



# Bereaved Parents of the USA

**MAR-APR 2022**

**VOLUME 45 - NUMBER 2**

### **BPUSA VIRTUAL SIBLING CHAPTER 2022 MEETING SCHEDULE**

**All Meetings are at 8:00 PM EST**

January 27

February 24

March 31

April 28

May 26

June 30

July 28

August 25

September 29

October 27

November Meeting Canceled

December 29

Email [BPVIRTUALSIBLINGCHAPTER@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BPVIRTUALSIBLINGCHAPTER@GMAIL.COM) for the Zoom Link

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# BEREAVED PARENTS USA TRIVIA NIGHT



**Saturday, April 23, 2022**

**Knights of Columbus - 5701 Hwy N Cottleville MO 63304**

**Doors Open 6:00 PM-Trivia Begins 7:00 PM**

**Table of 8 - \$200**

**Beer and Beverages Included**

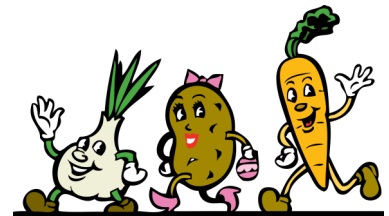
**Call for Reservations:**

**Terre - 314-393-5713 or Courtney - 314-440-7751**

**Don't have a table of 8? That's ok, come as a single and make new friends.**

*This annual fundraiser helps BPUSASTL continue to offer hope and healing to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings in our community. It helps sponsor an annual end of year candlelight ceremony, library of grief books, website support, office supplies and services...just to name a few.*

**Thank you in advance for your continued support.**



**Invite your friends**  
**Bring your own snacks**  
**Have a fun evening!**



It's been a while  
since I have taken stock  
of my feelings and my thoughts;  
created for myself a writer's block.

The past two years  
have worn me down;  
losses of health and hope  
and death seemed to abound.

I have sat alone  
a whole lot more;  
just me and my thoughts  
that rocked me to my core.

There are gifts, though,  
that brought me back.  
My faith, my family, my friends;  
in all of these I did not lack.

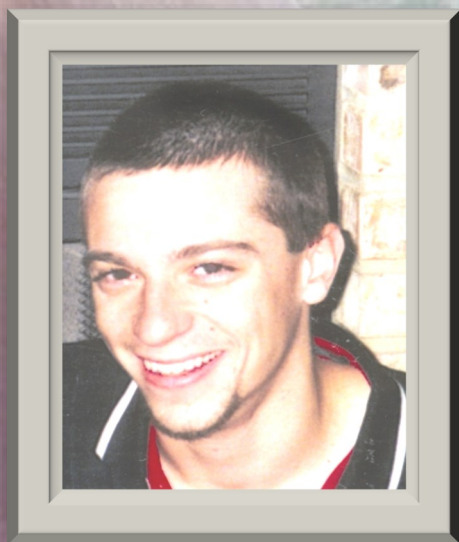
So let the new year begin.  
Couldn't stop it in anyway.  
So I'll be ready and find that smile,  
empowered to show my loved ones...  
...I'M OKAY

Written by Rosann Umhoefer Rosie's Mom,  
BPUSASTL



*In Loving Memory of  
Rosie Umhoefer*

*Thank  
You*



*In Loving Memory of  
Ryan Arnold*



*In Loving Memory of  
AMY MARIE LIZZI  
Forever in our hearts,  
Mom - Mary  
Sister - Beth  
Dad - Dino*

## CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT: ST. LOUIS CHAPTER

*BPUSA National publishes an on-line "Chapter Chat" newsletter for facilitators only. Mike and Jeanne agreed to share their spotlight article with our newsletter readers. Their contributions have been and remain instrumental to the success of BPUSASTL. Thank you Mike and Jeanne!!*

In December, 2008 our lives suddenly changed when we lost our daughter, Jennifer in a lunch-break car crash. Our son, John lost his only sibling. If it wasn't for a co-worker of Mike's, who was a member of BP-USA's St. Louis Chapter, we don't know where we would be today. In February, 2009, we attended our first St. Peters Group meeting. While there, we met a lady and her daughter. As we were introducing ourselves, we found that her son, Joe died the same day and year as our daughter. We met them after the meeting. I asked Theresa if I could give her a hug. She said, "yes" and we have been great help for each other along our grief journeys over the past 13 years. She currently is our Chapter Treasurer.

A few months later, we attended our first National Gathering in New York City. While there, and over successive yearly gatherings, we heard many stories, attended many workshops and met many people we still consider friends today on our grief journey. We look forward to staying in touch and seeing them each year. They have been an important part of our grief journey.

