

THE *Journey*

A newsletter for survivors of suicide



Iris M. Bolton

*“Give sorrow words;
the grief that does not
speak whispers the
o'er fraught heart and
bids it break.”*

~ William Shakespeare

SANDY MARTIN...MORE THAN A FRIEND

The theme of this issue of *The Journey* was to be the loss of a child. Fate had other plans. On Saturday, April 1, 2006, I received a totally unexpected phone call early in the morning. A soft voice shared with me that my beloved friend and soul mate, Sandy Martin, had experienced a heart attack and had died in her sleep a few hours earlier. I was stunned! She had been in my office just last week with Bunkie Rivkin, working on my endowment campaign. We were going to the AAS conference in Seattle, Washington, in a few weeks. She was to be my roommate! No!...No!...Not Sandy!

Suddenly there was a great hole in the universe...my world crumbled once again. Sandy Martin was my soulmate, my living angel, my playmate. She was bigger than life! It was our sons who died...over twenty years ago...not one of us. We had finally come to terms with their deaths...our wounded souls had healed enough to venture back into life.

Life, taken for granted...even when we know better. When our wounded souls have healed enough

to venture back into life, through the years we forget the fragileness...our vulnerability.

How can the healed wound be opened up again, with such voracity that our bones shake, our soul is cracked open and our heart bleeds all over again...perhaps twice as much...for then and now?

Another loss...another death...another explosion...obliterating the known...flinging us into the unknown...and yet, for survivors it is known. Remember? Remember the shocking news, too brutal to speak? Remember the endless days of grieving, crying, screaming, hiding, vomiting...wailing! And yet, we survived! How, we know not. Perhaps hour by hour and day by day and, then, our healing wounds have calmed from the inflammation and we begin to feel our skin again. We begin to move again...even smile...God forbid, we laugh once, and then we may laugh again.

And life fills the empty spaces, at least some of them, and our heart breathes. We can look at children again without aching, we can taste the laughter. We can see the sounds

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The Journey will possibly be taking an electronic format, in addition to the printed copy, in the near future. In anticipation of that change, we would like for you to submit your email address so you can receive it this way. Please send your email address to linknrc@thelink.org with *Electronic Journey* in the subject line.

A LIST OF HEALING STRATEGIES, ADVICE FROM SURVIVORS

- *let yourself be sad*
- *accept help*
- *journal*
- *throw ice or eggs when you're angry (outside, please)*
- *plant their favorite flowers*
- *say no when you don't have the strength*
- *say yes when somebody offers (only if you want to)*
- *attend Survivors of Suicide support groups*
- *make a photo album or scrapbook*
- *get rest*
- *talk about your loved one*
- *let others know it's OK to talk about your loved one*
- *laugh*
- *cry*
- *do things when you are ready*
- *relish your memories*
- *be kind to yourself*

Letter from the Editor

In this issue of *The Journey*, we are focusing on the loss of a child. As I sat down to write this piece, I wondered how I would address this loss—I lost my brother, not my child. Just as our losses share so many similar qualities, and they all break our hearts, they are all so different.

I don't know how each of us can ever exactly understand what another suicide survivor is going through, though we might come pretty close. Sure we can relate to the guilt or the sick feeling in your stomach or the sadness, and hopefully the peace that follows. But can we understand the real pain of another, the subtle things we now miss? I know that every relationship shared is unique, whether it's parent, child, sibling, spouse, lover, friend, or many others; we all are affected. And our unique relationship is what makes us hurt so much, because we were lucky enough to love so much. Parents grieve differently, siblings grieve differently; each unique relationship grieves differently—because they loved differently.

Last year a dear friend of mine lost one of her twins at birth. It was devastating. A few months afterwards we were talking about our losses and grief. She, as a new mother and a grieving one at the same time, was full of questions about grief. As we talked, she told me that she thought the suicide loss of my brother was worse than losing her baby at birth. Is it? I don't know, but I don't think it really matters.

What matters is that we all grieve how we know best and let the relationship that we shared with our loved one perhaps be our guide. When we lose someone we love, our world is thrown; we have to rethink things, we have to redraw the lines and somehow adjust. Hopefully, as each of us works through our loss, we will cherish what made our relationship unique. And though others might just not understand, it's OK. We all have an amazing strength within, one we probably never knew was there before. And probably one that our loved ones helped us build.

