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Springwood Qld 4127

Caring, Support, Awareness, Education

Telephone Help Line 24/7: 1300 767 022

Issue No. 3

May / June 2012

Helping a Man Who Is Grieving

-- *LIVING Beyond Suicide A14*

A man you care about is grieving. Someone he loved has died and you would like to help him during this difficult time. This brochure will help you know what to do and say as you offer your love and companionship to your friend.

Men feel the need to be strong.

Even in the face of tragic loss, many men in our society still feel the need to be self-contained, stoic and to express little or no outward emotion. It is very much in vogue today to encourage men to openly express their feelings, but in practice few men do so. The outward expression of grief is called mourning. All men grieve when someone they love dies, but if they are to heal, they must also mourn.

You can help by:

1. offering a "safe place" for your friend to mourn
2. telling him you'd like to help
3. offering to listen whenever he wants to talk
4. not worrying so much about what you will say - just concentrate on the words that are being shared with you
5. Letting him know that in your presence at least, it's OK for him to express whatever feelings he might have-sadness, anger, guilt, fear
6. assuring him that around you, he doesn't have to be strong because you will offer support without judgment.



Photo owner unknown

Men feel the need to be active.

The grief experience naturally creates a turning inward and slowing down on the part of the mourner, a temporary self-focus that is vital to the ultimate healing process. Yet for many men this is threatening. Masculinity is equated with striving, moving and activity. Many grieving men throw themselves into their work in an attempt to distract themselves from their painful feelings.

- Maybe you can offer your friend both activity and time for reflection.
- Ask him to shoot hoops or play golf.
- Go for a hike or fishing with your friend.
- Let him know that you really want to hear how he's doing, how he's feeling.
- In the context of these activities he just might share some of his innermost thoughts.

Active problem-solving is another common male response to grief. If a father's child dies of SIDS, for example, the father may become actively involved in fundraising for SIDS research. A husband whose wife is killed may focus on the legal circumstances surrounding the death. Such activities can be healing for grieving men and should be encouraged.

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2012 Meeting Dates for the Annerley Support Group (Brisbane)

Friday fortnightly at 7:30pm

May 11, 25 August 3, 17, 31

June 8, 22 September 14, 28

July 6, 20 October 12, 26

Management Committee

President: Cherrie Cran
Vice President: Donna Cumming
Treasurer: Darrin Larney
Secretary: Jennifer McMahon
Fundraising Coordinator: Lauren Leslie
Members: Elna Rongonui & Mark Williams

S.O.S.B.S.A. Support Group Meetings

Brisbane Support Group

Australian College of Community Services
 473 Annerley Road, Annerley (Cnr Fanny St)

Fortnightly from Friday 6th January 7:30 pm

Contact 1300 767 022

Cairns Support Group

Cairns Red Cross, Douglas House
 198 Grafton Street, Cairns

2nd Tuesday of every month at 7:30 pm

Contact Fran on 4045 2955
 or 0407 695 891

Bundaberg Support Group

Neighbourhood Centre
 111 Targo Street, Bundaberg

2nd Wednesday of every month at 10:30 am

Contact Peter on 4155 1015

NEW BRANCH! Mackay Support Group

Gordon White Library Meeting Room
 54 Phillip Street, Mt Pleasant, Mackay

2nd Saturday of every month at 2 pm

Contact Renee on 0412 448 805
 or Kim on 0430 186 149

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Become an SOSBSA member for 2012!

Pensioner / Student	\$20
Adult member	\$30
Family	\$50
Not-For-Profit Org.	\$50
Affiliate Business	\$100

Visit www.sosbsa.org.au or contact secretary@sosbsa.org.au for membership form or to renew.

SOSBSA Get-Together

Glindemann Park, Logan Rd,

Holland Park

Sunday 17th June 1:00pm

BYO plate to share, picnic blanket, chairs

Contact Cherrie on 0423 567 055 for any details.



President's Report

Welcome everyone to our newsletter for May/June 2012.

Mother's Day is upon us again, and this can be a difficult time for those who have lost their mother or partner or for those Mum's who have lost children or partners. Know that you are not alone and that you will be in our thoughts and prayers on that day.

I'd like to wish all the Mum's out there special wishes for Mother's Day. For me personally, this will be the third mother's day without my son, and as time marches by it's still sometimes difficult to believe that he won't be there.

