

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

POMC

Front Range Chapter
Parents of Murdered Children

SUPPORT
NEWSLETTER

December 2021

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trying to decide if you want to create a New Year's Resolution? If so, here's an idea...

Why not become a Board Member for the Front Range Chapter?

"Serving on the Board of an organization that I admire may be one of the most rewarding and valuable decisions I've made."

"The more I care and contribute, the more I grow."

"When you serve on the board, you have the honor, challenge, and responsibility of understanding how everything needs to work together for an organization to accomplish its goals. It's invigorating."

"I think there's incredible pride in giving meaningfully to something that I care about."

If you are interested, please contact a current board member today!

We want to know how we are doing!

It's our priority to ensure we are providing meaningful restorative resources each month. Help us continue to grow and evolve our meetings by sharing what you find useful, new ideas/topics, etc.

Email: POMCColorado@gmail.com



FRONT RANGE CHAPTER

"We Are Here to Help"

www.colorado-pomc.org

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.

LEADER

Phil Clark
303-748-6395
POMCColorado@gmail.com
Other Resources: Healing & Bereavement, Trials and Hearings

SECRETARY

Juli Jenicek
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Other Resources: Newsletter Editor, Roster & Mailing List, Memorials & Birthdays

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This newsletter is published monthly by volunteers prior to the regular POMC meeting. It is the official publication of the Front Range Chapter of POMC.

Articles, poems, recipes and letters from members are welcomed and can be emailed to the Editor and/or POMCColorado@gmail.com

*They may be edited for length and conciseness.

Newsletter Feedback: We are OPEN to receiving! Comments and suggestions can be emailed to the Editor and/or POMCColorado@gmail.com.



LOVE GIFTS

Thank you from our Chapter for the following donation in honor of their loved one...

Michael S. O'Fallon

by

Mary Jo Halfen (Mother)



TRIALS & HEARINGS

None at this time...



DONATIONS

Love gifts are dedicated to providing restorative resources for the participants of the Colorado Front Range Chapter.

If you wish to be acknowledged in the POMC newsletter, please fill in the below and return with your check or ADD A NOTE if donating by PAYPAL.

In Honor Of: _____

Donors Name: _____

Make Checks Payable to: **POMC**

Mail Checks to:

POMC

**18121 E. Hampden Ave Unit C #145
AURORA, CO 80013**

PAYPAL ACCOUNT : pomccolorado@gmail.com

Donations are tax-deductible Federal ID 31-1023437



COMFORT CORNER: GRIEF

Trauma Around the Holidays *April Goff*

It is not uncommon for the holiday season to be very difficult for people to cope with, especially survivors of trauma. This may include being more easily triggered, or heightened feelings of loneliness, depression and other strong emotions. There are a number of reasons for this. Some of these reasons include the fact that stress may be significantly heightened during the holiday season, the possibility that trauma may have occurred around the holidays, and the reality that many places tend to be louder and more over stimulating during this time.

One of the reasons some people struggle during this time of year is due to [Seasonal Affective Disorder](#) (SAD) related to fall and winter (there is also SAD which revolves around spring and summer). The symptoms of the disorder can be severe, and may leave someone feeling more tired and depressed. People with other mood disorders, like bipolar disorder, are at a higher risk for these issues.

In a lot of cases, the difficulty of the holiday season is caused by the people that someone may have to be around. This may include family members who do not respect boundaries, engage in toxic behaviors, may not be safe, or may have played a part in your trauma.

While this may be a tough time to deal with, there are some ways to cope that may make it easier.

Ways to Cope

Putting yourself first

While some circumstances may not make it a reasonable possibility, if you have a choice about whether or not to attend a gathering, try to remind yourself you do have a choice. You are not a bad person if you choose to prioritize your mental health over a family gathering. You can change your mind, say no, and make choices that are right for you. This does not mean that you do not love your family. Your love does not mean they are entitled to make demands of you. Your voice matters. And you have a right to use it. (This seems like a good time for a reminder that you're not a bad person if you don't love your family for whatever reason.)

