

1. Strategies to Cope with PTSD

Deanna Emberley Bailey

Dealing with Trauma, Post Traumatic Stress, Death of a Loved One. Deanna will share her grief and trauma journey briefly and explain what has lead her to share this workshop. Includes both a brief explanation of how Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocess (EMDR) worked for her, as well as an opportunity for the audience to practice step by step the use of some simple, easy to implement EMDR strategies. Includes a brief explanation of how she used creative writing to help cope as well as the audience practicing creative writing (short mini-activities) in safe mental spaces so that they are better able to reimagine their child’s experience at a later time.

Workshop is directed to recently (0-5 years from the death) bereaved parents, grandparents, siblings, counselors, and therapists.

Deanna Emberley Bailey, Mom of Solon Bailey 6/14/1997 ~ 12/25/2009 and Liam Bailey 10/28/1999 ~ 12/25/2009. Deanna’s two sons (10 and 12 years old) died of smoke inhalation in a house fire on Christmas morning 2009 while she, her husband and the boys were staying with family for the holidays. Deanna’s failed attempts to save her sons in the fire lead to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms that interfered with her ability to grieve, cope and function after the loss. She found some relief 2 months into her grief experience when a trauma therapist trained her to use Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing to calm the flight or fight response whe experienced repeatedly whenever the boys’ deaths came to mind. Deanna coupled EMDR therapy with reimaging the boys’ experience in the fire through creative writing. The two strategies combined to help her cope with images and sensations from the boys’ deaths, and gradually helped her to feel more stable again. Although Deanna is still grieving and will be forever, she is able to manage her PTSD symptoms using these two strategies, referring back to her creative writing whenever she feels the boys far away. Through these strategies, she feels her healthy boys near her once again.

2. The Poets and Grief

Paul Balasic

Poets have captured the essence of Grief over the ages. Is there something to be learned from their efforts? This workshop includes a general discussion of Grief Poetry with a view towards the idea that someone has already said or described what you are feeling. Our struggles are not unusual. The workshop will review and discuss several “Grief Poems” including ones written by the workshop presenter. Attendees are invited to bring and discuss poems they would like to share or have written.

This workshop is directed toward all bereaved parents, grandparents and adult siblings.
3. Music and Grief – One Man’s Journey  

Paul Balasic

How music can be a part of the grief healing journey. Paul will play and discuss several songs that have been meaningful to him during his journey. He will bring his guitar and plany and sing several songs that have been meaningful to him during his grief journey with audience participation. Group discussion of the songs that were included in the workshop as well as songs participants have found helpful during their journey. Participants are encouraged to bring CD’s, jump drives, phones, etc., with music to share. Participants will hopefully find that music can be a part of our grief journey. Participants will hopefully find that music can be a part of our grief journey. For many, including himself, there was no “music” in the world after a child’s death. The goal of the workshop is to get participants to let some “music” back into their lives.

This workshop is directed toward all bereaved parents, grandparents and adult siblings.

4. A Grief Equation – An Engineer Looks at Grief  

Paul Balasic

A “Rational” look at the “Grief Journey” and factors that affect our “Grief Level”. A general discussion of mathematical models is presented and a mathematical model of Paul’s “grief journey” is developed. An equation is developed with which our grief can be quantified. Ways of increasing and decreasing grief are identified and discussed. The presentation finishes up with a group discussion of the model and it’s usefulness and applicability to the participant’s experience.

This workshop is directed toward all bereaved parents.

Paul Balasic, Dad of Bethany Anne Balasic, 2/13/1981 ~ 4/05/1996. Paul has been involved with BP/USA and TCF since about 1 year after his daughter, Bethany’s death. He has been a Core Member of his local Chapter (Anne Arundel County MD) for the last 15 years. Paul has served as Program Manager for 10 years for our chapter and as such was responsible for our monthly meeting programs. Additionally he has been a Committee Member for their Annual Holiday Memorial Service, Memory Walk and Chapter Conferences for the last 10 years. These are all Annual events (except for the conference) our chapter sponsors. He served as the Workshop Coordinator for the BP/USA National Gathering that was held in Washington DC in 2011. He has been a workshop presenter at the Chicago, Little Rock, St. Louis, and NYC National Gatherings. BP/USA saved my life when my daughter was killed. I have been proud and honored to participate in their activities. I’m a firm believer in “Helping is the Best Way to Heal.”

5. Coping and Reinventing in Life When There Are No Surviving Children  

Kay Bevington

This workshop will include a panel of now childless parents and will discuss suggestions that other parents have found beneficial and discuss the needs of those attending the workshop. This workshop will provide hope to those bereaved parents due to the experiences of the presenters. We will also provide each attendee with the inspiration to commemorate their children and find meaning for their lives again as bereaved parents.

This workshop is directed toward bereaved parents with no surviving children.
Kay Bevington, Mom of Rhonda Kay Bevington, 9/27/1964 ~ 7/24/1980. Kay is a bereaved parent of only child, Rhonda, who died just prior to her 16th birthday. Kay and Rodney established a non-profit organization for parents whose only child/all children died Alive Alone, Inc. provides an international periodical, seminars at bereavement conferences, and networks parents according to the age and cause of death of their children. Kay is a retired educator and bereavement specialist who previously taught school and also worked at funeral homes. She has presented workshops and keynote speeches at regional, national and international conferences.

6. Bereaved Yet Blessed - Using Gratitude As You Grieve  
Kelly Buckley  
Kelly Buckley, Mom of Matthew Russell 5/22/1986 ~ 5/22/1986 and Stephen Patrick Russell 5/22/1986 ~ 7/04/2009. Kelly is an author and international speaker who has connected with thousands of people worldwide. Her mission? To have a conversation about life, gratitude, compassion and resilience, in the hopes of helping others navigate through both the hills and valleys of their own lives. Her life’s direction has been molded, as we all are, by the turning points in life, the defining moments that forever change how you see the world, the biggest being the sudden death of her 23-year-old son Stephen on the 4th of July 2009.