So know that I understand how you will be feeling and that I will be thinking of you all.

I'd also like to congratulate you all. If you are receiving this newsletter in hardcopy then you are either a member or have made a special request. If you are receiving this by email then you are also to be congratulated.

An update on what's been happening in the Management Committee:

- In June there will be 3 members of the Management Committee attending the upcoming Postvention Conference in Sydney – this will be Cherrie, Darrin and Mark. If anyone would like to contribute to the costs – we would very much appreciate it, or if you know someone who would like to provide sponsorship for us to attend this very important conference so that we can bring back to you all of the things that we learn it would be very very much appreciated.
- A letter was sent to the Office of the State Coroner asking that they be aware of how they interact with survivors of suicide.
- There was another request to start a new group in regional Qld, and this isn't going to progress at this time.

We are still currently working through re-writing the publications and we are still planning on holding a number of workshops / seminars during the remainder of the year.

If anyone has any ideas for fundraising or for workshops / seminars that you would like to see run – please don't hesitate to let us know, either by emailing Jen at secretary@sosbsa.org.au; by phoning 1300 767 022; in writing or by visiting our facebook page.

The **candlelight memorial** will be held at New Farm Park on Friday **13 July**, so if you have any contributions for the booklet please get them through to Jen as soon as possible. This could be a photo, a song, a poem or something that you would like to say to your loved one.



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President's Report cont.

Continued from page 3...

Our **facebook** community has grown to **over 1000** – What an outstanding place it is becoming. Please drop by and visit us there (just search **SOSBSA**).

For our corporate recipients of the newsletter, I will be sending one last hard copy to you, to allow you to get back to us and confirm that you actually want and use our newsletters. You will note that with this newsletter you have been provided with a notice to send back to us if you are not a paid member but have reason to require a hard copy of our newsletter to be sent to you.

If you are able to receive them by email – and download them then we would appreciate that too.

Take care of yourselves

Love and peace to all of you

Cherrie

*There is no grief like the
grief that does not speak*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Chris

You were the light
the joy of sunshine
now there is darkness
and empty tomorrows

You were the laughter
that brought the smiles
now there is silence
and acid tears

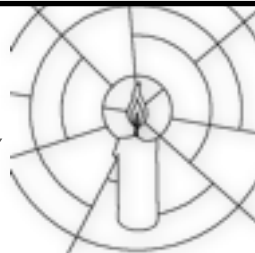
You were the soulmate
the pain that was shared
now there is heartache
for lost moments gone

You were the child
you were the man
you were here
and now you are gone

Olwen Schubert, June 1991

On the 9th of June 2012, my darling Chris, who was 21, will have been gone as long as he lived.

*Candlelight
Memorial*



All welcome.

Please contact Cherrie on
0423 567 055 for details.

FRIDAY 13TH JULY 2012, 7PM

New Farm Park, Rotunda



Take time out for yourself on the beautiful Sunshine Coast at a Recovery Weekend designed to provide you with skills to help you cope better during times of stress.

The weekends offer:

- * gentle daily exercise that you can do at home
- * cooking class focusing on simple, nutritious meals
- * techniques to quieten a busy mind
- * Recovery Planning session 1-1
- * massage (optional)
- * caring, supportive environment

Upcoming weekends:
May 18-20, July 20-22, Sept 14-16

For more information, contact Bronwen on 0410640803 or visit www.rosesintheocean.com.au

Call for Stamp Donations.

Thank you to those kind people who have sent in a few unused stamps for us to use. It all helps to keep our costs down so we can use our valuable funds in other ways to support the bereaved.



If you have a few stamps you could send our way, please post to:

**P.O. Box 334
Springwood Qld 4127**

Candlelight Memorial



Our Candlelight Memorial will be coming up on 13th July. This event is free to attend.

If attending, you may wish to submit a poem to be read out or a favourite song to be played on the night, or a photo to be included in the booklet.

