

August's Meeting Topic: Stages of Grief

Mission:

The mission of Pikes Peak Share is to serve those who have been touched by the tragic death of a baby, through miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, still birth or neonatal death. The primary purpose is to provide support toward positive resolution of grief experienced at the time of and/or following the death of a baby. This support encompasses emotional, physical, and social healing as well as sustaining the family unit. The secondary purpose is to provide information, education and resources on the needs and rights of bereaved parents and siblings.



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Meetings are held from
7 to 9 p.m. on the 2nd
Tuesday of each month.
St. Luke's Lutheran
Church. 5265 Union Blvd.

Next Meeting:
Tues. Aug. 14, 2007

A grieving parent is someone who will never forget their child no matter how painful the memories are.

A grieving parent is someone who yearns to be with their child in heaven but cannot conceive leaving their living ones.

A grieving parent is someone who has only part of a heart as the rest of it is buried with their child.

A grieving parent is someone who begs for relief from the memories which plague them and then feels guilty when they get it.

A grieving parent is someone who pretends to be happy and enjoying life when they really are dying inside.

A grieving parent is someone who holds the lives of their remaining children as the most precious gift they have.

A Grieving Parent

By

~ Judy Skapik ~



A grieving parent is someone who can cry or laugh at the drop of a hat whenever they remember their beloved child.

A grieving parent is someone who feels as if they just lost their child yesterday no matter how much time has passed.

A grieving parent is someone who fears for their remaining family because they cannot bear to have any more loss.

A grieving parent is someone who sits by their child's gravestone and feels a knife stabbing their heart.

A grieving parent is someone who wants to help others who have lost loved ones because somehow their loss is theirs all over again.

Our Babies Wanted, Loved, and Missed

Name: Margo Elizabeth Troyer
Date of Birth: August 30, 1998
Date of Loss: September 1, 1998
Type of Loss: neonatal
Length of Pregnancy: 40 weeks
Parent(s): Jane & Matthew Troyer



The Gardner's Rose

*At times, the Gardner picks a rose
That's weathered wind and sun,
For, looking down, He ponders,
"I'd love to have that one."*

*And other times, He picks a rose
Appearing in its prime.
Its petals still are soft and pink.
We thought it had more time.*



Name: Abigail Grace Burton
Date of Birth: August 19, 2004
Date of Loss: August 19, 2004
Type of Loss: miscarriage
Length of Pregnancy: 11 weeks
Parent(s): Amy & John Burton

Please feel free on the month of your babies birth to send in something special such as letters, stories, pictures or poems to remember your little one. You can email me at kaden9402@yahoo.com Thanks~ Melissa

"Happy Birthday" means much more
Than have a happy day.
Within these words lie lots of things
We never got to say.
It means we love you first of all,
Then thanks for all you gave.
It means you mean a lot to us,
And that we love and miss you,
especially today.
But most of all, we guess it means
we wish you were here!
Love,
Mommy and Kaelee

Name: Christian & Noah Horton
Date of Birth: August 11
Date of Loss: August 11
Type of Loss: pre term
Length of Pregnancy: 16 weeks
Parent(s): Diana Horton-Roe

*And still, sometimes, the Gardner,
In His, loving, tender way,
Gently plucks a buried seed
That's not seen light of day.*

*For He knows, in His wisdom,
It's more fragile than the rest,
And it needs special tending
To grow its very best.*

*And, so, the seed's transplanted
into the Gardner's care
To grow and blossom beautifully
In the fertile soil there.*

by Amy Burton

The "Ten Stages of Grief"

Understanding Grief

The ten stages of grief must be understood to be the normal process through which most people must go as they face up to their loss. Every person does not necessarily go through all these stages, nor go through them in this order.

SHOCK - When the sorrow is overwhelming. Sometimes at the funeral home we see the sorrowing wife/mother and find that she is almost radiant as she greets those who have come to offer their sympathy. People say, "What serene faith she has!" Yet the truth of the matter may well be that this woman is experiencing anesthesia which is helping her along until she is ready to move on to the next stage of grief. Shock is a temporary escape from reality. And this is one of the reasons it is a good to keep busy; to continue to carry on as much of the usual activities as possible during the period of crisis.

EMOTION - Emotional release comes at about the same time as the reality of the loss sets in. Sometimes without warning there wells up within, an uncontrollable urge to express our grief. And this is exactly what we ought to do: allow ourselves to express the emotions we actually feel. We have been given tear glands, and we are supposed to use them when we have good reason to use them. In our society it is very difficult for men to cry.

DEPRESSION & LONELINESS - Eventually there comes a feeling of utter depression and isolation. It is during these days that no one has ever grieved as we are grieving. No one has ever grieved EXACTLY as we are grieving, but the experience of being depressed is a universal phenomenon. Realize that this is to be expected following any significant loss and is normal and a part of good healthy grief.

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS - Sometimes a person may become ill because of some unresolved grief situation. This may first be accompanied by a physical complaint which sends yourself to the doctor. Many times this occurs when there is a great loss during the past months or year or two (or more); to which the central problems related to that loss are not yet worked through.

PANIC - We find ourselves becoming panicky because we think of nothing but the loss. We try to get our minds off the subject, but soon we are right back again where we started. This hinders our effectiveness in anything we try to do. Our work shows we are not producing the work of which we are capable. We worry about our mental health. We have to ask people to repeat questions, and this worries us, and they wonder what is wrong with us. We simply cannot concentrate. Inability of concentrate in time of grief is just as natural stage.