In response to her loss, Kelly has published Gratitude in Grief and Just One Little Thing, sharing her story of looking for one little thing to be thankful for each day, even when you hurt. Through her writing and reflection of what remains in troubling times, Kelly was able to not only shift her own perception of loss, but also provide others with comfort and purpose for the future. She has connected with numerous groups to add her voice in a discussion about hope after loss. She is a guest contributor for such respected sites as Open to Hope and Hello Grief (a division of Comfort Zone Camp). Most recently she has been published on Maria Shriver’s website.

Kelly also launched a global Facebook group, Just One Little Thing, focused on building resilience in adversity with the use of gratitude. With over 107,000 members from 45 different countries, she is having a global conversation about the power of gratitude in grief.

Kelly began her professional career as a registered nurse, and worked as a health executive in Canada. She continues to nurse, only now nurturing other souls with her words. Kelly lives in Charlotte, North Carolina.

7. How to Reinvent Your Life  
Anne Castaldo  
In this workshop we will discuss tangible ways to help redefine your life. We will explore the areas in your lives which can be refocused helping you to discover something which can lead you in a positive direction with passion and purpose. Discussion will include ways these results may be achieved with a focus on positive thinking, gratitude, hope, and the power of rituals, and helping others. Participants will leave with tools they can incorporate into their daily lives while honoring their child with the life they live.

This workshop is directed at all bereaved.

Anne Castaldo, Mom of Tony Brown, 3/09/1985 ~ 7/11/2009. Anne founded the non-profit Tony Brown Foundation shortly after the death of her youngest son Tony, 24 in July of 2009. She has two surviving sons David, 35 and Dan, 32 and has been married to Tony’s step dad Jeff for 18 years. Tony’s death
sent the family into a downward spiral, which included the loss of income, major health issues for her husband and many other areas which were deeply affected. Anne has worked hard at leading a productive life filled with purpose, love, and hope and continues to help others through her work with the foundation. Her life is not the same as it was before Tony died but Anne believes in living her life to the best of her ability not only to honor Tony’s memory but to honor her surviving boys! You can learn more about Tony and the foundation by visiting www.thetonybrownfoundation.org. Email for Anne is: anne@thetonybrownfoundation.org

8. **Love Honor Celebrate: A Path Toward Hope and Healing**

   Deb Carlin-Pohill

The grief journey is as unique as each individual. During our time together we will discuss many aspects of grief, as I share my revelations and process toward the discovery of the beauty in our sorrow. We will explore the multitude of various emotional aspects we encounter, as well as effective perspectives toward achieving a new sense of balance in our lives. Our session will include inspirational poetry and a healing energy circle, as we look at the life cycle itself and our place within it.

This workshop is directed at all bereaved.

**Deb Carlin Pohill, Mom of Cait Chivonne Polhill, 8/13/1983 - 10/09/2011.** October 9, 2011 began much as any other day, but come nightfall it would come to redefine the essence of herself. Her youngest daughter, Cait Chivonne, just 28 years old, passed away on that fateful day. She embarked upon a journey, which she soon realized was under the love and guidance of her precious daughter. Deb soon discovered that her process of grieving would be through loving, honoring and celebrating Cait. She wrote a book about her journey. It serves as a memorial and tribute to her cherished daughter and to life itself.

Deb is a singer/songwriter, poet, author, Reiki practitioner and registered minister. She has given local performances, readings, local and international radio and local television interviews, and addressed groups including, The Rotary and the Mid-Hudson Chapter of BP/USA. Deb lives in Cortlandt Manor, NY.

9. **The Elephant in the Room**

   Nancy Cayward

Surviving the loss of a death by suicide. DON’T let a death by suicide be an Elephant in The Room. Talk about it, admit if you don’t understand or know what to say but don’t walk away and leave someone who is grieving “alone.”

This workshop is appropriate for everyone, not just those who are suicide survivors.

**Nancy Cayward, Mom of M. Richard (Rick) Keery, Jr, 1/10/1970 ~ 4/27/2001.** My son, Rick died by suicide 14 years ago on 4/27/2001. I started attending support groups and when offered took facilitator trainings through AFSP (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention). In January of 2003 I founded a support group called The Anchor through my church. I have been the lead facilitator of the group for over 12 years. I continue to take facilitator trainings whenever I can as there is always more to learn. Through AFSP, I have also had some prevention training. I am ASIST trained for suicide intervention and I am a SafeTalk Trainer which teaches the general public and others how to identify someone who might have thoughts of suicide, how to talk with them and keep them safe until intervention help arrives.

My son’s tragic death gave me purpose. I want to help others get through a death by suicide and know that they are not alone through my work with The Anchor and with ASIST and SafeTalk I hope people will learn how to help prevent a suicide.
10. Dealing With The Aftermath  Clifton and Michelle Cottom

Discussions will discuss specifics of how to deal with the negatives after a loss e.g. individual pain, the insurance companies, pain of family and friends, denial, shock, anger, bargaining, guilt and depression. Strategies for acceptance, healing and how to go on.

Workshop is directed toward all who have experienced loss.

Clifton and Michelle Cottom, the parents of Asia SiVon Cottom, an 11 year old DC Public School student who perished on September 11, 2001, when hijackers crashed American Airlines Flight #77 into the Pentagon. As bereaved parents dealing with loss, describe what pain they went through, healed from, and learned; hope to bring comfort and relief to those who travel down the road of loss will find a semblance of light and comfort through their story. Currently residing in Prince George’s County, Maryland they have one son, Isiah and are the co-founders and executive board members of the Asia SiVon Cottom (ASC) Memorial Scholarship Fund.

