organization for People of Color Against Suicide, [www.nopcas.com](http://www.nopcas.com), Dr. Barnsi: 1.512.245.8453

**SPAN-USA** — Suicide Prevention Advocacy Network:  
[www.spanusa.org](http://www.spanusa.org), 1.888.649.1366

**SPAN-California:** 1.310.377.8857

**SAVE** — Suicide Awareness/Voices of Education (depression and suicide information): [www.save.org](http://www.save.org)

**The Surgeon General's Call to Action 1999**, download from:  
[www.spanusa.org](http://www.spanusa.org)

**Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Project, Light for Life International:** [www.yellowribbon.org](http://www.yellowribbon.org), 1.303.429.3530

## INTERNET SUPPORT

[www.suicidepreventioncenter.org](http://www.suicidepreventioncenter.org): OUR WEBSITE, Survivors After Suicide Newsletter, current issue

[www.friendsforsurvival.org](http://www.friendsforsurvival.org): Friends for Survival, Inc., Sacramento, CA

[www.1000deaths.com](http://www.1000deaths.com): SOLOS survivor support and suicide prevention

[www.groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/parentsofsuicides](http://www.groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/parentsofsuicides): submit your email to join the mailing list

[www.parentsofsuicide.com](http://www.parentsofsuicide.com): support for parents of suicides

[www.twotoomany.com](http://www.twotoomany.com): SAS Editor's website, lost two brothers to suicide

[www.spanusa.org](http://www.spanusa.org): helplines, prevention information and resources for mental health, etc.

[www.beforetheirtime.org](http://www.beforetheirtime.org): a musical resource to provide comfort to people after the death of someone close

[www.siblingsurvivors.com](http://www.siblingsurvivors.com): Michelle Linn-Gust's website

[www.survivorsofsuicide.com](http://www.survivorsofsuicide.com): a website dedicated to those who have lost a loved one to suicide

[www.nameastar.net](http://www.nameastar.net): Name a Star's Memorial Star™ can be given as a memorial in remembrance of a loved one

[www.nostigma.org](http://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](http://www.suicidewall.com): honoring Vietnam Veterans

[www.heartbeatsurvivorsaftersuicide.org](http://www.heartbeatsurvivorsaftersuicide.org): a peer support group offering empathy, encouragement and direction following the suicide of a loved one

[www.friendsandfamiliesofsuicide.com](http://www.friendsandfamiliesofsuicide.com): an international site for support

[www.suicidememorialwall.com](http://www.suicidememorialwall.com): a tribute to lost loved ones

[www.suicidediscussionboard.com](http://www.suicidediscussionboard.com)

[www.suicidereferencelibrary.com](http://www.suicidereferencelibrary.com)

[www.med.uio.no/iasp](http://www.med.uio.no/iasp): International Association for Suicide Prevention

[www.webhealing.com](http://www.webhealing.com): articles of interest

[www.griefnet.org](http://www.griefnet.org): grief support; a system that can connect you with various resources

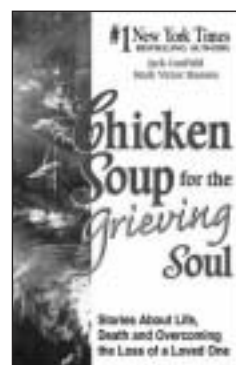
[www.geocities.com/Heartland/Hills/9689](http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Hills/9689): L.A.R.G.O., Life After Repeated Grief: Options (Sascha Wagner)

## Suicide in Film *continued from page 3*

the suicide, but the wrenching emotional agony of the survivors and the ambiguous ending are disturbing.

***Permanent Record*** (1988)—Although this film lacks the depth of, for example *The Hours*, all the survivor issues are here—the whys, the what-if's, the anger, confusion, helplessness, guilt. It is the story of a group of teens in the aftermath of their beloved friend's suicide. It is a sensitive and evocative portrayal, ultimately focusing on what we keep of those we lose. You do not actually witness the suicide.

In the next newsletter, I will review additional films and provide a "warning" list of those films that use suicide for shock value. ♡



## Chicken Soup for the Grieving Soul

Supporting the mission of The Compassionate Friends, **Chicken Soup for the Grieving Soul** is now available in bookstores across the country. Amazon.com can usually ship this book within 24 hours for less than the list price.

## 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: **Oct 11    Nov 8    Dec 9    Jan 10**

## SOUTH BAY: Must call ahead, 310.751.5370.

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: **Oct 20    Nov 17    Dec 15    Jan 19**

## 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: **Oct 15    Nov 19    Dec 17    Jan 21**

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

## SURVIVORS AFTER SUICIDE NEWSLETTER

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

**SAS Program Number:**  
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**Editor:** Deborah Pikul  
(sasnews@earthlink.net)

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4760 S. SEPULVEDA BLVD.  
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