We are Jeanne and Mike Francisco, Jen's mom and dad, and welcome to a short description of our St. Louis Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA. We have co-facilitated the St. Peters Group since 2010, and co-lead the St. Louis Chapter.

Established in 1995, St. Louis became the 20th BP Chapter, originally organized as one Chapter with six "Groups" (five in Missouri and one in Illinois),

Our St. Peters Group meets monthly at a Knights of Columbus Hall. Jacque Glaeser facilitates the West County Group, which meets monthly at Congregation Share Emeth.

Our chapter was started by Margaret Rose Gerner. After she had lost a son, Arthur and granddaughter, Emily in separate instances, she returned to school for a masters degree in social work, specializing in grief recovery. Margaret used her personal grief recovery experience as the foundation for many articles which help grieving parents and grandparents survive and grow after loss of their children.

The St. Louis Chapter has a board which conducts business meetings at a local hospital on behalf of our groups. The board raises funds, usually an annual Trivia night, which sustains our activities. The Board also produces our bi-monthly Chapter Newsletter, edited by Marilyn Kister, recently "gone green" on-line, and presents our annual December St. Louis Area Candlelight Program which is open to the public.

The Mission Statement of Bereaved Parents of the USA is, "We as Bereaved Parents, help grieving parents and families rebuild their lives following the death of a child." At our St. Peters Group, during our first encounter with parents, we ask that they give us three meetings before they decide if our group is for them. This is so they may hear the variety of voices of experience from meeting participants over time. We also furnish a "Welcome Packet," which includes our local "In the

Beginning" newsletter, which accommodates and welcomes them into our group. The packet also contains materials and additional activity opportunities (i.e., Angel of Hope ceremonies, Dr. Alan Wolfelt presentations, etc.) useful in their grief journey. Newly bereaved parents are advised to take what they need from our meetings and attend for as long as they need and are always welcome back when they need a meeting.

In our St. Peters Group, we spend the first part of our meetings letting members talk about anything they'd like. They share their "joys and concerns." We are very family-oriented. We have members that have been attending for years. They, in-turn help us to help the newly bereaved in the group. We have a sibling coordinator available and on-call.

We provide activities helpful in grief journeys. Prior to Covid, in July, we would have an ice cream social. We provide three different varieties of ice cream and everyone brings their favorite toppings to share. Comfort food makes people comfortable and they will talk more. Prior to Covid, we would have a potluck dinner at our December meeting (always well-attended). Also, in this season, we have two traditions that are strictly optional. We exchange Christmas ornaments in honor of our children. Participants are encouraged to consider home-made ornaments or anything of their choosing. Some use these decorations on a separate tree in honor of our children. As another tradition, also optional, we individually purchase toys and or clothing for a local crisis nursery. We also support a toy drive one of our members has in honor of her daughter, Harper. Items purchased are in honor of all our children.



In years that the National Gathering is not held in the St. Louis Area, we conduct a one-day "mini-gathering" with workshops, speakers and a lunch. Attendance is for anyone, but is geared towards those who may not be able to attend a National Gathering.

Giving back to the organization is important to us. In 2010, we were approached by our, at-the-time group facilitator, already running three BP-USA Groups, who invited us to facilitate the St. Peters Group. She saw the compassion in us to be group facilitators. We knew we had big shoes to fill. That was our mistake—we could never fill those shoes—we had to make the meetings our own in a way we felt comfortable. Giving, again, in 2014-2015, Michael was invited to apply and run for election to the organization's National Board. He was elected to the board and served as President for that year. Lastly, in our own ways, the St. Louis Chapter, West County and St. Peters Groups felt honored to have donated their time, talent and treasure in supporting recent National Gatherings held in the Saint Louis area.

Thank you for following our St. Louis Chapter presentation.  
Jeanne and Mike

# *GRIEF DURING WINTERTIME*

## **How to Cope with Grief During Another Pandemic Winter**

By Jill S. Cohen, Family Grief Counselor

It's wintertime now. The days are getting darker earlier and those who are bereaved will likely feel "darker" earlier too. It's tough to handle grief when it's dark and dreary to begin with, then add the coronavirus pandemic to the mix. Now, you have a very isolated grieving time, with less light and fewer people around to brighten your days.



### **Learning to Cope**

To cope a little bit better, try to keep some of these tips in mind:

### **This Will End**

As hard as it may be, realize that the pandemic will eventually end, and you will be reunited with the comfort of people who support you, keep you company and give you a hug when you need one.

### **Others Are Experiencing Challenges**

Be gentle with some of your supportive friends and family members who don't seem as "available" as you expected them to be. They may be experiencing their own challenges of living through the pandemic, and not intentionally ignoring your grief. Reach out to them if you need to.