11. Am I Crazy Or Is This Grief? – An Avalanche of Secondary Losses in Grief  Bettie-Jeanne Rivard-Darby

Grief is a crazy, hard, deep experience. Many don’t understand the far reaching affects.

Because the Loss of our Loved One is THE HORRIFIC LOSS that is tangible and seen, too many, sadly, think that it is the Only Loss we experience. But, truly, it can be the catalyst for the avalanche of Secondary Losses that occur. These Secondary Losses are little talked about, but very real. It may help us to be more gentle to ourselves, and understand that we aren’t going crazy if we try to understand the many aspects of our lives that have been affected by our loss. This is a candid interactive discussion about recognizing the many possible Secondary Losses in Grief. No – we aren’t going crazy – we are Grieving.

The mission of the workshop is to raise awareness of the multitude of what Secondary Losses are, that they frequently occur, to validate the experience of Secondary Losses and to help individuals feel less isolated and alone. It is Not to attempt to SOLVE.

While the newly bereaved (6 years and younger) may find this workshop the most enlightening, it is of benefit to anyone who wishes to learn more about how deeply grief can affect and come to a better understanding of why we don’t just “get over it”. As conversation often reaches to the losses in physical intimacy, it is not a group geared toward younger participants.

12. AND NOW WHAT??? I KNOW I'M NOT CRAZY, BUT HOW DO I COPE WITH SOME OF THE SECONDARY LOSSES IN GRIEF?  Bettie-Jeanne Rivard-Darby

You Know That You Aren't Crazy– It's Grief - Now What Can You Do About It? How To Better Understand and Cope With The Avalanche Of Secondary Losses In Grief Sometimes it isn’t enough to know that you aren’t Crazy, even when grief can make you feel that way. Sometimes you need to find out why it feels the way it feels and what you can do about it. Once you’ve identified the very real, yet
too often little talked about, Secondary Losses in your life, what do you do next? Are there physiological reasons for some of them? Can you do something about any of them, whether concretely, abstractly or even spiritually? Expect a frank, interactive discussion of WHAT TO DO WITH THE AVALANCHE OF SECONDARY LOSSES IN GRIEF – How we might deal with or combat some of them to try to regain a quality of life. We may be Grieving, but How Can We Live, Too? (To attend it isn’t necessary to have participated in the workshop Am I Crazy Or Is This Grief? – An Avalanche of Secondary Losses in Grief) The mission of this workshop is to delve into the origin of some of the secondary losses and to brainstorm ways in which we have approached coping with them.

This workshop is directed at all bereaved.

13. “I LOVE HER, I WANT TO HELP HER, BUT …” A panel of women answering the questions that men have about their spouses’ grief. Bettie-Jeanne Rivard-Darby

Everyone has heard that men and women grieve “differently”, but WHAT ARE THOSE DIFFERENCES? WHY DO THEY OCCUR? Is the grief experience that different for a Dad than it is for a Mom? This highly interactive workshop is designed to help men better understand and better cope with the grief experiences of their female partners. The question and answer format will allow the panel to openly and honestly discuss what is on women’s minds in such areas as changes in the physical/ sexual and personal relationship, why women sometimes seem to “grieve forever”, the “disappearing wife”, how relationships with family and friends might change, may be addressed. No sincerely questioned topic is taboo. Each participant will be encouraged to anonymously write their concerns and placed in a “fishbowl” for open candid discussion. Direct questions from “the floor” will also be welcomed. Those who need a better understanding of difference in “gender grief” will appreciate frank discussion about understanding how their female partners are grieving, why they’re acting differently and how to help them. This workshop will provide a safe discussion where men are not judged for their grief experiences and can try to better understand that of their spouses.

To whom is this workshop directed? Men of any grief age – NO WOMEN ALLOWED (except for the panel)

14. MEMORIAL GEOCACING ~ A TOOL TO HELP TO FILL AN EMPTY SPACE IN YOUR HEART (Creativity / Finding Hope) Bettie-Jeanne Rivard-Darby, Jim Darby & Keith Connors

A great fear of bereaved families may be that their loved one will be forgotten. Creating a Memorial Geocache is a unique, resourceful way to share their story, and keep their legacy alive and remembered. Geocaching is a fun, family-friendly mind / body activity best described as an outdoor treasure hunt; where participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates, searching for a hidden container. Memorial geocaches can be decorated reflecting your loved one’s personality, filled with inexpensive give away trinkets, “trackables” that can travel all of the world. This workshop will include What a Geocache is ~ How Bereaved Families Use Geocaching to Find Comfort, Keep Memories Alive, and to Stay Connected. Using Samples of an ACTUAL GEOCACHE, Geo-Swag, Travel Bugs, and Trackables used in our daughter RobynApril’s Geocache: THE BYRDSHOUSE, we’ll share everything you’ll need to learn about GEOCACHING AS A PROACTIVE TOOL IN GRIEF.

This workshop is directed at all bereaved.
15. FOR MEN ONLY - A MEN’S FRANK PANEL DISCUSSION OF SURVIVING GRIEF AS A MAN

Jim Darby

This highly interactive workshop will provide private and safe discussion, designed to help men understand and cope with their grief experiences. The panel welcomes any and all questions. Each participant will be encouraged to anonymously write their concerns, placed in a “fishbowl”, for open candid talk. Direct questions from “the floor” will also be welcomed. Those who need a better understanding of difference in “gender grief” will appreciate frank discussion about understanding how their female partners are grieving, why they’re acting differently and how to help them. Areas such as tears or lack of them, changes in physical / sexual / personal relationship, how relationships with family and friends might change, underworking / overworking, and issues with surviving children, may be addressed. No sincerely questioned topic is taboo. Men need to be part of a safe group where they are not judged for their grief experiences.

This workshop is directed to all men.