In some cases, it may also mean putting forth and enforcing boundaries. Please check out our blog post on boundaries [here](#). These boundaries may be things like not attending events, or they may be things like setting boundaries about what topics you choose to talk about, how long you will attend the gathering, or leaving early if things get uncomfortable.

Putting yourself first may also mean finding time for you. You don't have to be "on the go" the entire holiday season. Find time to do things that you enjoy or otherwise practice self-care.

Show yourself kindness

You deserve your own kindness and understanding. You are not weak or anything of the sort. Holidays are stressful, and this can increase if you have trauma. Try to have a plan for if things go wrong.

Let yourself feel your emotions. This may mean grieving for what you've lost as a result of your trauma or allowing yourself to feel anger and/or sadness.

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COMFORT CORNER: HEALING

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Have a support system

Having a support system can make a huge difference in coping through difficult times. This may mean having someone to talk to about how you're feeling (friends, a therapist, support group, etc). It could also mean having someone to hang out with. When it comes to dealing specifically with a family gathering, this may mean someone you can text throughout the gathering or maybe even make plans to connect before and/or after the dinner whether it's in person, by phone call, etc.

Plan some coping methods

Work at recognizing your triggers and coming up with a plan to deal with them if they arise, or plan for ways you can avoid them if possible.

This may include things like grounding techniques, making a self-care box, planning for fun things to do, or things like journaling. I recently wrote a blog post about navigating traumaversaries, and some tips for that. These tips may be useful for things like dealing with the holidays as well. The blog post is [here](#).

Things like being able to step outside at a family gathering may help to ground you, give you privacy to practice some breathing exercises or otherwise clear your head. I also want to note that someone doesn't have to do "something wrong" at a family gathering for you to be allowed to have struggles. It can be an overwhelming situation, even if your family does everything right.

Try not to forget the basics

This includes things like staying hydrated, eating, taking medications and finding time to rest. What I personally find helpful is a chore app on my phone. I input tasks in there that I want to do every day and I "check" them off every time I complete a task. The app also allows me to assign point values so that I can plan for rewards for myself if I hit a certain goal. The app I use is OurHome, but there are several other apps out there. You can also set reminders for yourself on your phone, put sticky notes up around your house, or find an accountability buddy. An accountability buddy is someone you talk to and you both check in on each other when you can and encourage each other to meet your daily goals. They might text you to let you know their progress, check in on yours, and also offer words of encouragement.

Try to make plans for after the holidays that you will look forward to

This may mean making plans with a good friend, going to an event you like, or going somewhere you love like a museum or other place. This may mean buying yourself a book you've been wanting to read or putting time aside to binge watch a new season of your favorite show.



COMFORT CORNER: SELF CARE

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Come up with a safety plan

If you are going to a place or environment where you worry you could feel unsafe, and not going isn't a feasible option, try to have a safety plan in place.

This may mean things like downloading a safety app or checking emergency features on your phone. Maybe emergency services feel even less safe to you, in which case, try to plan for alternatives. Consider whether there is a friend or loved one who you could text with a code word to help get you out or otherwise help protect you if things get unsafe. Perhaps seeing the word means they need to call you and come up with an excuse to get you out of there, or just otherwise interrupt whatever situation is going on. Maybe the code word means they need to call someone for help. You deserve safety, and any consequences someone else feels for endangering your safety are on them. Try to remember that.

A big part of a safety plan is setting up an exit for yourself. If you drive, make a point of driving yourself to events rather than getting a ride with someone else, so that leaving is an option for you at any time. If that's not possible, do what you can to set up an alternative way to leave. One option might be talking to a friend with a car about the possibility of them picking you up when you text them. Another is downloading and setting up the Uber or Lyft app, if one is available in your area, or saving the number of a cab company that serves the area. One other possibility is looking into the public transit around the area and making sure you have an idea of the schedule they run around that location and where they stop, as well as cash or whatever else you might need to pay for a ride on that transit.

