



For the families and friends of those who have died by violence

POMC

SUPPORT
NEWSLETTER

Front Range Chapter
Parents of Murdered Children

APRIL – MAY 2015

What I Wish More People Understood About Losing A Child

By Paula Stephens

Forward by Phil Clark.

The loss of a loved one is unbearable, whether it be a son or daughter, nephew, niece, husband, wife, brother or sister. Having them murdered puts is an additional pain that most cannot fathom. This article was written to help others understand our grief and that we want our loved one remembered. I hope you find it helpful.

Four and a half years after the death of my oldest son, I finally went to a grief support group for parents who have lost children. I went to support a friend who recently lost her son. I'm not sure I would've gone except that when I was in her shoes, four years ago, I wish I would've had a friend to go with me. Losing a child is the loneliest, most desolate journey a person can take and the only people who can come close to appreciating it are those who share the experience.

The group of incredible survivors included parents whose children had been killed by drunk drivers, murdered, accidental overdose, alcoholism, suicide and freak accidents. The children's ages ranged from 6-38 years old. When hearing the stories, I had a visceral reaction to being part of this "club," but was also humbled by the greatness of these mothers and fathers.

Most of what I share in this article came from this meeting, but also from my own experience of having lost a child and being four years into that lifelong journey of healing from deep grief. The following five tips can be your compass to help you navigate how to give support to grieving parents on a sacred journey they never wanted to take.

1. Remember our children.

The loss of children is a pain all bereaved parents share, and it is a degree of suffering that is impossible to grasp without experiencing it first hand. Often, when we know someone else is experiencing grief,

...our discomfort keeps us from approaching it head on. But we want the world to remember our child or children, no matter how young or old our child was.

If you see something that reminds you of my child, tell me. If you are reminded at the holidays or on his birthday that I am missing my son, please tell me you remember him. And when I speak his name or relive memories relive them with me, don't shrink away. If you never met my son, don't be afraid to ask about him. One of my greatest joys is talking about Brandon.

2. Accept that you can't "fix" us.

An out-of-order death such as child loss breaks a person (especially a parent) in a way that is not fixable or solvable — ever! We will learn to pick up the pieces and move forward, but our lives will never be the same.

Every grieving parent must find a way to continue to live with loss, and it's a solitary journey. We appreciate your support and hope you can be patient with us as we find our way.

Please: don't tell us it's time to get back to life, that's it's been long enough, or that time heals all wounds. We welcome your support and love, and we know sometimes it hard to watch, but our sense of brokenness isn't going to go away. It is something to observe, recognize, accept.

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POMC National Conference

Sign up now for the POMC National Conference in Las Vegas, July 30—August 2, 2015.

“Remember the Past, Treasure the Present,
Embrace the Future”

Go to www.POMC.org for more details

National Crime Victims Rights Week

Join Us on Tuesday, April 21 12:00 p.m.

Wellington Webb Building
201 W Colfax Ave



PARENTS OF MURDERED CHILDREN NATIONAL OFFICE—CINCINNATI, OHIO

WHY WE ARE HERE

1. To support persons who survive the violent death of someone close, as they seek to recover.
2. To provide contact with similarly bereaved persons and establish self help groups that meet regularly.
3. To provide information about the grieving process and the criminal justice system as they pertain to survivors of a homicide victim.
4. To communicate with professionals in the helping fields about the problems faced by those surviving a homicide victim.
5. To increase society's awareness of these problems.

**POMC NEWSLETTER
STAFF AND INFORMATION**

This newsletter is published bimonthly by volunteers prior to the regular POMC meeting. It is the official publication of the Front Range Chapter of POMC. Articles, poems, and letters from members are welcome. They may be edited for length and conciseness. Mail such items to the editors:

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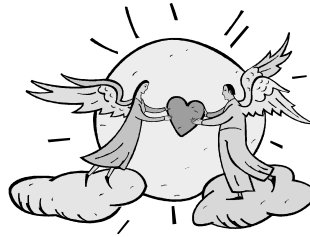
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Robert Curnow, 303 948-3494

**Healing & Bereavement
Resources:**
Barbara Kaptanian, 303-792-5432

Trials and Hearings:
Tom Rasser, 303 798-2841

Love Gifts



Our Chapter Thanks the following group of members who gave a donation in honor of their loved one.