16. FOR WOMEN ONLY - MEN EXPLAINING MEN’S GRIEF TO WOMEN

Jim Darby

Everyone has heard that men and women grieve “differently”, but WHAT ARE THOSE DIFFERENCES? WHY DO THEY OCCUR? Is the grief experience that different for a Dad than it is for a Mom? This highly interactive workshop is designed to help women understand and better cope with the grief experiences of their male partners. The question and answer format will allow the panel to openly and honestly discuss what is on women’s’ minds in such areas as changes in the physical and personal relationship, tears or lack of them, why men sometimes seem “not to grieve”, the “withdrawing husband”, time spent with family, work, treatment of the surviving sibling, changes among friends and family. No sincerely questioned topic is taboo. Each participant will be encouraged to anonymously write their concerns and placed in a “fishbowl” for open candid discussion. Direct questions from “the floor” will also be welcomed.

This workshop is directed at all women.

Bettie-Jeanne Rivard-Darby, Mom of RobynApril Rivard-Darby, 3/14/1980 ~ 12/04/2008, Sibling of Rene’ George Rivard and Joseph Edward Sheltz. After deaths of two brothers, and as the family caregiver, providing end of life palliative and medical care to 7 family members, Bettie-Jeanne thought she was an incredibly strong person. But nothing could have prepared her for the sudden, tragic accidental death of her 28-year-old daughter in 2008. She found that not only was RobynApril’s death life changing, but that unexpected “additional losses” compounded the pain and became roadblocks in life. It was as if Robyn’s death had started an avalanche. To help herself and others realize the significance of the far-reaching impact of a loved one’s death, Bettie-Jeanne co-founded with her husband, Jim Darby, a local support group in 2010. She speaks about the affects of grief publicly, monitors several social media grief groups, writes blogs validating emotions of mourning and is the founder / organizer of A Day of Community and Caring ~ the Statewide Walk to Remember.

Jim Darby, Dad of RobynApril Rivard-Darby, 3/14/1980 ~ 12/04/2008. As a Vietnam Vet and a caregiver to terminally ill family members, Jim had a personal intimacy with Death and Dying. But with the death of his adoptive / step-daughter, RobynApril, Jim found grief and mourning taking on new dimensions. A Girl Scout leader for 13 years, he was aware of the gender differences in thinking, action and reactions, enabling him to be supportive to his wife in their loss, while acknowledging that their
grief and mourning experiences were very different. In 2010, he co-founded a grief support group with his wife in honor of their daughter. Jim realized the need for men to be able to speak freely without the presence of their wives and began a Dads Only subgroup. In addition to his work with bereaved fathers, Jim speaks to Moms Only gatherings helping them better understand the different experiences of the genders in grief.

Keith Connors is a local Geocaching friend of the Bettie-Jeanne and Jim, who helped to create THE BYRDHOUSE. Keith is a non-bereaved parent who has presented locally several times with them on this topic of what geocaches are and how to create a memorial cache. Keith is an active geocacher from Ellington, Connecticut; an activity shared with his family. He has aided in the creation of a Memorial Geocache and has spoken to bereaved parents groups several times on how to use geocaching to keep the memory of a loved one alive.

17. Blogging Your Way Through Grief

Jacqueline will explain the benefits of writing to cope with grief, and demonstrate how to set up a blog and maintain it. Attendees will take home the step-by-step guide and create their own free blogs at home, and use some of the suggested topics as inspiration for their own writing.

This workshop is directed toward Web savvy people who have an interest in writing and creativity.

Jacqueline DeVito, Sister of Jennifer “Niffie” DeVito, 11/03/1991 ~ 8/17/2010. Jacqueline lost her little sister, Jennifer, in August of 2010. After trying to find the best way to work through her grief, Jacqueline started a blog as a way to express her thoughts and feelings. Since then, she has been published in a national magazine and has presented at both National and International conferences on grief, writing, and how to cope. Jacqueline is a web developer and resides in Westchester, NY with her fiancé’ Adam.

18. Expressing Grief Through Writings and Publications

How written expressions of grief can help in the therapy of the grief journey. Those who have published books and articles related to their grief journey are invited to share their story and display their book. Authors will share their loss and steps they took toward expressing it on paper, others will absorb how they can relate and receive help toward publication. Attendees struggling to express their grief and handle their personal loss should find comfort in knowing they are not alone. Cary will present an easy step-by-step process going from journal writing into focus on themes and book formation and then publication of the grief journey. Not only will it help them come to grips with their loss but the authors also rejoice in knowing they helped.

By following the step-by-step process, the grief journey is personalized for each attendee and he hopes to form a core support group of authors who are just a phone call away.

This workshop is directed toward those who wish to learn how to publish their writings.

Cary Gregory, dad of Kellie Rai Gregory, 11/21/1986 ~ 5/30/2011. Cary has written poetry, stories, and songs for most of his life and earned a BS degree in Mass Communications from Southeast MO State University. But it wasn’t until his daughter, Kellie, was born did he write with much passion. As she grew and enjoyed his creative writings, she encouraged him to share them and look into publishing;
which he promised her he would do someday. When she passed away unexpectedly at age 24, he felt it important to keep his promise, sharing them has led him to Bereaved Parents and currently publishing his 3rd book. Touching people’s lives in a positive way compels Cary to continue his heartfelt writing.

19. Turning Grief into Positive Influence  
Jordan Herskowitz

How do you turn the grief of losing a loved one into powerful, positive action? Join Keynote Speaker Jordan Herskowitz as he walks you through his journey of losing his younger brother, writing his one-man show, and creating his non-profit foundation is his brother's memory, Richie's Spirit Foundation. This session will give you ideas to start thinking about ways to carry on the spirit of your loved one.

This workshop is directed at all bereaved looking for ways to honor their loved ones memory.

