



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

POMC

SUPPORT
NEWSLETTER

Front Range Chapter
Parents of Murdered Children

FEB – MAR 2015

The ABC's Of Grief - D is for Desolation and Degrees

By Gail Mendelman

Desolation – n. A state of complete emptiness; Anguished misery.

Degree - n. Any of a series of steps or stages.

Nothing wreaks havoc on the body like grief. Loaded like a ballistic missile, it hits a target and leaves in its wake, a sub lethal dose of desolation. This isn't a normal kind of sadness, it is unique to the grieving process and no matter the noun used to describe it, be it agony, despondency or misery, it is a horrible state of mind. There is no pill for it, no medication that can take it away. This desolation comes with an exhaustion unlike any other. Sleep patterns will be disturbed, life patterns will be off kilter. For the longest time, nothing will work right. The heart is a sensitive organ and the death of a loved one will break it. The death of a child will shatter it. Picking up the shattered pieces is painstakingly difficult and in the end, the heart will never be fully mended. It will be held together by scabs that will get picked off time and time again until it stops beating. I know this sounds dismal, it is. But this despair, it doesn't last forever, it just seems like it will. The truth is, if you never go through this awful, initial stage, you can't ever expect to get through it. I just found notes that I wrote three years after Mack died. The heavy load of sadness that I carried had become a little lighter because I had begun to learn to live with my grief. I had begun to absorb it and it was becoming a part of the person I would be from then on.

There's no shortcut, no secret passage way through the desolation but it will pass and you will find a way to manage your grief. ...continued on page 3

Thank You for your Service

After being Board Members for 14 years, Tom and Nancy Rasser have decided to retire. At our last meeting, Tom and Nancy were each presented with a certificate of achievement and thanks from the Front Range POMC Board of Directors and the group.

Thank you Tom and Nancy for all that you have done.

Welcome New Board Members

Please help us welcome three new board members, however, they are not new to POMC.

Bill Lusk - Kaye Cannata - Bernadette Allness

We look forward to starting a new era in POMC

Front Range POMC Receives Grant

The Front Range POMC has been awarded a \$1000 grant from Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP. The firm is celebrating its 100th year anniversary with 100 good deeds. One of those good deeds is to help POMC with expenses such as publishing this new letter.

Thank you to Gloria Sigala for nominating us for this award.

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



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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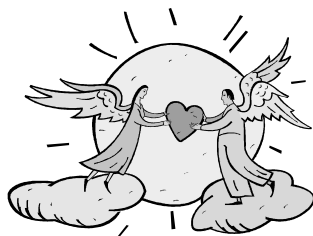
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Cherri Lusk, 303 593-0784

Roster & Mailing List:
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.

Robert & Peggy Gielinski
In memory of their daughter,
Jacine

Opal & Don Dick
In memory of their daughter,
Linnea

Jerri & Don Reichert
In memory of their son,
Michael

Earl & Claudette Elder
In memory of their daughter,
Cher

Erica Mulligan
In memory of her son,
Michael Tarasuik

Jane & Joe Craft
In memory of their son,
Jeremy

Phyllis & Ciro Pena
In memory of their son,
Ricky Bobian

New Members

Steve and Sonja Anders

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

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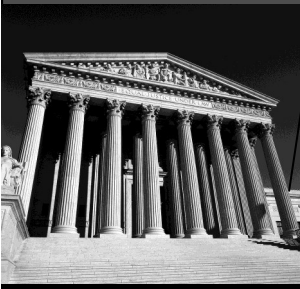
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Trials & Hearings

There are no trials or hearings at this time.

The ABC's of Grief....Continued

There's no shortcut, no secret passage way through the desolation but it will pass and you will find a way to manage your grief. Of course, not without after effects, there will always be after effects. Here is an example but I live with many. Mack regularly used to come into our bedroom between two and three a.m. I'd wake up when he came in and lift him up to put him in between David and I and we all slept well. It was years before I got back to some kind of a decent sleep pattern and yet I very often wake up in those early hours of the morning. I think I always will.