### **Stay Active**

Make sure you get outside at least once a day. It's tempting to stay inside where it's warm but push yourself. You need fresh air and a change of scenery. Those are important.

### **Keep Busy**

If you're up to it and have time to fill, try handling some projects which need to be done after the death of a loved one. i.e., sorting through mail and paying bills, collecting photos and creating an album, making a "memory box" of your loved one, organizing files for insurance, banking, health records, and other important paperwork.

Tackling these projects will be helpful to you in the long run, and give you something to focus on, and give you a sense of productivity and accomplishment.

### **Keep Having Fun**

If you have children who are grieving too, play games this winter. Play games (i.e., Dollhouse, or Doctor, for example) that allow the kids to act out their feelings.

This will give their grief an outlet for expression. Also, have kids make memory boxes, dreamcatchers, keep a journal, and do artwork to encourage talking about their loved one and expressing their feelings of loss.

### **Enjoy Movies**

Watch funny movies. Finding a good comedy to watch is one of the best ways to lighten up your mind.

### **Mix Things Up**

Just for a change, try a new or different activity. Try cooking things more adventurously, try building something in the garage, try crafts, find new books to read.

# 1

## Don't scroll past the sad stuff.

It's beautiful to see how people use social media to mourn a loss. A grieving person usually posts in a moment when they need connection, so a simple "like" or a hug reaction can help. The only thing you can do wrong is ignore this kind of post. Too often we worry that we have nothing profound to say, but that's not necessary on social media. Every comment is a small connection—like a hand extended, a pat on the back, or an understanding smile.

**TAMARA WANDEL, PhD**, IS A PROFESSOR OF COMMUNICATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EVANSVILLE.

# 2

## Embrace the discomfort.

According to Jewish wisdom, it's our responsibility to help the stranger. A "stranger" is really anyone who is vulnerable, whether after the loss of a loved one or because of an injustice. Vulnerability tends to make everyone uncomfortable, so I counsel people to honor the discomfort. Sitting in that feeling makes it easier to call someone after their parent dies, or to be with a friend who's received a grim diagnosis. The second thing is to be quiet. What people need more than words is your presence. Be an active listener, even if the talk is about nothing more than baseball. And don't worry about not having answers to big questions, like "Why did this happen?" You just need to show you understand the question.

**ELIANNA YOLKUT** IS A RABBI AND COHOST OF THE PODCAST *NOT YOUR JEWISH MOTHER*.

**People often see the act of extending sympathy as a draining experience, but it actually fills you up.**

# 3

## Consider sympathy fuel for your soul.

People often see the act of extending sympathy as a draining experience, but it actually fills you up. And it's much easier to be a comfort than most of us realize. You can say you made a stew and want to send some of it over. Or mail a present without asking what your friend needs. Having been on the receiving end, I can tell you it's always a delight to be surprised with hand lotion or some silly stationery. To me, extending sympathy is one of our few real superpowers.

**KATE BOWLER, PhD**, IS A HISTORIAN AT DUKE DIVINITY SCHOOL AND THE AUTHOR OF *NO CURE FOR BEING HUMAN*.

# 4

## Send no-pressure invitations.

Something that changes your life in a moment—like my husband's cancer diagnosis—upends your identity. So it helps when friends remind you who you are with calls or texts. Just be sure to relieve the grieving person of any pressure to respond. That means saying, "I'm here if you want to take a break and get a pedicure, but there's no need to reply if it's not a good time."

**LUCY KALANITHI, MD**, IS A CLINICAL ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND THE HOST OF THE PODCAST *GRAVITY*.

# Support That Surrounds

## 2022 BJC Hospice Community Grief Support Programs

### SUPPORT GROUPS

All groups will be held for six consecutive weeks beginning on the dates below:

#### GENERAL GRIEF GROUPS

March 22, in North County, 6:30-8 p.m.

August 16, in North County, 3-4:30 p.m.

#### LOSS OF SPOUSE/PARTNER

October 11, in St. Peters, 6-7:30 p.m.

### GRIEF EVENTS

Lessons Learned from Grief, May 9, 7-8:30 p.m., Virtual  
Memorial Service, Location TBD, June 6, 7-8 p.m., In-person  
Trauma Informed Yoga, September 12, 7-8:30 p.m., Virtual  
Healing Art of Gratitude, November 14, 7-8:30 p.m., Virtual  
Memorial Service, December 6, 7-8 p.m., Virtual



### LOSS OF CHILD

*Weavings is a retreat for mothers who have lost a child that is held at the Pallottine Renewal Center in Florissant, MO.*

April 1-3

October 14-16

We are offering Weavings twice this year. One weekend retreat will be in April and the other will be in October.