20. Creatively Writing through the Grief  
Jordan Herskowitz

Join Keynote Speaker Jordan Herskowitz as he teaches you ways to deal with your grief through creative writing. By putting pen to paper, we allow ourselves to explore a different medium that enables us to connect to our loved ones. No previous writing experience needed!

This workshop is directed at all bereaved.

Jordan Herskowitz, brother of Richie Herskowitz, 2/24/1990 ~ 10/29/2007. Jordan Herskowitz is an accomplished actor, writer, and teacher. His award-winning autobiographical one-man play, Growing Up Jordy Pordy, has been performed over 300 times on three different continents. Time Out London said this show is "a story worth sharing" and The News Line called it "a performance masterpiece." He was awarded Best Theater Company at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland. In addition to acting and writing, Jordan has a passion for teaching. He has led various workshops, including bereavement-based ones, and taught his own creative drama curriculum for schools, talent agencies, community centers, and faith-based groups. For more information about Jordan’s work, please visit www.jordypordy.com and www.richiesspirit.org

21. QI Gong ~ Simple Yet Powerful  
Lorraine Hughes

Relieving stress by being present. Lorraine will give a brief history, origins and purpose of Qi Gong. Explain posture, alignment, breath & intention. Basic energizing but simple opening exercises. Eight brocades and five element Qi Gong with healing sounds. Use of exercises with breath in order to let go, reduce stress and relax, increase circulation and vitalize health.

This workshop is directed toward everyone.

Lorraine Hughes, sister of John Fitzpatrick, 9/25/1953 ~ 5/07/1994. Lorraine is a Therapeutic Herbalist with main focus practicing with Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine. As a health practitioner she is familiar with the impact the grieving process has imbeds upon one’s health, both physical, mental and emotional. Lorraine is also a Certified Reflexologist with the American Reflexology Certification Board, a Reiki Master, Aromatherapist and teaches Qi Gong (Certified Qi Gong Instructor by Santa Cruz Chi Center) and Herbal Educational classes and workshops. www.EmpoweredByNature.net.
Lorraine is a bereaved sibling, her brother, John, died at age 38 from HIV/AIDS due to his lifelong addiction to drugs, starting at age 14 with heroin. Her mother passed away in 2010 at the age of 71 and her sister-in-law committed suicide at age 49 in 2007.

22. Crisis of Faith After the Death of a Child

Dr. Doug and BJ Jensen will facilitate this interactive audience participation workshop that addresses grievers experiencing a crisis of faith. Participants will leave better equipped to deal with their loss, with insights that will help them to strengthen their faith, and be better equipped to apply principles, ideas, perspectives shared by other couples and the Jensen’s. Doug and BJ are published authors, speakers, Sign Artists, and Dramatists who travel internationally, inspiring audiences with their insight and helpful presentations.

This workshop is directed at all bereaved parents, grandparents and adult siblings.

23. Moving Through Grief With Music

Dr. Doug and BJ Jensen are joining together with members of LOVE IN MOTION Signing Choir to present an informative workshop titled: “MOVING THROUGH GRIEF WITH MUSIC.” The Jensens are popular workshop presenters at Bereaved Parents, The Compassionate Friends, T.A.P.S. (Tragedy Assistance Programs for Military Survivors, and Umbrella Ministries for Grieving Moms. The Jensens have gone from barely surviving to abundantly thriving as they have used their humor, compassion, and knowledge on the subject of grief following the death of their beloved son, Jay. LOVE IN MOTION is a choir from San Diego made up of Christian Sign Artists of all ages who travel internationally, inspiring audiences with presentations of music in American Sign Language (ASL), drama, and movement.

This workshop is directed toward all bereaved.

24. Strengthening a Marriage After the Death of a Child

Not wanting to become a divorce statistic after the death of a child, Dr. Doug and BJ Jensen researched what could help them build a stronger marriage in the midst of their crisis. They will present TOP TEN ACTIONS that can build a stronger marriage after the death of a child. Participants will gain tools that can strengthen their marriage when they apply the principles, ideas, and perspectives shared by the Jensens. Doug and BJ use a multi-media approach combined with grace, humor, compassion, and knowledge on the subject of grief.

This workshop is directed toward all married bereaved parents.

Dr. Jensen is Doctor of Biblical Counseling and Biblical Studies. After the death of their son, Jay, Doug went on to earn his doctorate in order to help others. The Jensens have counseled couples and led retreats, conferences, workshops, and meetings all over the world since 1989.

BJ has been the director of “Love in Motion: Signing Choir since its inception in 1990. The choir is made up of Christian sign artists of all ages who travel internationally, inspiring audiences with presentations in American Sign Language and movement. BJ is also a humorous speaker, award-winning writer, and was the director of their church’s Drama Troupe for 14 years.

The Jensens and “Love In Motion” choir have been privileged to serve bereaved parents at 16 international, national, regional and local conferences. They live in San Diego, California.

25. Phantom Limb: Living With the Loss of a Sibling  
Sarah Kravitz

Coping with the death of a sibling. Introduction and discussion of the “phantom limb” metaphor for sibling loss. Discussion of key points of sibling loss: This loss being considered less intense than loss of a child or parent; supporting one’s parents in the loss (especially when becoming an only child); change in family structure; caring for sibling’s family members; realization of the depth of sibling connection, regardless of proximity or emotional closeness; affect on shared history and identity; guild over status of sibling relationship at the time of death; how a sibling is irreplaceable. We will focus on specific coping strategies for bereaved siblings.

This workshop is for anyone who has lost a sibling (adults and older children).

26. You Have The Answers: Creating a Personal Commonplace Book for Coping With Grief  
Sarah Kravitz

How to create a sourcebook specifically tailored to you and your experience. Brief overview of types of grief “workbooks” or journals. Explanation of the “commonplace book,” definition and history. Sarah will give a description of her own grief commonplace book, with show and tell, how she created it and continues to expand it, how she uses it, and why she thinks it is the most effective choice for her. She will discuss possible categories for a commonplace book. Attendees will make lists of their own commonplace book sections.