One thing to keep in mind about a safety plan is that you don't need to feel there is a danger to your life or a possibility of assault to have a need to leave.

If you have family who you can sometimes deal with just fine but who can become emotionally abusive, triggering or otherwise toxic sometimes, that is an extremely valid reason for an escape plan. If you are meeting with a group of people who you know might or might not include someone who assaulted you in the past or can be upsetting for you to be around, it's valid and quite reasonable to plan for the possibility that the person might show up. If the location where you are meeting is one where you experienced trauma in the past, and you do not know how you will react to being there again but cannot avoid going, it's completely valid and probably a very good idea to have a plan in place in case you can't handle staying there. Even if the event you're going to does not seem like it could be unsafe or upsetting in itself, but you are feeling anxious or on edge because of an upcoming traumaversary or for any other reason, it might be wise to think about how you could get yourself to a safer place if you feel like that's necessary at any point.

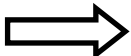
Remember that you are valid

Your feelings and your trauma are valid. It's not a poor reflection of you if you aren't ready to cut people out, set boundaries or do anything else that others might say could help you deal with things. You are the only one who knows the circumstances of your life and can decide the best ways to cope and handle any difficulties you might have. The holiday season can be hard for so many reasons and on so many levels, and you are not weak for struggling with it.

You are not alone in this struggle. While it can be unbelievably hard, you can do this.

Resource:

[Trauma Around the Holidays \(fortraumasurvivors.com\)](https://fortraumasurvivors.com)





MINDFUL MEMES

DON'T MISS ME MORE THAN ONCE A DAY

Don't miss me more than once a day,
For life is moving fast.
Don't wish all of your time away,
Dreaming of the past.

Don't waste the moment looking at,
The things I left behind me.
I'm not there anymore my love.
Your heart is where you'll find me.

Don't dread to say my name, sweet one,
Don't fear the rush of sadness.
Just take the love you had for me,
And turn it into gladness.

Some days your anger will rush out,
Your tears will find their way.
To me, wherever I am then.
I'll soothe them all away.

When I am gone don't miss me more,
Than once, or twice a day.
There's so much life to live, my love.
I'm with you, all the way.

Donna Ashworth



ONGOING HOPE

Hi! This is Marti Kohnke. My daughter, Kris Kirk, was murdered by her husband on April 14, 2014. She left behind three little boys who we are raising. I wrote the attached poem to her the first Christmas after her death.

December 24, 2014

**My first Christmas without you, Kris
The clothespin angel hangs on the tree.
When you were little, you made it for me.
You were so happy, your smile so bright.
So very beautiful, inside and out.
Your angel has hung year after year.
This year it brought more than one tear.
You chose your gifts every Christmas with care.
Wrapped in your love, your sweater I'll wear.
This year's present is most precious of all.
The most treasured gift, it's not from a mall,
You knew my grief would surpass any measure,
You left me your boys to raise and to treasure.
This Christmas Eve you'll spend at God's table,
I know you'd be with us if you were so able.
We've tried very hard to make things alright,
The presents are wrapped, and the tree lights shine bright,
But we continue to cry and to suffer,
Nothing on earth can serve as a buffer.
I'll love you forever, my child.**



BIRTHDAYS REMEMBERED

Chad Ferguson	12	1	1977
Ethan Wolf	12	1	1974
Rubon Wayne Norwood	12	1	1938
Robert Mejia	12	2	1979
Mark Nicholson	12	3	1958
Meglan Renaud	12	3	1976
Paul Anthony Ciaramitaro	12	4	1959
Kyra Harris	12	7	1958
Jason Trembath	12	9	1974
Dale Morris	12	11	1931
Mel Gurule Jr.	12	11	1959
Chandra Haak	12	12	1975
Christa Benton	12	15	1978
Charla Nicholson	12	16	1962
Craig Jackman	12	18	1964
Jake Steinbredner	12	18	2007
Martel Thomas	12	18	1947
Tammy Lamberty	12	18	1970
Edward Gomez (Martinez)	12	19	1962
Desiree Holland	12	20	1975
Randy Arlin Russom	12	20	1964
Frank Hernandez Jr	12	21	1979
MichelleVinson	12	22	1968