Learning to live with grief doesn't happen overnight. Nothing to do with it happens quickly or in great leaps and bounds but rather in small, incremental degrees. Every baby step and they are baby steps, happens so slowly that you probably won't be aware of any change until after it happens. When one begins to grieve, it takes a Herculean effort to do the simplest daily tasks. Getting out of bed, eating, showering, starting your day etc., they all become huge, monumental strength sapping efforts. You are so busy trying to live hour to hour that you aren't even aware of the smallest progress. One day, you'll just pause and realize that you've moved forward a little and that's good, even if you feel guilty about it. Moving forward can also be a sad thing. Although it is such an important goal of intense grief, it somehow implies that you must leave something behind. This isn't true but at the beginning, when it dawns on you that you have begun to head in a forward direction, you are afraid that what may be left behind, is the person who has died. Early on, I felt this way, I was scared that somehow Mack would fade away. It's an irrational fear and it makes no sense but it is very common in grief. I learned very quickly that this could never happen. Mack is always with me.

Healing happens in small degrees and although we need it to happen, when it begins we almost fight it, I did. What kind of a parent was I if I didn't spend the rest of my life mourning my son every minute of the day? I remember being on the phone with my mother early one morning, the day after Mack died. I was sobbing, so despondent, so full of sadness. I couldn't imagine not feeling like that forever. I kept asking her questions. How do you deal with this? How do you learn to live without your child? Unfortunately, my parents had been where I was then because of the death of my older brother Ronnie and now, they had lost their only grandson. My mother listened and in her infinite wisdom, told me that I would always mourn for Mack but months down the road, without even realizing it, I would wake up one day and discover that my stage of intense grief had ended. She told me that the body and mind could not handle being in this state forever, they would shut down because it is just too much to bear. This is no way meant that you stopped grieving, you never do but it meant that at some point, little by little, bit by bit, you stop living your life in limbo and just begin living.

Now, almost seven years later, I don't feel guilty if I go an hour or three without Mack being foremost in my brain. I welcome the break for it never lasts very long. I am slapped in the face a hundred times a day with the reality that my son is no longer alive so if something distracts me for a little while, I'm okay with it.

As summer is approaching, we are grateful for the slightest surge in the temperature. Each degree brings us closer to the change of a season and after a harsh winter, we welcome it. The same can be said for early grief, each degree that you move forward brings you closer to becoming a person who will learn to manage their grief and live life at the same time.

You can't ask for more than that.

SMILE

Smile. Does that seem like an impossible reach for you? In speaking with so many who have lost their child, or those who have experienced any kind of deep loss, how often have I heard, “How can the world keep turning? How can people go on living? How can people keep on smiling? I’ve just lost my child; don’t they know?” Yes, there is a time when it seems impossible that you will ever smile again. Your heart is breaking, swelling up ’til it surely will burst, bleeding, overflowing with tears. Just the thought of smiling seems some kind of betrayal as though dishonoring your loved one and is so often laced with guilt. Why I can’t be happy, it’s not right! Have you ever had those feelings? It’s much more common than you would guess and it’s ok. Those are natural feelings after such a horrific experience. Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D., founder and director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition, terms this the joy-guilt syndrome. “Reexperiencing any kind of joy in life after someone loved dies can also make you feel guilty. [But] As you do the work of mourning, a day will come where you experience a laugh, a smile, a happy feeling. Great! Why should you be depressed forever? This syndrome usually relates to your loyalty to the person who died. You may fear that being happy in some way betrays the relationship you once had.” Rest assured, it is not betrayal! You have a right to experience happiness again!

What does God say about sadness? He realizes we have deep grief but He also states in Jeremiah 31:13 that “...I will turn their mourning into gladness; I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow.” Romans 12 states that we should “...mourn with those who mourn but be joyful in hope.” Psalm 42:5 says, “Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God...” God, who comforts the downcast, says in Isaiah 61 that He will “...bind up the brokenhearted [and] comfort all who mourn.” He promises the “...oil of gladness instead of mourning...instead of a spirit of despair.” “You will find rest for your soul.” Matthew 11:29

That God’s promise. Rest on the promises of God.

Can you begin to smile again? Oh yes my friend. And laugh too! Take a moment to sit back and remember..... remember that special time with your child..... those moments of that first step, the giggles and laughter and sparkle in the eye..... first time on a bike, the baseball game, playing dollies, those birthdays. Perhaps finally getting a driver’s license, perhaps seeing the Grand Canyon and wondering at the miracles of nature. Holidays filled with wonder and expectation! Those memories remain with you, in your heart, they’ll never be taken from you. And you can begin to smile, to smile at the joy you were given as a gift that came wrapped in that child of yours. Those don’t go away! Share those with family or friends. Get out the pictures! Put a little joy back in to your life. It’s good for your soul. And you will find that smile creeping back in until pretty soon, you’ll be smiling and won’t even realize it! Your child will be smiling with you! Trust me!