This workshop is directed toward all grieving adults and older children.

Sarah Kravitz, Sister of Frank Lyman III, 6/11/1968 ~ 6/21/2014. Sarah is a writer and teacher. For over 20 years has co-authored the Keys to Success textbook series on college success, published by Pearson Education, and she teaches student success at Monclair State University. In June of 2014, her beloved brother and only sibling was killed in an auto accident when his vehicle was hit head-on by a severely impaired driver. In navigating this loss through self-exploration and writing, she has come to understand judgment, specifically negative judgment, of one’s self as well as of others, as a paralyzing force that prevents the full realization of who we are and what we are capable of doing. Her website is at www.lifewithoutjudgment.com where she blogs regularly on coping with crisis, and she is a contributing writer at www.opentohope.com.
27. Nurturing Healing Love

Choosing Love. Scarlett will talk about her experience the day of the tragedy. She will talk about her decision to forgive the man who shot her son as well as his mother who armed him. About how choice is paramount in healing and how much of the healing components are a choice. How there is meaning in all suffering and how we can use our experience to find that meaning. Attendees will be given a perspective from a mother who has gone through a loss of how one can heal by being in service to others. Focusing your energy of something productive and healing to the world, as large as a foundation and book about your experience to as small as helping out another person who is suffering.

This workshop is directed toward all bereaved parents.

Scarlett Lewis, Mom of Jesse McCord Lewis, 6/30/2006 ~ 12/14/2012. Scarlett is the mother Jesse Lewis, a six year old who was shot at Sandy Hook Elementary on December 14, 2012. Following Jesse’s death, Scarlett began a mission, based on a message left by her son who wrote three words on their kitchen chalkboard shortly before he died, “Nurturing Healing Love,” to bring the message of compassion and love into our schools and society. She started the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Foundation whose goal is to bring compassionate programs and learning into schools and our society as a whole. Scarlett also wrote a book titled, “Nurturing Healing Love” that talks about her journey of hope and forgiveness. The message to Choose Love has gone viral and she has spoken in schools, universities, corporations and through the media all over the world. Scarlett is the recipient of the International Forgiveness Hero of the Year Award and in line to receive the Legacy Award and the Common Ground Award.

28. Common Signs Seen Through Uncommon Eyes (Signs I)

Attendees will learn about 15 common signs most often experienced by the bereaved as related from a spiritual perspective. They will learn the descriptions of and about the mechanics of the signs plus they will gain an understanding of the where, the how and why from spirit’s perspective. Participants will have time for Q & A at the end of the workshop and will have an opportunity to continue questions in a sharing session in the evening after the workshop. (Due to the amount of material, this will not be a sharing session of personal experiences). Attendees will have a clear understanding of 15 documented signs spirit share with the bereaved. They will understand that this is a different kind of 2-way communication and they will understand their responsibility in this new relationship.

This workshop is directed toward all bereaved parents, grandparents and adult siblings.

29. How To Receive Signs From Your Loved One (Signs II)

Attendees will be given a list and will discuss a variety of methods to help them receive signs from their loved ones. Many of us believe our suffering and pain of grief will be reduced when we receive a sign from our loved one. But our anxiety, depression and sorrow increases if we hear about other’s experiences and do not experience our own. Perhaps we need to view signs differently. Perhaps we need to ask ourselves what can we do to be a better communicator with our loved one? This workshop encourages attendees to view their continuing connections with their deceased loved ones in a different way. They will learn a variety of methods to help them answer their question and increase the opportunity to receive the signs they want from their loved one.
This workshop is directed toward all bereaved parents, grandparents and adult siblings.

30. Healthy Grieving in Body, Mind and Spirit  
Chris Mulligan and Jane Bissler

Empowering participants to learn to live their life differently after grief. Attendees will identify unhealthy body, mind and spiritual signals and will receive tips and techniques to encourage a practice of healthy grieving. This is not a workshop for those who want to stay in their pain but is for those who want to choose to live differently, who want to effectively address their body, mind and spirit in their grief and those attendees who want to learn tools to help them learn to grieve in a healthy way.

This workshop is directed to all grieving parents, grandparents and older siblings to empower them with the tools to gain clarity and self control in their body, mind and spiritual grief.

31. Spirituality 3.0 (10 Healing Practices)  
Chris Mulligan and Jane Bissler

When our world shatters as the result of the death of our child, our spirituality is only one piece of the self that is lost. Recreating a new life after loss begins by identifying those lost parts and gaining some control in those areas. But how do we do that? Attendees will be introduced to 10 spiritual practices that they can first, identify, then use in their daily life to learn more about themselves and ultimately learn how to recreate their new life after loss. These practices will be discussed in an interactive format. Attendees will learn 10 spiritual practices that can be incorporated into their daily life in order to identify the new life they are rebuilding and be able to live a more spiritual life while grieving.

This workshop is directed at all bereaved parents, grandparents and adult siblings.