Weavings

### SUPPORT FOR GRIEVING KIDS AND TEENS

Grief Event for Kids/Teens, April 18, 7-8:30 p.m., Virtual

*Stepping Stones is a camp for kids ages 6-15 who have lost a friend or family member.*

August 12-14, Camp Wyman in Eureka, MO

Stepping   
Stones

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER FOR ANY OF THESE EVENTS, PLEASE CONTACT BJC HOSPICE AT [GRIEFSUPPORT@BJC.ORG](mailto:GRIEFSUPPORT@BJC.ORG) OR 314.953.1676.

BJC   
Hospice

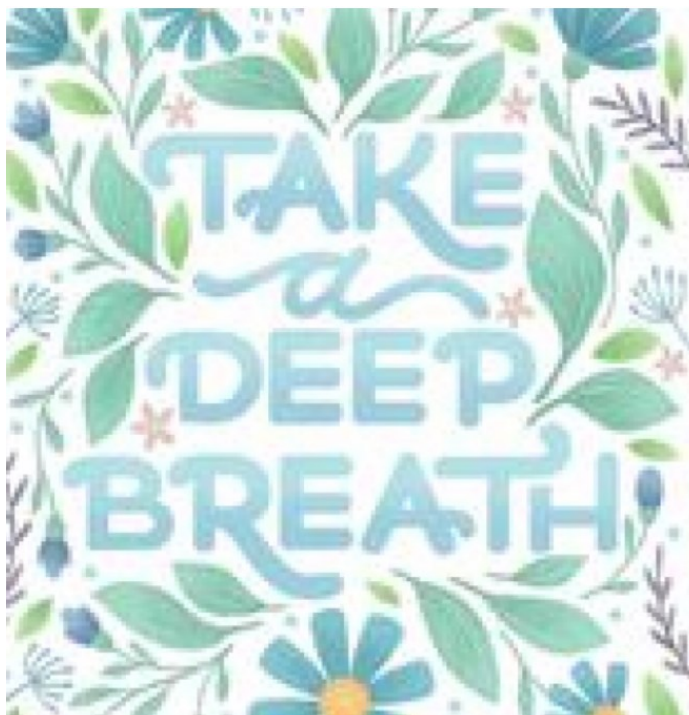
NATIONAL GATHERING 2022

reflecting & connecting

Bereaved Parents USA  
JULY 22-24 ♥ ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

**Announcing Our Keynote Speakers**

Beth D'Angelo ♥ Diane Bergeron ♥ Crystal Webster ♥ Angela Kennecke



Bereaved Parents of the USA

February 02, 2022



Deep breathing is relaxing and efficient, allowing higher volumes of oxygen to reach the body's cells and tissues. Deep breathing can reverse the physical stress response in the body and can help calm and slow down the emotional turbulence in the mind. Just a few deep breaths can have an immediate effect on diffusing emotional energy so there is less reactivity to your emotions.

**Chapter News!** BPUSASTL welcomes Anne Marie Salyer, Patrick's mom, to the Board. She and her husband Steve relocated from Texas. The Salyer's frequently attend the St. Peters meetings.



# AHA News: How Grief Rewires the Brain and Can Affect Health – and What to Do About It

[www.urmc.rochester.edu/encyclopedia](http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/encyclopedia)

WEDNESDAY, March 10, 2021 (American Heart Association News) --

Grief is a common, if not universal, human experience. But that doesn't make it simple.

It's psychological, but it affects people physically. It's a matter of science, but scientists who discuss it can sound poetic. Dr. Katherine Shear, professor of psychiatry at Columbia University School of Social Work in New York, calls grief "the form that love takes when someone we love dies."



COVID-19 has both brought grief and disrupted the way people experience it. But researchers have been examining grief since well before the pandemic.

Simply defining it can be difficult. Shear, who also is director of the Columbia Center for Complicated Grief, said "there are pretty much as many different definitions of grief as there are people." Commonly, it's thought of as a feeling, like sadness. That's not wrong, she said, but it's more accurate to call it "the response to loss," a complex and multifaceted thing with yearning and longing at its core.

Its health implications are serious.

A 2014 study in JAMA Internal Medicine showed that within 30 days of their partner's death, people ages 60 and older had more than twice the risk of a stroke or heart attack compared to people who hadn't suffered such a loss. That followed a 2012 study in the American Heart Association journal Circulation showing the danger of a heart attack was highest in the first 24 hours after the death of a loved one and people with existing cardiovascular problems might be at particular risk.