Robin Paquet & SeaJaye Sillasen
In memory of their nephew,
Ryan Gray

Donna J Mandell
In memory of her daughter
Leah Faye Mandell

Jerri Reichert
In memory of her son
Michael Scott Reichert

Jane & Joe Craft
In memory of their son
Jeremy Campton Craft

New Members

Sarah Jane Alexander

**FRONT RANGE CHAPTER
INFORMATION AND NUMBERS
"We Are Here to Help"**

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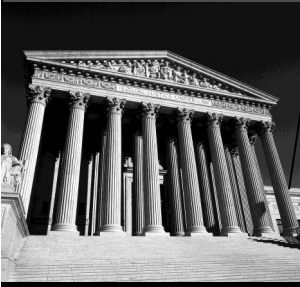
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Trials & Hearings

There are no trials or hearings at this time.

What I Wish.....Continued

3. Know that there are at least two days a year we need a time out.

We still count birthdays and fantasize what our child would be like if he/she were still living. Birthdays are especially hard for us. Our hearts ache to celebrate our child's arrival into this world, but we are left becoming intensely aware of the hole in our hearts instead. Some parents create rituals or have parties while others prefer solitude. Either way, we are likely going to need time to process the marking of another year without our child.

Then there's the anniversary of the date our child became an angel. This is a remarkable process similar to a parent of a newborn, first counting the days, then months, then the one year anniversary, marking the time on the other side of that crevasse in our lives.

No matter how many years go by, the anniversary date of when our child died brings back deeply emotional memories and painful feelings (particularly if there is trauma associated with the child's death). The days leading up to that day can feel like impending doom or like it's hard to breathe. We may or may not share with you what's happening.

This is where the process of remembrance will help. If you have heard me speak of my child or supported me in remembering him/her, you will be able to put the pieces together and know when these tough days are approaching.

4. Realize that we struggle every day with happiness.

It's an ongoing battle to balance the pain and guilt of outliving your child with the desire to live in a way that honors them and their time on this earth.

I remember going on a family cruise eighteen months after Brandon died. On the first day, I stood at the back of the ship and bawled that I wasn't sharing this experience with him. Then I had to steady myself, and recognize that I was also creating memories with my surviving sons, and enjoying the time with them in the present moment.

As bereaved parents, we are constantly balancing holding grief in one hand and a happy life after loss in the other. You might observe this when you are with us at a wedding, graduation or other milestone celebration. Don't walk away — witness it with us and be part of our process.

5. Accept the fact that our loss might make you uncomfortable.

Our loss is unnatural, out-of-order; it challenges your sense of safety. You may not know what to say or do, and you're afraid you might make us lose it. We've learned all of this as part of what we're learning about grief.

We will never forget our child. And in fact, our loss is always right under the surface of other emotions, even happiness. We would rather lose it because you spoke his/her name and remembered our child, than try and shield ourselves from the pain and live in denial.

Grief is the pendulum swing of love. The stronger and deeper the love the more grief will be created on the other side. Consider it a sacred opportunity to stand shoulder to shoulder with someone who have endured one of life's most frightening events. Rise up with us.

Notes from Barb Kaptanian

Sometimes You're The Comforter

I fought the tears and ran outside
 From human eye I'd try to hide
 But there are Eyes that always see
 He ever watches over me
 And so He sent a gentle breeze
 To kiss my cheek and comfort me
 Emily King

Yes, there are those who genuinely try to comfort after the loss of a child, or any loss for that matter. Friends/Family, coworkers, etc., really do care, but often as not, many haven't experienced grief let alone know how to comfort. They may try to find the words which are difficult, or say they understand (do they know what's going on in your heart?), but generally are at a loss. And when it comes to murder, well, that's another matter entirely. It's best to give them a little grace for attempting to bring you comfort. Most probably they do love you and just don't know how to express their grief at your grief. Understandable.

Although your own grief is huge, have you ever thought that the people around you may need comfort? They're visibly horrified and upset over a murdered child, clueless as what to do, mystified at how to help and comfort you, scared a little. Oftentimes YOU have to comfort them! But here I would like to address you as comforter to your mate, your family, and especially your children. Children have a tendency to lack the resources to grieve and understand loss, particularly a sibling. We are so often caught up in the loss, legal issues, investigations, etc., that we may inadvertently neglect one of the more important aspects of grieving - our children. Time and time again I get calls on what can be done about child grief. Let's explore a few ideas. You as comforter:

I believe the most important piece in comforting a child is listening with the heart. Your physical presence and desire to actively listen are critical. Not to worry so much about what to say, but listen and touch and hold and cry and tenderly point out their feelings are ok and normal. Your child may want to relate their feelings or the story over and over again as they're trying to make sense out of this. This is part of their process and simply listening and "being" with them speaks volumes.