Michelle Mellema-Witherell	12	23	1967
Daniel Chavez	12	25	1972
Cindy Wilson/Langlois	12	26	1954
Diane J. Caldwell	12	26	1950
Jakob Montoya	12	26	1998
Michael Adams	12	26	1962
Michael L. Crouch	12	27	1957
Brandon Cruz Sigala	12	28	1983
Doug Bradley	12	29	1967
Emily Reilly	12	29	1991
Linda Zambotti	12	29	1954

*We apologize if we have missed any dates or they were posted incorrectly. Please alert the Editor know and we will update our records accordingly. Thank you!



IN MEMORIAM

Jacy Kadison Marshall	12	1	2018
Leroy Martinez II	12	2	1993
Yvonne Cossio	12	2	1993
Steve Murgatroyd	12	4	1993
Wayne Craig	12	4	1998
John Rasser	12	5	1996
Terry Sheeran	12	5	1999
Cody Martell	12	10	2002
Byris Williams	12	11	2004
Dennis Meredith	12	11	1992
Fernando Sanchez	12	12	2004
Matt Ownbey	12	12	2000
Cindy Jolene Tiemann	12	16	1987
Frank Hernandez Jr	12	17	1998
Jerry Baca	12	18	2008
Megan Patricia Neylon	12	19	1998
Megan Patricia Rapacz	12	19	1998
Michelle Mellema-Witherell	12	20	1992
Heather Moore	12	21	1995
Michael McMullen	12	22	2007
Polly Elizabeth Sullivan	12	25	1998
Martha Munoz	12	26	1998
Doug Bradley	12	28	2017
Paul Christopher Bueno	12	28	1999
Damon A. Roberts	12	30	1992
Christine Marie Zablocki-Alicata	12	31	1986
Michael L. Crouch	12	31	1986



MONTHLY MEETINGS

Support meetings are held the 3rd Saturday of every month
at **7:00 PM. (Doors close at 7:15)**

For Year: **2021**

January 16*

February 20

March 20*

April 17

May 15*

June 19

July 17*

August 21

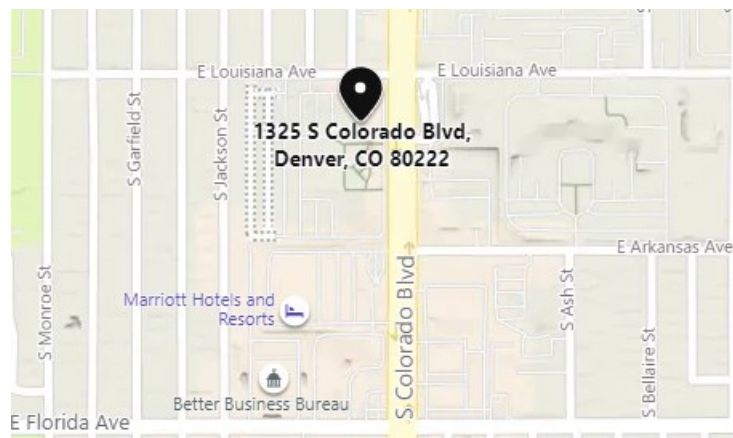
September 18*

October 16

November 20*

December 18

****Board meetings are held the 3rd Saturday of every other month at 5:30 PM***



We meet in **Suite 508-B** of the **Empire Park Building B** at 1325 South Colorado Blvd in Denver. Parking is in the back.

If you'd like to attend the meeting via Zoom: Email POMCColorado@gmail.com to receive an invite.

POMC
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Aurora, CO 80013

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED