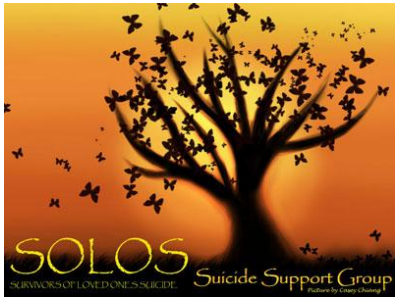


SEPTEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER



www.survivorsofsuicide.co.za

DURBAN NORTH joy@crisisteam.co.za
Joy Chiang 083 256 5993 :SueFairall 074 182 4360 Meetings are held the first Monday of every month from 18H30-20H30 at Pam Golding House, 2 Swapo Road Dbn North.

GLENWOOD
suicideprevent@gmail.com
Lori Barausse 083 652 0117
Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of every month from 18H00 171 Bulwer Road Glenwood

and
Depression and Anxiety Group.
Meet at the above address every two weeks on a Monday 18h30. SMS Danielle 0728489782 or email depressiondbngroup@gmail.com

SADAG SUICIDE HELPLINE
0800567567

DIARY DATES : DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY GROUP MEETING: LAST TUES OF EVERY MONTH SMS Robin for details 0824991344

No one is obliged to speak and everything said is confidential.

Hello,

On September 10, 2016, we observed World Suicide Prevention Day to reach out to those affected by suicide, raise awareness and connect individuals with suicidal ideation to treatment services. It is also important to ensure that individuals, friends and families have access to the resources they need to address suicide prevention.

SADAG has all this information for you, so for information please visit their webpage or call 0800567567 if you need guidance with family or friends that might be suicidal.

We also had a poignant "Into the Light Walk at Umhlanga on Sunday morning 11 September. This year we were many and instead of letting go balloons we opted to write our messages on pebbles and then throw these into the ocean. We also received great coverage on SABC 1,2&3 radio.

To see pictures of this event please go onto our FB SOLOS page.

I thought the below two articles by Father Rubey would be relative for this month and hopefully help many of you that have a lost a loved one to suicide and are in different stages of grieving.

In the immediate aftermath of losing a loved one to suicide, there is generally a lot of activity in a family. People are very

thoughtful in sending over meals and other signs of thoughtfulness such as cards and flowers. These wonderful gestures of support last for several weeks and months. They eventually drop off as people move on in their lives and other activities take up their time and energy. It is not that they have forgotten but they have moved on.

Sometimes survivors hear comments or are asked the question such as "Aren't you over this loss yet?" This could be after three or four months. Survivors become enraged at such a question or comment as well they should. People who don't know the impact of a completed suicide of a loved one say such a thing because they have not experienced such a loss. They are not mean spirited or insensitive, they are merely ignorant of the fact that such a loss leaves an indelible mark on the psyche and soul of survivors.

Survivors' lives are permanently altered by the death of a loved from suicide. Nothing is ever the same after the death and friends and acquaintances oftentimes are ignorant of this fact. They want nothing but the best for survivors but they fail to realize that there has been a sea change in their lives and nothing is going to be the same after as before.

There is a let-down for survivors in very much the same way as there is a let-down when the summer season is over and people return to the mundane and the ordinariness of life –back to work and back to school. The good times of summer are over and there is a return to the

ordinary activities of life. For survivors of a suicide there is a venture forth in a very new way of life and that is to create a life after the death of a loved one. This is a major adjustment in one's life.

Survivors can experience a let-down from all of the attention that was afforded them in the immediate aftermath of a suicide. Survivors are challenged to realize that survivor's lives are permanently altered but the lives of friends and acquaintances are not changed in that way. These friends and acquaintances are moving on with their lives and they expect the lives of survivors of a suicide to do the same. Such is not the case. Sometimes survivors experience disappointment when people fail to afford them what they (the survivors) feel is the proper support and understanding.

Survivors can share a gentle reminder to friends and acquaintances that lives are permanently altered after such a tragic event and life will never be the same. It is not that life will never be enjoyed again or there will never be any pleasure in the life of a survivor because there will be good times and pleasure but everything is different as a result of losing a loved one from suicide. Survivors are not dragging out or prolonging the grief journey. They are just reacting to this fact of life that losing this loved one from suicide has left such a void. One that can never be filled because this person is gone forever. That is a very cruel experience to absorb

but that is what the grief journey is all about.

The journey is an experience whereby survivors learn to accept the fact that their lives are different and will never be the same. Survivors will always be frustrated if they try to get back the life they had before this loved one took their life. That aspect of life is over and a new life will evolve and be created once this fact is absorbed and believed and accepted. This takes time and patience. This part of the grief journey cannot be rushed or raced through. It takes time to evolve. Patience is a vital part of the grief journey. It can and will take place over time and a lot of hard work.

Love



Beneath all the feelings of shock, guilt, anger and grief, there is an underlying love that survivors have for the one who has departed. It hurts so much because we loved them so much. They will never cease to be deeply treasured parts of our families and our lives.

Fr. Charles Rubey writes about this love:

"Because there is such deep love for these dearly departed people, I am suggesting that survivors concentrate on the fact that their loved ones are no longer struggling but are at

peace. Try to imagine them totally at peace and free of pain.

We want only what is best for our loved ones and freedom from pain for these tortured souls is a gift beyond measure. Granted there are other means to achieve freedom from pain such as medication or other types of therapy but these loved ones honestly and sincerely thought that the only way out of this ocean of pain was to take their life. They were not acting out of malice. They were acting out of desperation.

Granted that they left behind a wake of pain and disruption. They did not want this effect. Their mind was so distorted and engulfed in pain that they thought that they were doing the right thing. They had no idea of the destruction that they were leaving behind."

Members of our community frequently express their love:

"Why does it hurt so much? Because we loved them so much. Our children became a part of our lives and from the moment they were born brought us joy, happiness, laughter, amazement, sometimes tears and anger, frustration ... "

"The love of my life shot herself. I've never been a religious person, not even a spiritual person. However, I've found myself talking to her on a daily basis, telling her that I love her and how sorry I am for everything."

"I sat awhile at the grave site. I don't cry when I go there anymore. If it's possible, I think I

am cried out. But I talk to him and tell him I love him. --- The funny think is when I was leaving the cemetery, I saw deer which is odd because it's in a built up area. I just watched them and said: Thank you. They are beautiful. --- Where we used to live we would watch the deer in our backyard all the time."

*Rev. Charles T. Rubey is the Founder and Director of **Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide** (LOSS) a non-denominational program offered by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Starting in 1979 with one small group, LOSS has grown to be a leader in the field of suicide grief, offering **support groups and counseling for survivors of all ages, in and around metropolitan Chicago.***

Native American Prayer for the Grieving

I give you this one
thought to keep -
I am with you still - I
do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds
that blow,
I am the diamond glints
on snow,
I am the sunlight on
ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn
rain.
When you awaken in the
morning's hush,
I am the swift, uplifting
rush
of quiet birds in circled
flight.
I am the soft stars that
shine at night.
Do not think of me as
gone -
I am with you still -
in each new dawn

- unknown