Equally important is giving them permission to express their thoughts and feelings without fear or criticism. They get enough of that from their friends, and school, etc. Best not instruct or set expectations as they must go through their own process. Just walk with them. Let the child experience all the hurt, the sorrow, and pain; never try to take that away. Tears are an appropriate expression of grief.

As you all know, people say the weirdest things, sometimes very inappropriate. Avoid these cliches like, think of all there is to be thankful for. Not a plan for their healing; be constructive.

Just as we grieve uniquely, remember that children have their own unique way of grieving. They most probably have no concept of loss, particularly a loss like this. It is something they must develop and it may take a very long time. No timetables here. Be patient, personal, and available.

Invite them to participate in planning activities to honor your lost child. Perhaps planning a ceremony, creating something special as a remembrance, setting a place for dinner during a holiday, creating a memory book, keeping a picture by their bed. Include them in discussions as appropriate when people show comfort to you. Assist them in ways that they can pay tribute to their sibling.

Perhaps they may even want to write a little something about their sibling. A journal, a diary. The written word is powerful. Favorite memories in this way can be shared with their friends, and family, or be their private treasure. It confirms that their sibling is not forgotten and was very much a part of their life. They may even want to keep one of their siblings special toys, clothes, books, whatever. The remembrance is so important.

Remember that the death of their sibling is just as shattering to them as it is to you! They are under reconstruction at this time. They may even act out for lack of knowing what to do. Be gentle with them, be gentle with their heart. They need you now more than ever. It may not be an easy task, but how you help them grieve will set the tone for how they grieve for their entire life. You may be learning at the same time. Grieve together. Let your child see *Your Heart, and Your Tears, Your Grief*. And know that it's ok to express deep feelings. You will reconstruct and grieve and grow together. A blessing to you both for a very long time.

Listen to what's going on inside your own heart and head. Put yourself in the shoes of your child. Try to imagine what's going on inside them. You're all trying to gain a renewed sense of meaning and purpose. Create a safe place to mourn, to embrace your pain, and move toward healing. Take a moment to close your eyes, open your heart, and remember the smile of your child. And reach out to the child who clings to you with all their pain and hurt, and with all their heart. It may be one of the most important things you ever do.