Other research has linked grief to disrupted sleep, immune system changes and the risk of blood clots.

Dr. Lisa M. Shulman, professor of neurology at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore, said much of the physical effect of grief stems from how our brains respond.

The stress from the death of a loved one jolts our personal identity, our view of how we fit into the world, Shulman said. It sounds like a philosophical problem, but the brain is built to perceive an existential threat as a threat to our very existence.

This triggers what most people know as the "fight or flight" response. Stress hormones course throughout the body. "Your heart starts racing, your blood pressure increases, your respiratory rate increases, you become sweaty, as the body marshals defenses for you to protect yourself, one way or another," Shulman said.

Someone who has experienced a traumatic loss, she said, might feel such a response kick in when they enter a restaurant that reminds them of a loved one, or even when someone brings them up in conversation.

But people don't grasp why. "Instead, you just feel this incredible, physiologic response and a rising sense of anxiety, or even panic. And you're flummoxed by it."

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## AHA News: How Grief Rewires the Brain and Can Affect Health – and What to Do About It - Continued from page 9

Shulman understands this firsthand. Her interest in the neurobiology of grief followed the loss of her husband, Dr. Bill Weiner, a fellow neurologist, who died of cancer in 2012.

Despite her prior experience in dealing with grieving patients, she was unprepared for it herself. The first two years, she said, were particularly difficult. At times she felt disoriented, confused, in a fog – responses that are the brain's attempts to dissociate itself from emotional pain.

Such reactions can make a bereaved person feel isolated, she said, because people feel their problems are unique. But after writing the book "Before and After Loss: A Neurologist's Perspective on Loss, Grief and Our Brain" and giving regular talks on the subject, she's found talking with others can help. That is why the pandemic has made things extra difficult for people who've been cut off from the comfort of others.

Many people have identical experiences with grief, she said – right down to the same dreams.

"People do respond very positively to the message that the experience of grief and loss can be normalized by understanding why and what you're feeling," she said.

Grief can reinforce brain wiring that effectively locks the brain in a permanent stress response, Shulman said. To promote healthy rewiring, people need to strengthen the parts of the brain that can regulate that response. That can involve "a whole range of creative and contemplative practices," from painting to meditation or expressions of faith.

Journaling helped her. By writing about disturbing memories or troubling dreams, "you can read it over in your own words and annotate it over time. And as you do that, you are becoming increasingly aware of these unprocessed thoughts, memories and emotions. And that is the way you start to rebuild more positive neural connections."

Shear said having someone to confide in – even if it's by video call, phone or letter – is important.

Grief, she said, is a lengthy path, marked with milestones people must face – and detours where they can get stuck. Her center offers a website full of information about grief. So does the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Grief never just goes away, Shear said. "If the loss is permanent, then so is the grief, because we're defining it as a response to loss."

But the way people experience grief is fluid. It can shift over the course of a day or an hour.

"It will naturally kind of surge and then recede," she said. "We sort of oscillate between confronting the pain of the loss, and then being able to kind of set it aside or compartmentalize it."

Eventually, it can evolve to a place where it resides mostly in the background, with only occasional periods of stronger, noticeable thoughts and feelings about the person who died. And in time, people find ways to let good memories in without triggering stress.

"We never have no response to the fact that someone we love died," she said. "But it does change its form over time."

*[American Heart Association News](#) covers heart and brain health. Not all views expressed in this story reflect the official position of the American Heart Association. Copyright is owned or held by the American Heart Association, Inc., and all rights are reserved. If you have questions or comments about this story, please email [editor@heart.org](mailto:editor@heart.org).*

**By Michael Merschel**

# 10 Common Myths About Grief

[www.good-grief.org](http://www.good-grief.org) | Morristown and Princeton New Jersey

Myths often fill in the gaps where we find ourselves without answers or lack true understanding about a social phenomenon. Myths are rooted in folklore, culture, and breakdowns in communication and knowledge between generations. Death – the cessation of life that all living things will undergo – became abnormalized over the past 150 years in the USA. As a result, our response to death and grief is often ineffective, misguided, and makes this difficult time of life even harder. Unfortunately, children experience the brunt of this burden when looking to adults for help.

## **THE FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF**

Grief is not a linear process. The five stages of grief, popularized in the 70's by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, are often misunderstood and incorrectly applied. There are many aspects of grief, but there is no singular grief process. Each person grieves different and uniquely depending on many internal (emotional and psychological) and external (support systems and community) variables. Grief is not a prescribed experience that can be contained to categories or types. Grief is a normal and natural coping response to loss. Grief serves a purpose through the process of making sense of a loss.