Please submit any poems/songs or photos, either by mail to:
P.O. Box 334
Springwood Qld 4127

or by email to secretary@sosbsa.org.au

THANK YOU

Thank you to **Kathy & Bryan Pollard** for their generous donation of stamps to help with posting newsletters and information packs. Much appreciated. xxxx



Thank you also to our many **Facebook supporters** who send words of comfort every day to those of us grieving and in need. We have all built a strong online community and you should each be proud of yourselves for reaching out to others even during your own grief. xxxx

Count the Cost

Parents lost their beloved Child,
Siblings a Brother or Sister
A Partner, their Life's Love.
Husbands lose a Wife,
To a Wife a Husband is mourned.
Sons and Daughters will never grow and
learn from that parent.
Nieces and Nephews, lose an Aunt or Uncle
Grandparents lose a well loved Grandchild
Aunts and Uncles lose a Niece or Nephew
now gone.
Cousins have lost a childhood playmate
School friends a Buddy,
Co- workers a mate
Close friends an accomplice in fun and
daring,
Extended families and friends join in the
ripple effect of grieving
Countless others lose the chance to ever
know this person.
So many hearts now broken, so many dreams
now lost
So many questions left unanswered
How do we count the cost!

~ K Lester 2012

We miss him every moment of every day.

-- Jeanette Bath

My youngest son Miles passed away on 9/10th April 2010 aged 18 from suicide. We still cant believe he has gone and I know part of me died with him that day. Here is a little of his 'story'.

In October 2011 we took some of Miles's ashes back to England to bury them there with his dad who had passed away nearly ten years previously. When I stood in the church that day reading the eulogy, it wasn't as hard as I thought it would be and I took strength from remembering how as a little boy of age 9, Miles stood there in the very same spot and spoke so eloquently about his dad all those years ago. The first thing he said was he wished his dad was there that day to see all the people who were there for him. I could say that about Miles as the church was packed to the rafters and it was the third service there had been for him. In Miles' words, he would have been stoked. I think it was a testament to what sort of young man he was, always ready to give a kind or cheerful word to help someone and always there to support his friends when they needed him. It has been quite amazing to see how many people's lives he has touched over the years on both sides of the world.

When his sister read the eulogy at his funeral in Sydney, she talked about some of the funny things he had said and done over the years and there were many to choose from – his



unnatural fear of ducks – plastic or real, his delight at being rescued from a locked toilet as a child and loving "Fireman Sam" all the more for doing it and even selling sweets at his dad's funeral to help cheer everyone up that day and amassing forty pounds in the process!! He always saw the best in everyone, had a great sense of humour and fun but was always very caring and compassionate too.

He did go off the rails as a teenager and made some very bad choices, but it was the nature of the addictions he had that caused him to have to go through his private pain again and again. I try to remember that his final response to this pain was to see it over, both for him and for those he loved. I also believe that in Miles's case his addictions having started so young, and in the ignorance of his age, are themselves an indictment on our society and culture but not on Miles himself.

My pain as his mother will never be over with and I am also angry at the waste of life and potential everyone saw so clearly in Miles, but I am not angry with Miles because I know he genuinely tried over and over to have a different outcome. I just hope that one day I will become stronger through my pain and the memories of my wonderful son who loved life, perhaps a touch too much, will bring me immense joy and will help me to grow through my grief.

He was and will continue to be a wonderful younger brother to his two siblings and would also have been a terrific uncle to his two nieces born since he died. He will continue to be a huge part of our lives forever. He might have lost his way for a little while, but he never lost sight of the fact that we all loved him, were always there for him and always forgave him. It was just that he wasn't able to forgive himself.

He will never leave our hearts and we will grieve for him every day for the rest of our lives.

Miles Alastair Liddell
11-9-1991 - 9/10-4-2010

Helping a Man Who Is Grieving *cont.*

-- *LIVING Beyond Suicide A14*

Continued from page 1...

Men feel the need to be protectors.

Men are generally thought of as the "protectors" of the family. They typically work to provide their spouses and children with a warm, safe home, safe transportation and good medical care. So when a member of his family dies, the "man of the house" may feel guilty. No matter how out of his control the death was, the man may feel deep down that he has failed at protecting the people in his care.

If your friend expresses such thoughts, you will probably feel the need to reassure him that the death was not his fault. Actually, you may help your friend more by just listening and trying to understand. By allowing him to talk about his feelings of failure, you are helping him to work through these feelings in his own way and his own time.

It's OK for men to grieve differently.

We've said that men feel the need to be strong and active in the face of grief.

Such responses are OK as long as your friend isn't avoiding his feelings altogether.