Believe in them, and the power to heal. Love, Barb

Birthdays Remembered

Maria Cordova, April 1, 1974

Maria Fierro, April 1, 1974

Dennis Sanchez, April 1, 1977

James Sanchez, April 1, 1987

Martin "Marty" Lawrence Martine, April 3, 1962

Troy Krause, April 3, 1967

Mary Rogers, April 3, 1983

Latoya Cisneros, April 4, 1985

David Gonzales Shuker, April 5, 1979

Daniel Walsh, April 6, 1976

Casey Korgan, April 6, 1990

Gary McGee, April 7, 1970

Larry Carmichael, April 8, 1961

Kim Hadley, April 8, 1975

Greg Swazo, April 8, 1982

Guillermo Quinones, April 10, 1982

Ivory Mefford, April 11, 1981

Stephanie Bechtold, April 13, 1989

Amanda Anders, April 15, 1995

Mary Buso, April 16, 1913

Dennis Meredith, April 17, 1956

Chris Mains, April 20, 1972

Rodney Lee, April 22, 1988

Carlos Luna, April 24, 1969

Tiffany Brill Jarmon, April 26, 1975

Kevin Blunt, April 27, 1973

Michael Nigg, April 28, 1969

Jolene Romero, April 28, 1975

Cher Elder, April 30, 1972

Alan Michael Conner, May 1, 1980

Cody Faust, May 1, 1982

Carold Peoples III, May 1, 1987

Jackie Maldonado, May 2, 1962

Steve Murgatroyd, May 2, 1962

Jeff Walker, May 3, 1972

Terrance Mayo, May 3, 1976

Patricia "Trisha" Green, May 3, 1977

Melodie Robertson, May 3, 2000

Jennifer Behling, May 4, 1980

Roy Cozby, May 10, 1940

Michael Cates, May 11, 1975

Lindsey Kay Creason, May 12, 1993

Sgt Tim Mossbrucker, May 15, 1958

Ennis Walton, May 17, 1970

Rebecca Lynn Gonzales, May 20, 1989

Vera Escobedo, May 21, 1966

Mark Anthony David Johnsen, May 22, 1987

Page Ten Brook, May 24, 1966

Eric Martinez, May 24, 1978

Christopher Aragon, May 26, 1960

Jack Koller, May 27, 2009

Annamarie Villalobos, May 28, 1965

Michael Julius Ford, May 29, 1984

Gary Carlson, May 31, 1962

Joseph Seara, May 31, 1977



In Memoriam

Phillip Rose Jr., April 1, 1992
Christopher Aragon, April 2, 1994
Dylan Lee Newman, April 3, 2007
Annamarie Villalobos, April 6, 2011
Aaron Tuneberg, April 8, 2014
Phillip Dearing, April 9, 2002
Chelsea Strauss, April 9, 2010
Yvette Strong, April 10, 1992
Jared Whitney, April 11, 1997
Mitch Anderson, April 11, 2001
Gerry Schwartzman, April 13, 2011
Beth Haynes, April 16, 1994
Paul Klein, April 17, 1993
Terrance Mayo, April 17, 1995
Carold Peoples III, April 17
Douglas "Dougie" Charles, April 19, 2000
Cynthia Mc Queen, April 20, 1983
Matthew Kechter, April 20, 1999
Corey DePooter, April 20, 1999
Daniel Mauser, April 20, 1999
Steven Robert Curnow, April 20, 1999
John Tomlin, April 20, 1999
Cassie Bernall, April 20, 1999
Dan Rohrbough, April 20, 1999
Rachel Scott, April 20, 1999
Desiree Holland, April 20, 2002
Ryan Gray, April 20, 2014
Jesse Field, April 21, 1998
Ethan Wolf, April 23, 1996
Chris Waters, April 23, 2013
Jon-Paul Lewis, April 24, 2010
Charles Harris, April 24, 2013
Andrew Sheppard, April 25, 2008
Gail Garcia-Herrera, April 27, 1984
Nancy Begg Shoupp, April 28, 1990
Sgt Tim Mossbrucker, April 28, 1995
Dan Suazo, April 28, 1995
Rob Stewart, April 28, 2010
Jacine Gielinski, April 29, 1997
Stoneham Farris, April 30, 1996
Chandra Haak, May 1, 1991
Tina Abbott, May 1, 2003
Karla Winberg, May 2, 1981

Angelina Sicola, May 2, 2013
Kyra Harris, May 3, 1987
Christy Marie Brown, May 4, 1995
Danny Stanazyk, May 5, 2005
Eddie Hairston, Jr., May 6, 1978
Kay Lyn Robinson, May 8, 1979
Frankie Paul, May 8, 1998
Rubon Wayne Norwood, May 9, 1988
Anthony (Tony) Gonzales, May 10, 1990
Lori Bases, May 11, 2000
Heather Victoria Reyes, May 15, 1998
Ronald Eugene Hinson Jr., May 18, 1988
Jeffrey Smith, May 18, 1993
Alie Berrelez, May 18, 1993
Leslie Ann Russell, May 20, 1991
Carlos Luna, May 21, 1992
Christy Birmingham Barry, May 23, 1989
Beth Gallegos, May 23, 1998
Britt Mackay, May 23, 2007
Shaniqua Coffman, May 26, 1993
Jeremy Campton Craft, May 26, 1995
Geney Crutchley, May 26, 2002
Shaundra Schell, May 28, 1990
John C. Abeyta, May 29, 1993
Kaci, May 29, 2008
Kevin, May 29, 2011
Linnea Dick, May 30, 2008
Ivory Mefford, May 30, 2009
Brandy DuVall, May 31, 1997



ANNOUNCEMENTS

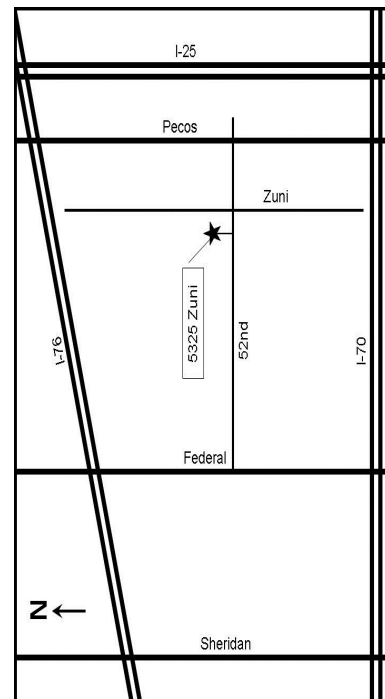
April 13 - Voice Meeting 6pm—8pm
 District 3 Denver Police Station
 1625 S University Blvd. Denver, CO
 Topic: Management of DOC Offenders on Parole and in Community Corrections

April 18 - Support Group at 7:30 PM

May 16 - Board Meeting 6:00 PM
 Support Group at 7:30 PM

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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 80160-0375



We meet in the
 cafeteria of the
CenturyLink Building
 at 5325 Zuni in Denver on
 the 3rd Saturday