Do you remember Nat King Cole's song, **SMILE** ?

Smile though your heart is aching
 Smile even though it's breaking
 When there are clouds in the sky, you'll get by
 If you smile through your fear and sorrow
 Smile and maybe tomorrow
 You'll see the sun come shining through for you

Light up your face with gladness
 Hide every trace of sadness
 Although a tear may be ever so near
 That's the time you must keep on trying
 Smile, what's the use of crying?
 You'll find that life is still worthwhile
 If you just smile

I can still remember when I was small and used to have sleepovers with my friends. After staying up all night giggling and laughing as children do, my father would come early in the morning, open the blinds, and sing, "Oh let the sun shine in, face it with a grin, open up your heart and let the sun shine in!" I used to get so mad!!! I look back on that now and smile, a very warm and pleasant smile of a memory of long ago. And isn't it the truth? Shouldn't we try to open up our hearts and let the sun shine in? Can't we begin the morning facing it with a little quiver of a lip turning up, then maybe a little smile, than growing into a grin, until finally a real smile breaks through and the sun can shine in? I'll bet you can do that! You might surprise yourself! And remember,

That's the time you must keep on trying
 Smile, what's the use of crying?
 You'll find that life is still worthwhile
 If you just smile

Give me a little smile, will ya huh?

Love you. Barb

Birthdays Remembered

Randy Fleming, February 1, 1960
Heather Harper, February 2, 1975
Martin Macias, February 3, 1960
Sherri Majors, February 3, 1969
Philisia Bunting, February 4, 1974
Tiffany Cuin, February 4, 1981
Ronald (Ron) Georgopulos, February 8, 1954
Kay Lyn Robinson, February 9, 1961
Roxanne Logan, February 12, 1952
Loren Holcom, February 14, 1943
James Mora, February 14, 1972
Frank Sumpton, Jr., February 16, 1973
Anthony Taiitt, February 18, 1960
Matthew Kechter, February 19, 1983
Ryan Gray, February 19, 1985
Charles Harris, February 20, 1976
Cissy Foster, February 20, 1979
PJ Pierce, February 20, 1986
Beulah Lawson, February 22, 1927
Karla Winberg, February 22, 1961
Michael McMullen, February 22, 1980
Lonnell Friend, February 24, 1978
David Michael Kelly II, February 26, 1977
Chris Irish, February 27, 1971
Miranoa Rose Linn Baca, February 27, 1985
Vanessa Gushard, February 28, 1976
Garett Cordova, March 1, 1965
Jennifer Manchego, March 1, 1974
Jeremy Campton Craft, March 2, 1970
Sindy Wong, March 2, 1977
Corey DePooter, March 3, 1982
Beth Haynes, March 5, 1972
Danny Steve McQueen, March 5, 1955
Wayne Craig, March 6, 1969
John Rasser, March 7, 1966
Mark Francis, March 7, 1978

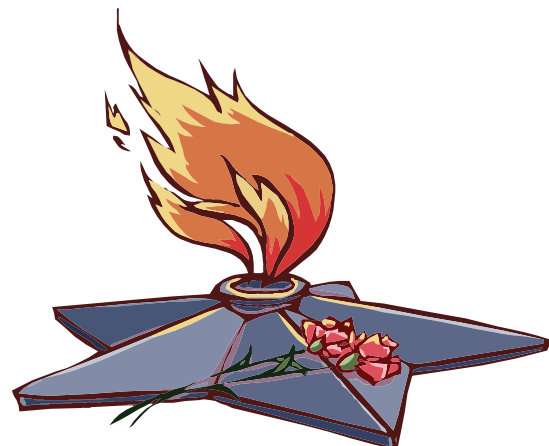
Michael Scott Reichert, March 8, 1964
Steven Johnson, March 8, 1986
Shaniqua Coffman, March 8, 1991
Nathan Bailey, March 10, 1996
Amy Hill, March 11, 1979
Edward Perez, March 15, 1946
Tina Abbott, March 15, 1949
Tina Sandoval, March 17, 1972
Megan Patricia Neylon, March 17, 1982
Gerry Schwartzman, March 18, 1938
Paul A. Stone, March 18, 1980
McKinley Dixon Jr., March 20, 1975
Leslie Gonzales, March 20, 1989
Troy Baker, March 23, 1977
David Aric Rothrock, March 23,
Anthony (Tony)Gonzales, March 24, 1942
Andrew Just, March 25, 1980
Jesse Field, March 27, 1979
Kaci, March 27, 1982
Jeffrey Smith, March 27, 1992
Sid Wells, March 28, 1961
Chad Harvey, March 30, 1975