It's also OK for men to feel and express rage, to be more cognitive or analytical about the death, to not cry. All of these typically masculine responses to grief may help your friend heal; there is no one "right" way to mourn a death.

Avoid clichés.

Sometimes words, particularly clichés, can be extremely painful for mourners. Clichés are trite comments often intended to provide simple solutions to difficult realities. Men are often told "You'll get over this" or "Don't worry, you and Susie (can) have another child" or "Think about the good times."

Comments like these are not constructive. Instead, they hurt because they diminish a very real and very painful loss.

Make contact.

Your presence at the funeral is important. As a ritual, the funeral provides an opportunity for you to express your love and concern at this time of need. As you pay tribute to a life that is now passed, you have a chance to support your grieving friend. At the funeral, a touch of your hand, a look in your eye or even a hug communicates more than words could ever say.

But don't just attend the funeral then disappear. Remain available afterwards as well. Grief is a process, and it may take your friend years to reconcile himself to his new life. Remember that your grieving friend may need you more in the weeks and months after the funeral than at the time of the death.

Excerpt republished with permission by Michael Hawke, Anglicare SA.

LIVING Beyond Suicide: free practical and sensitive support for families in the hours and days after a suicide.

Phone 1300 76 11 93 between 10am – 10pm any day

For other helpful articles see: www.anglicare-sa.org.au/lbs



Photo owner unknown

A Spooky Story

-- Janet Camileri



On 24 August 2011 I found out that my mother had passed away ... 4 ½ years earlier. The details are unclear but it seems that she died from the after-effects of a botched suicide attempt (she had attempted suicide many times before).

As I was putting the wheelie bins away a couple of days after I found out, I noticed a tie on the road just in front of my house. Although it was a bit muddy and wet, I could clearly see Bugs Bunny grinning at me.

I picked it up, mud and all, and stared at it.

You see, when I was a tiny tot, my Mum used to call me her little bunny rabbit. I had rabbits on my first cutlery set, a Bunnykins bowl. There were even bunnies on my paint apron as you can see in the photo below.



My favourite TV show was Bugs Bunny, and Mum used to tell a funny story of how I couldn't pronounce Bugs Bunny and instead called him "Gugs Gunny". She would patiently sound out "B - b - b - b - b - b - b - b - b - b - **B**ugs **B**unny" to help me learn to say it properly, and I would ever so carefully repeat "B - b - b - b - b - b - b - b - b - b - **G**ugs **G**unny!"

When I saw Bugs Bunny on the ground in front of me, I couldn't help thinking that somehow my Mum was sending me a message from heaven, that she was well and happy, remembering the good times and letting me know how much she loved her little girl.

This was a very special sign to me. Mum and I (and in fact mum and all of my siblings) were estranged for a number of years before her death. She suffered from bipolar disorder and borderline personality disorder which grew worse as she got older.

Despite the fact that we hadn't spoken for many years, I had worked hard at forgiving her and had reached a place where although I didn't want to renew contact, I sincerely hoped and prayed that she had found peace and happiness in her life.

Her severe mental issues robbed me of my mother many years before she actually passed. I liken it to Alzheimer's, where as the illness takes hold and the memories fade, the person becomes just a shell, no longer themselves. The mother I knew and loved as a child disappeared a long time ago, eaten away from the inside out by the bitterness and mental torment she suffered.

Perhaps it was just a coincidence, but to me, that Bugs Bunny tie is very precious. I have washed it and now keep it in a drawer with other sentimental keepsakes and I'm grateful for the comfort it has brought me.

"Coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous." – Albert Einstein

This story first appeared on my blog at <http://footprintsaustralia.com/blog/2011/09/07/a-spooky-story/>.

Other Suicide Support Groups

If you would like to add your suicide support group to this page, please email secretary@sosbsa.org.au.

Sunshine Coast



Head High Young People Living Beyond Suicide Support Group

Maroochy Neighbourhood
Centre
Fifth Avenue, Maroochydore
Linda —5479 0394

Meetings are held last
Thursday of the
month at 4:30 —6:30pm.

Caloundra Living Beyond Suicide Support Group

42 Croydon Avenue
Currimundi

Jeanine and Ron —5491 7452

Meetings are held every 1st
Monday of the month at
10:00am-12 noon.