Chris Mulligan, Mom of Zachary Jay Herigstad, 1/22/1979 ~ 10/01/2000. Chris Mulligan inspires and guides the bereaved to choose to live differently after grief. Her passion is fueled by her transformation when her youngest son, Zac died in 2000 and she was enduring a shattered world she didn’t expect to inhabit. She shifted from living in grief to living on with her changed view of death, life and grief. Her truth developed with the decision to open her heart, live differently and create a life of gifts, gratitude and grace. A MS in Clinical Child, Youth, and Family Work, 25 years of Adoption Social Work, participating in death panels for the TIP (Trauma Incident Program) hospice volunteering, facilitating grief support groups, writing her blog, newsletter and website have taught her about pain and peace. She authored Afterlife Agreements: A Gift From Beyond. Http://www.Afterlifebooks.com and soon www.Grievedifferently.com

Jane Bissler is a Clinical Counselor/Clinical Director, (PhD in Counseling Education, Supervision M.Ed in Education, LPCC) teacher, writer, speaker, a fellow in Thanotolgy (study of death and dying) President of ADEC and SRT Teacher and Consultant. She is a practicing clinical counselor and clinical director of Counseling for Wellness, LLP, is an adjunct professor in the Masters and Doctoral programs at Kent State U. Her clinical research and specialty focuses on what has been most helpful for bereaved parents. She has published a weekly newspaper grief and loss column for over 25 years. She has co-authored: Surviving and Thriving :Grief Relief and Continuing Relationships, Loving Connections: The Healing Power of After-Death Communication and Hoover and Honeybunch Find Comfort in a Sometimes Scary World.
32. Healing Grief and Regret

Alan Pedersen

This workshop will help participants gain an understanding into the guilt and regret bereaved parents may face in relation to both the life and the death of their child. Participants will be given effective tools to offer the bereaved to help them work through guilt and regret, including owning their guilt, accepting their guilt, sharing their guilt, and releasing their guilt. The 5 H’s (hurt, hope, help, honor, and healing) will be shared in detail and practical examples given of each.

Alan Pedersen, Dad of Ashley Marie Pedersen, 5/16/1983 ~ 8/15/2001. Alan lives in Roseville, California. He has spent more than 30 years as a professional creator, writer and performer of music, comedy and news. In August 2001 Alan’s world changed forever when his 18-year-old daughter, Ashley, was killed in an automobile accident. In 2003 the focus of Alan’s writing and performing changed as he began using his talent and creativity to help others walking the grief journey.

Alan’s music and message have become very popular with grief organizations. In 2010 Alan and his wife, Denise, founded the Angels Across the USA Tour and together they have traveled to over 340 U.S. cities sharing a message of hope for organizations offering support to those in grief.

Alan is certified as a Grief Service Provider through the American Grief Academy. In 2011 Alan worked as a creator, writer, producer and video editor on the highly acclaimed “Walking Through Grief” DVD series distributed internationally by the Grief Toolbox. In 2010 Alan was named the Professional of the Year by The Compassionate Friends and in 2011 he was awarded the Humanitarian of the Year by Bobby Resciniti Healing Hearts Foundation. Alan served on The Compassionate Friends Board of Directors in 2012-2013 and is currently the Executive Director for The Compassionate Friends organization.

33. The Bereaved Parent – 5 Years Later

Dave Roberts

This workshop will explore the continuing evolution of grief and the lifelong process of grief. We will explore various tools and strategies that are essential to transforming our grief. We will also discuss how we can embody the essence of our children into our own lives, to discover joy and meaning in our forever changed worlds. It is Dave’s hope that the attendees will apply the knowledge gained during this workshop to better navigate their grief after the death of their children and in the process, change their perspective on life and death.

This workshop is directed toward parents who have been bereaved for five years and longer.

34. Men and Grief

Dave Roberts

The male grief experience. This workshop will explore the challenges that males experience after the death of their children. Our unique style of grieving will be explored. Other areas such as, expression of thoughts and feelings, accessing and receiving support, and our language of grief, will also be discussed. It is Dave’s hope that men in this workshop will be able to acknowledge that inherent strengths and utilize them to find meaning after the death of their children.
This workshop is directed toward grieving males who have experienced the death of a child.

David J. Roberts, LMSW, CASAC, Dad of Jeannine Marie Roberts, 4/27/1984 ~ 3/01/2003. Dave became a parent who experienced the death of a child, after his daughter Jeannine died of cancer on March 1, 2003 at the age of 18. He is a retired addiction professional and is also an adjunct professor in the psychology and psychology-child life departments at Utica College, Utica, New York. He is a volunteer for Hospice and Palliative Care, Inc in New Hartford, New York and the chapter leader for The Compassionate Friends of the Mohawk Valley.

Dave has presented several workshops at national conferences of TCF and BP/USA, in the past. Dave was also the opening keynote speaker at the 2011 National Gathering of BP/USA in Reston, Virginia. He is also a featured speaker, workshop presenter and coach for Aspire Place.

Dave is a contributing writer for the Open to Hope Foundation and The Grief Toolbox. He is also a blogger for The Huffington Post. He has contributed articles to several other grief and self-improvement sites and publications, as well. Dave has co-authored two books with Linda Findlay of Mourning Discoveries. One is on navigating grief during the holidays and the other is on pet loss.

One of Dave’s articles “My Daughter is Never Far Away” can also be found in the book Open to Hope: Inspirational Stories of Healing and Loss. Excerpts from Dave’s article for the Open to Hope Foundation, called The Broken Places, were featured in the 2012 Paraclete Press DVD video, Grieving the Sudden Death of a Loved One.

Dave has also appeared on Healing the Grieving Heart show. Dave’s website: www.bootsyandangel.com is devoted to providing support and resources for individuals experiencing loss.

35. Who Am I Now? Sara Ruble

The chaos of life and death and love creates a place of great unknown for those whose child or children have died. Who am I now? A question we may ask almost daily as we journey through the enormity of grief. Being able to see who we are now with greater clarity and understanding can help balance us and strengthen us as well. Sara Ruble a bereaved mom, will help navigate through the many questions that arise about our changing identity and the confusion that can create. This is an interactive workshop and will allow participants to discover more about themselves and who they are now.

Workshop attendees will be asked to share how they saw themselves before their child or children died . . . and how they see themselves now. They often discover greater compassion, understanding, and a need to reach out and help others comes with this time of great pain. Or wherever they are on their grief journey . . . to gain new insights and perspectives on the ways grief can change us.

This workshop is directed toward parents, grandparents and siblings over 16.