In Memoriam

Louis Muradian, February, 1985
Brandon Gushard, February 1, 1987
David Michael Kelly II, February 1, 1996
Marilyn Gillespie, February 2, 2010
Jackie Maldonado, February 3, 2002
Robert Ursetta, February 4, 1995
Bryan D. Lusk, February 5, 2007
Levon George Griego, February 6, 1985
Ruth Ortega's son, February 6, 1985
Amber Bullington, February 6, 2000
Alan Cardares, February 7, 2013
Ada Johnson, February 9, 1983
Garett Cordova, February 11, 2002
Heather Riccardi, February 15, 2014
Kevin Johnson, February 16, 2003
Vera Escobedo, February 16, 2008
Marco Escobedo, February 16, 2008
Clair Weaver, February 17, 1991
Antoinette "Toni" Clark, February 17, 2008
Gertrude Brown/Nussel, February 20, 1992
Aaron Richart, February 20, 1999
Carmina "Nina" Anderson, February 21, 1973
Peter Beaupre`, February 23, 1995
McKinley Dixon Jr, February 25, 1994
Terrell Ephriam, February 26, 2014
Erin Golla, February 27, 2002
Robert Zajac, February 27, 2002
Sheldon Sullivan, March 1, 1998
Mark Francis, March 1, 2002
Maria Cordova, March 1, 2003
Maria Fierro, March 1, 2003
Alice Jane Hensley, March 3, 2001
Mark Smith, March 4, 1995
Ron Haynes, March 4, 2006
Ronald Overstreet, March 4, 2006
Martin Macias, March 4

James Mora, March 7, 1992
Andrew Just, March 7, 1998
Ruby Sparks, March 8, 1981
Gloria Bailey, March 8, 1981
Ralph Earl Pettis, March 9, 1986
Harold Lee Prelow, March 9, 1996
Alan Friedman, March 10, 1989
Carrie Lee Gonzales, March 11, 1984
Larry Heil, March 12, 1991
Roxanne Logan, March 12, 1995
Scott Clarke, March 14, 2011
Roderick Paulsen, March 15, 1997
Eddie Garcia, March 15, 1998
Nathan Leon, March 17, 2013
Lee Pumroy, March 18, 1993
Sherri Majors, March 18, 1996
Theodore C. Carleton, March 18, 1996
Meglan Renaud, March 21, 1989
Guillermo Quinones, March 21, 2012
Lori Jean Burritt, March 22, 1990
Paul Hurtado Jr, March 22, 1990
Michelle Vinson, March 28, 1992
Cher Elder, March 28, 1993
Paris Lamar Davis, March 29, 1998



ANNOUNCEMENTS

February 21 - Support Group at 7:30 PM

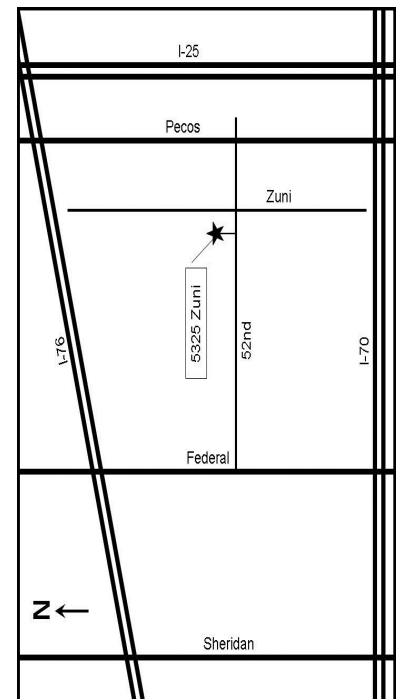
March 21 - Board Meeting at 6:00 PM
Support Group at 7:30 PM

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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LITTLETON, CO
80160-0375



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