## **KIDS ATTENDING FUNERALS**

While it is natural to want to “protect” children from the painful reality of death, end of life rituals are vital to a child's understanding of death and a key component of grief and mourning. Funerals are a communal tradition that serves the purpose of transitioning, memorializing, and making meaning

after a person's death. Children who are excluded from funerals often are resentful of that decision because it was not their choice.

You can “protect” a child by including them in a funeral. Start by telling them what to expect. Walk them through what they will see, who might come, what people might say, and how people might feel. Children are wonderfully inquisitive and will be curious at the funeral. Answer questions honestly and confess when you don't know the answer.

Many parents find it helpful to have a point person during the funeral. Identify someone you and your child trust to be available if the child wants to take a break or stop participating in the ritual. The majority of children will want to participate. Give kids the facts they need, normalize the experience, and let them know the options available. If they decide they do not want to participate that's okay, too. Just be sure they are making the decision with unbiased facts.

## **TIME HEALS ALL WOUNDS**

Grief does not have a timeline. That doesn't mean the intensity of the experience will last forever. It will evolve and reemerge throughout a person's development. Grief becomes more manageable and less intense with support systems and a caring community of family and friends.

## **CLOSURE**

We don't just get over it. We don't just move on. We can't compartmentalize grief by closing the door as if it didn't happen. Closure is a false idea that



neglects the fact that grief is a lifelong process. Grief can appear in cycles and present itself again intensely many years after the death. The goal is not closure, but rather integration. Through strengthening our sense of connection to the person who died, having opportunities to share our story, processing the various feelings, and finding ways to continue to keep them in our lives, we are able to continue living a meaningful and healthy life. Compartmentalizing and “closing the door” doesn't work, and in the end will get us into trouble.

## **TELLING CHILDREN SECRETS IS HELPFUL TO PROTECT THEM**

Some people die messy deaths. Death can be complicated. However, lies and secrets don't make the death or grief easier. In fact, when the truth finally comes out (and it will), kids will have to grieve the death again because they will have to make sense of it in light of new information. Secrets and lies actually make it harder. Facts, honesty, and a support system make complicated deaths more manageable to grieve.

## **NOT TALKING ABOUT DEATH KEEPS US HAPPY**

Humans are social creatures. We thrive off of connection, understanding, and belonging. Not talking about

Continue on page 12



death or grief assumes we can live a compartmentalized life, and ultimately blocks connection and understanding. Silence around death and grief leaves us unprepared for future losses, and also leaves us without the tools we need to establish healthy coping skills, build resilience, and establish a helpful support system.

### ***GRIEF IS AN EMOTION***

Grief is the compilation of feelings. But, it is also a physical experience that causes fatigue, headaches, bellyaches, and other physical ailments. Grief is an intellectual experience in which we work hard to “wrap our heads” around the fact that someone was here one moment and then gone the next. Grief is also spiritual and forces us to wrestle with questions of “how” and “why” bad things happen. It also prompts us to question the meaning of life. Grief is not just emotional. All four components of grief comprise our response to the loss or death of someone or something we care about. Grief is an experience that touches all parts of what makes us human.



### ***GRIEF IS TRAUMATIC***

Trauma has a very clear definition: a self-perceived threat. Many people experience trauma and grief after the death of someone they love. However, grief and trauma are not synonymous.<sup>1</sup> Some expressions of grief may look like or sound like trauma, but that doesn't mean it is

necessarily trauma. We need to be careful with labels that influence the self-identity and the perceptions and response of others. Labels can also get in the way of what type of support is provided. So, unless you are a professional, stay clear of words and labels that you don't fully understand.

### ***GRIEF CAN BE INAPPROPRIATE***

Social constructs create ideas about what is normal, abnormal, complicated, or otherwise. Remember that grief is unique to each person. It is a normal response. Across cultures people grieve in a lot of different ways. In many cultures families dig up their dead (including in Europe), some decorate bones, worship ancestors, wear black for a year, party after the death, while others are somber. What is “normal” is a social construct. If a particular expression of grief is helpful and healthy for a particular community, then it is likely an appropriate response.

### ***CHILDREN DON'T GRIEVE***

An infant grieves. Starting at birth, a child will grieve the death of a parent. An infant will be clingy and colicky when sensing something is wrong and doesn't smell or see mom. Just because a 2-year-old can't fully articulate his feelings does not mean he is not grieving. ■

<sup>1</sup> Kaplow, J. B., Howell, K. H., & Layne, C. M. (2014). Do Circumstances of the Death Matter? Identifying Socio-environmental Risks for Grief-Related Psychopathology in Bereaved Youth. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 27*(1), 42-49.

# MEETING TIMES & PLACES

**\*\*\*Call for meeting status\*\*\***



<b>BUSINESS / FACILITATORS MEETINGS</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>
<b>ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME!</b>  <b>CONTACT: Mike &amp; Jeanne Francisco</b> <b>636.947.9403</b>	BJC Hospital St. Peters Medical Center Bldg. 1 St. Peters, MO 63376	<b>Contact Mike &amp; Jeanne. Meeting dates vary depending upon unforeseen events.</b>	9:00 AM

<b>GROUP MEETINGS</b>	<b>MEETING LOCATION</b> Some are currently on pause pending COVID restrictions	<b>FACILITATOR(S)</b>	<b>DAY</b>	<b>TIME</b>
St. Peters / St. Charles, MO	Knights of Columbus Hall 5701 Hwy N St. Charles, MO 63304	Mike & Jeanne Francisco 636.947.9403	1st Thursday - <b>Please contact facilitators for meeting status</b>	7:00pm
St. Peters / St. Charles, MO—Siblings Facilitator	Same as above	Samantha Schaefer 636.293.1099	Same as above	7:00pm
West County Group St. Louis, MO	Shaare Emeth 11645 Ladue (Ballas & Ladue) St. Louis, MO 63141 Library -	Jacque Glaeser 636.236.5103 jlynn63021@yahoo.com	Fourth Tuesday, members will be emailed reminders. Contact facilitator for schedule	7:00pm

<b>SPECIALIZED MEETINGS</b>	<b>MEETING LOCATIONS</b> All may be on pause pending COVID restrictions—phone facilitators	<b>FACILITATOR(S) / CONTACT(S)</b>	<b>DAY</b>	<b>TIME</b>
SOUL: (Surviving Overdose and Understanding Loss)	Please call for meeting times/location/and or zoom	MaryAnn Lemonds 314.282.7453 (landline) 314.330.7586 (cell) survivingOUL@gmail.com	Please call for meeting times/location/and or zoom	
Life Crisis Center Survivors of Suicide	9355 Olive Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63132	314.647.3100	Wednesdays	7:00 pm
PALS: Parents affected by the loss of a child to suicide	St. Luke's Hospital (Hwy 141 & 40) St. Louis, MO 63017	Linda Fehrmann <b>Currently meeting on line</b> 314.853.7925 lindafehrmann36@gmail.com	4th Saturday	10:30 am
Survivors of Suicide	Provident Behavioral Health	Linda Fehrmann, Call to confirm meetings 314.853.7925	1st & 3rd Monday	6:30 pm
Trees of Righteousness Grief Support Group— Any loss	Christian Hospital in the main lobby conference room—Please call Johnnie for correct location.	Johnnie Coleman 314.740.3602	3rd Tuesdays	6:00pm to approx.
BPUSA Virtual Bereaved Sibling Chapter — Ages 18+	Please email <a href="mailto:bpvirtualsiblingchapter@gmail.com">bpvirtualsiblingchapter@gmail.com</a> for the zoom link.	Katie Alger 845-443-0614	Last Thursday	7:00pm

# TELEPHONE FRIENDS

## BPUSA ST. LOUIS CHAPTER CO-CHAIRS:

**Mike & Jeanne Francisco**

**Landline: 636-947-9403**

Accident, Auto	Theresa DeMarco	636.544.3478
Accident, Non-Vehicular	Bill Lagemann	573.242.3632
Adult Sibling	Samantha Schaefer	636.293.1099
Drugs/ Alcohol	MaryAnn Lemonds	314.330.7586
Grandparents	TBD	
Child with Disability	Linda Frohning	314.721.5517
Illness	Marilyn Kister	636.634.6019
Jefferson City	Sandy Brungardt	314.954.2410
Murder	TBD	
Only Child /Single Parent	Donna Arnold	314.608.3655
Suicide	Linda Fehrmann	314.853.7325

**As always, for up-to-date information on BPUSAStL events, visit [www.bpusastl.org](http://www.bpusastl.org)**

### Representation in Lieu of Meetings

Franklin County, MO	Bill & Vicki Lagemann	573.242.3632
	Cindy Morris	314.954.1810
Tri-County, MO	Brenda Wilson	573.438.4559
OPEN ARMS (Parents Left Behind)	Kathy Dunn <i>kathydunn333@yahoo.com</i>	314.807.5798

### Newsletter Submissions

Cut-off date for our next issue is

**April 15, 2022**

Send your submissions (poems, articles, love gifts) to:

Newsletter  
PO Box 1115  
St. Peters, MO 63376

or to :

[snowwhite6591@gmail.com](mailto:snowwhite6591@gmail.com)

Your writings may help someone.



### OUR COMMITMENT



Part of **BPUSAStL's** commitment to you is that we are the space where our parents and families communicate. Printed in your newsletter are articles to educate and ones that are private expressions of writers. We offer our writings only for your reflection. Sometimes serving nature or establishing routines signal solace to the writer. Often they turn to religion or spirituality for comfort and guidance.

**BPUSAStL** share these insights not only for your contemplation but also to acknowledge our community's many and rich sources for strength and hope.



**Some souls leave behind a trail of light that is never forgotten.**

# Children of BPUSASTL's Board Representation



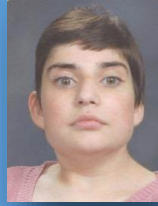
**Julie Bardle**  
Daughter of  
Marilyn Kister  
Newsletter  
Editor



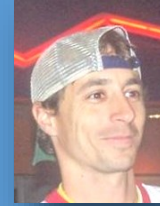
**Joseph DeMarco**  
Son of  
Theresa DeMarco  
Treasurer



**Jennifer Francisco**  
Daughter of Jeanne  
& Mike  
Francisco  
St. Peters Group  
Facilitators  
& Co-Chairs



**Natalie Frohning**  
Daughter of  
Linda Frohning



**Mickey Hale**  
Son of  
Jacque Glaeser  
W. County Group  
Facilitator &  
Secretary



**J. P. Rosciglione**  
Son of Terre  
Rosciglione  
Trivia  
Coordinator



**Patrick Salyer**  
Son of Anne Marie  
and Steve Salyer



**Rosie Umhoefer**  
Daughter of  
Rosann Umhoefer



**Matthew Wiese**  
Son of Kim Wiese



**Arthur Gerner / Emily Gerner**  
Son & Granddaughter of  
Margaret Gerner  
Founder of BPUSASTL

## Children of BPUSASTL's Special Events



**J. P. Rosciglione**  
Son of Terre  
Rosciglione  
Trivia  
Coordinator



**Aaron Cole**  
"Aaron's Ms.  
Courtney"  
Trivia Coordinator

**Danny Brauch**  
Brother of  
Samantha  
Schaefer  
St. Peters Group  
Sibling Facilitator



**If you wish to make a love donation - IN ANY AMOUNT - We will include a picture of your child(ren) (See page 3 of this newsletter)**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF CHILD(REN) \_\_\_\_\_

BIRTH DATE(S) \_\_\_\_\_

ANGEL DATE(S) \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE A LOVE GIFT DEDICATED TO MY CHILD(REN) IN THE MONTH OF: \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO DONATE IN LOVING MEMORY OF \_\_\_\_\_

Some days  
I feel  
SAD

Some days  
I feel  
ANGRY

But the thing  
I feel the most...

**YOUR  
ABSENCE**

[www.facebook.com/Missinglovedone](http://www.facebook.com/Missinglovedone)



# A Letter to Anyone Grieving

@GlitterAndGrief

I know you feel *broken*,  
even when you're trying to be *strong*.  
I know your world has *shattered*,  
yet somehow you're still going.  
You may not feel like it, or even want it,  
but you, my dear, are *healing*.

It's not always going to be *pretty*.  
It's not always going to feel *peaceful*.  
But next time you look at yourself in the  
mirror. Please remember, you've kept  
going.

Whether that's because you're living in  
honor of their *memory*. Or living a life  
they'd be *proud* to watch over. Or just  
because you simply have no other  
*choice*. You're doing it. And I hope  
some part of you recognizes your own  
*resiliency* in all of this grief.



## WELCOME

We are the parents whose children have died. We are the siblings whose brothers and sisters no longer walk with us through life. We are the grandparents who have buried grandchildren. We come together as Bereaved Parents of the USA to provide a safe space where grieving families can connect, share our stories, and learn to rebuild our lives. We attend meetings whenever we can and for as long as we find helpful. We share our fears, confusion, anger, guilt, frustrations, emptiness, and feelings of hopelessness, knowing these emotions will be met with compassion and understanding. As we support, comfort and encourage one another, we offer hope and healing. As we confront the deaths of our loved ones, our shared grief brings us to a common ground that transcends differences, building mutual understanding across the boundaries of culture, race, faith, values, abilities, and lifestyle. Together we celebrate the lives of our children, siblings, and grandchildren, sharing the joys and the heartbreaks as well as the love that will never fade. Together, strengthened by the bonds we create, we offer what we have learned from one another to every bereaved family, no matter how recent or long ago the death.

We are the Bereaved Parents of the USA.

We welcome you