36. The Sole/Soul Journey Sara Ruble

This workshop will explore the Sole Journey and the work we must do ourselves to come to a place of hope and even peace. It will address how the Soul Journey takes us to a deeper place of knowing and
hope as well, and how the two journeys work together to encourage a deeper understanding of life and death.

This workshop will help the attendees see that the heavy grief work we must do teaches us and helps us find greater balance, strength, courage, and depth even when we cannot always see it.

This workshop is directed toward parents, grandparents and siblings over 18.

*Sara Ruble, Mom of Scott Michael Jessie, 3/20/1975 ~ 5/20/1994.* As the mother of a healthy and happy teenager, Sara’s life was forever changed with the sudden death of her son and only child, Scott. The grief and pain were excruciating. Sara’s grief journey and her continuing relationship with Scott has created within her the desire to help others through their own pain. Out of a great need for support in her area, Sara created a group for bereaved parents at a local grief center in Stow, Ohio and was the facilitator for many years. She is a co-author of Surviving and Thriving: Grief Relief and Continuing Relationships. She founded the Christmas Box Angel of Hope Children’s Memorial in Stow and continues to lead that heartfelt foundation. Presenting at Now Childless Conferences, BPUSA National Gatherings, and the Compassionate Friends National Conferences has allowed Sara to know this journey has great meaning for herself and others. Her blog is titled Death Teaches at [www.deathteaches.com](http://www.deathteaches.com), where Sara openly shares what Scott’s death continues to teach her and what ultimately brought her greater understanding of her beautiful spiritual relationship with him.

37. **Hanging On: Bereaved Parents Parenting Bereaved Siblings**

This is an interactive workshop that will discuss the normal developmental stages of life for teens and children and the unique challenges of the various age groups. How you can assist surviving siblings to navigate through their own grief journey while you, yourself, are grieving will be explored.

This workshop is designed for bereaved parents with surviving siblings living in the home.

38. **Wheepy Seeds**

WeepySeeds is a fun, interactive workshop that will assist you to understand and appreciate your personality more than ever before. It begins with an explanation of what Becky calls “The principle of The Harvest”. Then each member will be given a short survey which will assist you to understand why you think and act in specific and predictable ways. This class is useful for discovering your strengths, determining how/where you may wish to serve others, how you handle stress, etc. Come prepared to laugh.

This workshop is directed to all bereaved.

*Becky Russell M.A., R.N., Mom of Jae Lynn Russell, 10/03/1987 ~ 3/18/2004.* Becky received her Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing from the University of Central Arkansas and her Masters of Arts in Health Service Administration from Webster University of Missouri.

Almost all of her 33-year career as a nurse has been within the Baptist Health System of Arkansas. Her positions there have ranged from an intensive care nurse to a faculty member at their nursing school and finally on to her current position of Staff Specialist.
As a Registered Nurse, Becky had experience in assisting others in the grieving process. As a teacher, she taught the grieving process. On March 18, 2004, she became a participant in the grieving process, when Jae Lynn, her oldest daughter, was killed in a car accident. Jae Lynn and two friends were going fishing when an 18-wheeler struck their car as they attempted to cross a notoriously dangerous intersection near Cabot, Arkansas. All three girls were killed.

Becky is the creator of a 30-minute visual presentation entitled “The 10 Things I Did Not Know About Grief” and is the author of the now-quiet-blog entitled “WeepySeeds.” Becky lives in Jacksonville, Arkansas and is a wife and mother of three girls.

39. Writing Through Grief  
Susan Strecker

This workshop will deal with how grief is different for everyone, even family members. Having an outlet for one’s grief and understanding that everyone grieves differently is key in carrying on.

This workshop is for bereaved siblings.

Susan Strecker, Sister of Rob Monso, 9/26/1968 ~ 9/30/1990. Susan earned a Master of Marriage and Family Therapy in 1997. Part of my training dealt with grief. I also have personal experience as my brother, Robbie, died in a car accident in 1990. In 2014, my debut novel, Night Blindness, was published. In the book the protagonist has lost her brother before the book opens. The book largely deals with grief and how it’s different for everyone.

40. Healing Improv  
Bart Sumner

This workshop will use improvisational group exercises to open lines of communication and free blocked emotions through laughter and movement. Designed for anyone who feels stuck in their grief and/or is looking for help back to the road forward or to finding joy of living again.

This workshop is directed toward all attendees.

Bart Sumner, Dad of David Barton Sumner, 7/30/99 ~ 10/09/2009. Bart is an actor/screen writer/award winning improvisational teacher and performer of 25-plus years. After his son died from a tragic sports accident, he came to realize that his life’s work as an improvisational teacher and actor helped him through his personal nightmare, and was perfectly suited to helping people who felt stuck in their grief begin to connect with others and begin to laugh again. With support of his wife and daughter, he started Healing Improv (www.healing/improve.org), a nonprofit corporation to provide Comedy Improv Group Therapy at no cost to people struggling with their grief journey. Healing Improv is based in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and is a registered charity and charitable trust in Michigan.

41. Healing A Step At A Time  
Keith Swett

Keith will talk about a child’s death as a massive injury. Starting with physical effects, we will share our successes as we move to social and emotional growth. Keith will read essays he’s written and lead a discussion. Participants will use strategies and techniques which allow them to celebrate their child’s life rather than be stuck in their child’s death.

This workshop is directed toward all participants.
Keith Swett, Dad of Matthew John Swett, 1/07/1979 ~ 1/25/2003. With Matt’s death Keith’s world fell apart. Knowing success can be copied, he looked for others in his situation. Bereaved Parents provided the model I needed. A pattern for successful healing emerged. Keith shares his journey through workshops, speaking and writing. As a teacher and a coach he wants to motivate and educate. His goal is to help you celebrate your child’s life rather than get stuck in death.