When a person begins worrying about losing his mind, he often panics. He becomes almost paralyzed with fear, and that throws him into this panic. This is why it is important to understand something about the grief process in advance of the crisis. When we have been briefed about some of the tricks which grief plays on our minds, then we are not overwhelmed by the disturbing thoughts that seek to take over. It is the panic of thinking we are going through something wholly abnormal that throws us deeper into despair. But it is normal, it is normal! It is comforting to know that even panic is normal.

GUILT - Unresolved guilt and misunderstood emotions of this type can make us miserable for years, or they might come out in a variety of physical symptoms of distress. It is important for us to face our feelings of guilt and not be afraid or embarrassed to talk about our feelings with those who have been trained to help us when the going gets rough.

ANGER & RESENTMENT - As we come out of depression, we may be more able to express some strong feelings of anger and resentment of which we may not even have been aware. Anger and resentment are a part of good grief in that they are normal for every human. If allowed to take over, they can be very harmful, yet they are normal and can be overcome. When we have something precious taken from us we inevitably go through a stage when we are very critical of everything and everyone who was related to the loss. As humans, we are always looking for someone to blame. We may be hostile toward doctors, the nurses, relatives and even God.

RESIST RETURNING - Although we may be quite well along in our grief work and really want to get back to our usual activities, something inside us resists returning. Our loss has been something special and we feel that other people just don't understand how great the loss was. They are off talking about other things and we are left alone with our sorrow. Everyone has forgotten our tragedy. Somebody has to keep the memory of it alive. We must not allow things to get back to normal again. We also find that when we attempt to get back into life again, it is much too painful. We would rather grieve than fight the battle of coping with new situations. We want to stay with the grief... the familiar.

We also resist returning because our modern way of life makes it so difficult for us to grieve about any loss in the presence of other people. We are forced to carry all the grief within ourselves. Grief seems to be out of place in our society. We offer our sympathy to our grieving friends immediately after their loss has occurred, but from then on we say in effect, "Now, let's get back to business as usual again". Most people who are grieving are very considerate of others. They do not wish to force their troubles on other people.

HOPE - Now and then we get a little glimpse of hope in one experience or another. The cloud begins to break up, and rays of light come through. We may be in deep grief anywhere from a few weeks to many months (to years). We are never quite sure how long grief is going to last. We must remember that no two people are the same, nor are any two grief situations identical. Some do not express their feelings overtly and don't seem to need to. Within themselves they probably struggle with many of these stages, but are able to handle these problems by themselves, they don't want anymore "meddling" in their lives by trying to help them in their grief. The majority, however, need to express their emotions. They need the affection and warm encouragement of those around them. With this help they find that other experiences in life can be meaningful again.

AFFIRMING REALITY - We finally begin to affirm reality. This does not mean we become "our old selves" again for when we go through significant grief experience we come out of it as different people. Depending upon the way we respond to this event, we are either stronger people than we were before or weaker- either healthier in spirit or sicker. Some never really work through their grief, and months even years later are still fighting battles within themselves. Others, although they have grieved deeply, come to realize that everything has not been taken from them. Although life will never be the same again, they begin to sense that there is much in life that can be affirmed, and to affirm something is to say that it is good.

As we begin to struggle to affirm reality, we find that we need not be afraid of the real world. We can live in it again. We can even love it again. The dark clouds are beginning to break up and occasionally for brief moments rays of the sun come through. And hope once more becomes a part of our outlook on life.

The "Ten Stages of Grief" information has been provided by Bereaved Families of Ontario, where they got the information from the book "GOOD GRIEF" by Granger E. Westberg..

Born To Fly - An Infant's Journey to God,
is one of those little treasures that will both touch and enlighten you as you absorb its powerful, yet, simple, message. For parents who have had a child die before birth, the story and soft illustrations will bring comfort and hope. Friends and relatives of grieving families will discover within these pages a deeper understanding of the precious bond that exists between a bereaved parent and their baby, while caregivers will be inspired to continue their journey of support and healing.



"Born to Fly" brings a tear to the eye and a smile to the face. It is emotional balm for the wounded heart of any stillbirth parent." Lorraine Ash, author of "Life Touches Life

"It makes me smile, it makes me sigh, and gives me strength to offer support to other families facing the tragedy of stillbirth." Marian Sokol, PhD, MPS, President of the First Candle/SIDS Alliance

"As a pastor and hospital chaplain for over 32 years, I have ministered to many families who have lost a child before they knew them. This little book will provide help, hope and strength...I highly recommend it." Dr. Bobby G. Dickerson, Senior Minister, Park Avenue Christian Church

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On angels wings you came and went
Tears of joy and sorrow spent
Loving memories our hearts do hold
within this box your treasures gold.

Bonita Firby

Love Gifts:

In Loving Memory of our precious
Christian & Noah
Love,
Mommy & Kaylee

Thank you to everyone who has donated to
SHARE through the United Way in honor
of your little ones.

We Ask...

To be considerate of others, please refrain from bringing children to monthly meetings. Note: Pregnant women may be in attendance at the monthly meetings as SHARE does not have a separate subsequent pregnancy meeting. If you have checked out something from the SHARE lending library, please make sure to return it. -Thank You

To donate a love gift (any amount) in memory of your baby, please send a check or money order to the P.O. box listed on the front of this newsletter. Please remember *We are a non-profit organization which relies on donations and volunteers to provide our services. *Donations given to the United Way can be assigned to benefit SHARE*Donations to SHARE are tax deductible.*Please remember that any donations sent, must be postmarked by the 15th to be in the next issue of the newsletter. Thanks!