Chermside



Lifeline Brisbane North

766 Gympie Road
Chermside
Monthly: First Tuesday of each
month
Time: 6:00pm—8:00pm
Contact: Lyndall Stafford
Email:
enquiries@uccommunity.org.au
Phone: 07 3624 2400

Also

Lifeline facilitates an 8-week
closed therapeutic group for the
bereaved by suicide (daytime at
Chermside and night time at
Fortitude Valley).

Contact: Lyndall Stafford at
above phone number or email
address.

Gold Coast



Lifeline

2791 Gold Coast Road
Broadbeach
Monthly: 1st Friday of the
month
Time: 6:30-8:30pm
Phone: 5579 6000

NSW

Lifeline Harbour To Hawkesbury
4 Park Ave, Gordon, NSW
Monthly: 2nd Thursday of the
month 7-9pm.

Phone: 02 9498 8805

Email: admin@lifelineh2h.com

If you wish to receive this newsletter via email, please contact us on
secretary@sosbsa.org.au.

In Memoriam

If you would like an 'in memoriam', please send an anniversary record to SOSBSA, P.O. Box 334, Springwood 4127 or email to secretary@sosbsa.org.au.

Loved one lost to suicide: Ann Sutherland

Date of Birth: 9th May 1968

Message: I never go a day without missing you or crying over you. Every day seems to be a struggle, you were the best Mum, I will forever love you and miss you.

Your Name: Emily Foster

Date of Death: 12th June 2011

Loved one lost to suicide: Kevin

Date of Birth: 5th September 1986

Message: Love you always. Mum xo

Your Name: Michaelle

Date of Death: 16th May 2009

Loved one lost to suicide: James Pritchard Leslie

Date of Birth: 16th May 1981

Message: I take you to be my husband, my closest friend and one true love. I will cherish our friendship and love you today, tomorrow and forever. I will trust you and honour you, I will laugh with you and cry with you. I will love you faithfully through the best and the worst, the difficult and the easy. What may come, I will always be there. As I have given you my hand to hold, so I give you my life to share. Xxx Your Lauren

Your Name: Lauren Leslie

Date of Death: 27th June 2011

Loved one lost to suicide: John Frantz

Date of Birth: 12th July 1975

Message: I miss you John, I know you up above taking care of Zachary for me. You would be so proud of the kids. Matthew is almost 21 now, Josh is graduating high school next yr. and Halie and Grant are going into 6th grade. Watch over them for me. I love you and Ill see you again someday. Love your big sis...

Your Name: Dawn Fortier

Date of Death: 20th June 2001

Loved one lost to suicide: Christian Paul Schubert

Date of Birth: 14th May 1970

Message: Gone but not forgotten - forever etched in my heart. Love always Mum

Your Name: Olwen Schubert

Date of Death: 9th June 1991

Loved one lost to suicide: Craig Fitzpatrick

Date of Birth: 20th January 1962

Message: You are continually in my prayers. Till we can dance together. Mum xx

Your Name: Desley Fitzpatrick

Date of Death: 2nd May 1995

Loved one lost to suicide: Jeremy (Jiddaz) Ingram

Date of Birth: 31st May 1985

Message: Not a day goes by that u don't bring-tears to our eyes,weather happy or sad memories,you were loved by so many,you had that huge smile that just seem to light up the room,there are not enough words to describe how I am feeling..We all love n miss you to the moon and back..Forever in our hearts..Love Mum n Pihama, your loving sister Sam, and adorable niece n nephew Alani n Cj xoxoxoxo

Your Name: Elna Rongonui

Date of Death: 23rd June 2011



For everyone whose anniversary of their loved one is in May / June. On this anniversary of your loved one's death, may you remember the best experiences you shared, the most meaningful words that were spoken, the happiest moments you had together and the comfort that has given you the courage to go on.

National Helplines

LifeLine: 13 11 14 (24 hour)

Mensline: 1300 789 978 (24 hour)

Suicide Callback Line: 1300 659 467 (24 hour)

National Hope Line: 1300 467 354 (24 hour bereavement support)

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636

Kids Help Line: 1800 55 1800 (24 hour)

SANE Helpline: 1800 18 SANE (M-F 9am-5pm)

QLD

Standby Response Service 07 3250 1856 / 0438 150 180
(24 hour mobile crisis response to suicide bereavement.)

Sunshine and Cooloola Coasts 0407 766 961

Photo by Ian Britton