~ Heather Legg

We Want to Hear From You! IN OUR NEXT ISSUE...

...we will be addressing finding meaning from our loved one's death. We might think it's the craziest thing when we are first told that somehow, we'll make meaning from our loss. We'd much rather have our loved one back. But after we learn that's not possible, we find ways to honor their lives. What have you done? Have you run a marathon, led a support group, planted a tree or set a balloon into the sky? Have you become more compassionate, less judgmental? Some survivors do the huge things and some do things on a smaller scale, though no less meaningful. What have you done and how has it helped you heal?

We would love to hear from our readers, our survivors and share your thoughts and stories for others to hear. We hold pride in the fact that *The Journey* is filled with readers' stories; that is what makes it so healing. It is important that those experiencing grief from suicide loss know that hope is out there; peace awaits. *The Journey* affords us such a great medium to share those ways. Please don't be shy about sending in your thoughts; you may be surprised at how your words can help another.

Please send your thoughts (500 words or less) to:

Submissions • The Journey • The Link's NRC • 348 Mt. Vernon Hwy. • Atlanta, Ga. 30328 or linknrc@thelink.org

INVOLVEMENT THERAPY

Involvement therapy is a technique for coping with life after suicide, consisting of the basic components of getting involved in both the memory of the person lost to suicide and in suicide prevention.

This therapy supports the concept that it is better to talk and learn about suicide than try to escape it. Involvement therapy can provide new circuits for those thoughts that relate to the person lost.

Providing new pathways for our thinking requires activities. Everyone has to handle grief in his or her own way. However, for suicide survivors there are three basic activities that can help with involvement therapy:

- 1) Involvement in memories of the person lost to suicide
- 2) Attending and working with suicide survivor groups
- 3) Working toward suicide prevention

Involvement with memories of the person lost starts with the funeral; however, after that, opportunities to talk about memories seem to dwindle. People seem reluctant to bring up the name of the person lost or contribute to a conversation initiated by you.

**THIS THERAPY SUPPORTS
THE CONCEPT THAT IT IS
BETTER TO TALK AND LEARN
ABOUT SUICIDE THAN TRY
AND ESCAPE IT.**

People can get involved in memories by:

a) Writing memories in any form: book, memory book, short story, notebook or just a file collection of memories. Ask friends and relatives for their memories to combine with yours.

b) Creating a memorial, preferably something you can work on and something anyone who grieves from the loss can help with. (example: Lifekeeper Quilt Squares)

c) Establishing a special place to go for memories and “remembering.”

d) Start new traditions or acquire new memories to help with special family times like Christmas or Thanksgiving.

Attending and working with a suicide survivor group is getting

involved with recovery. It is an opportunity to talk about your memories and better understand your own grief. It makes you realize you are a different person now, but you can still carry on. Survivor groups also give you the opportunity to help others by listening and sharing.

It wasn't many years ago that stigmas and taboos related to suicide prevented us from talking about suicide, let alone working on prevention. We know suicide is preventable, yet, because of the existing stigmas, much more needs to be done. Public education is needed to end these stigmas. The more survivors are willing to break the silence, the more public awareness and education will follow.

Involvement in suicide prevention helps with reprogramming; it creates new avenues for memories. By reprogramming your thinking in a positive way, your memories will start to include some positive feelings and aid in your recovery.

*Contributed by
Scot and Leah Simpson
Edmonds, Washington*

THE IRIS M. BOLTON ENDOWMENT FUND

A Legacy of Healing and Hope

In your financial planning over the next few years, please remember to include a pledge or donation to The Link and The Link's NRC, honoring Iris as a pioneer in the suicide survivor movement and her years of service to the community. In 2007, she will retire after 36 years as Director of The Link. Survivors around the country who have been touched by Iris' dedication are joining local and national campaigns to support this endowment. Interest from the six million dollar fund will ensure that The Link and The Link's National Resource Center for Suicide Prevention and Aftercare will continue to provide services for healing and growth. Please designate your donation specifically for this fund which may be paid over several years. To make your donation on-line, please visit thelink.org. Thank you!

IN OTHER'S WORDS...

THE COCOON

A MAN FOUND A COCOON OF A BUTTERFLY.

One day a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could, and it could go no farther. Then the man decided to help the butterfly. So he took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon.

THE BUTTERFLY EMERGED EASILY.

But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened! in fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings.

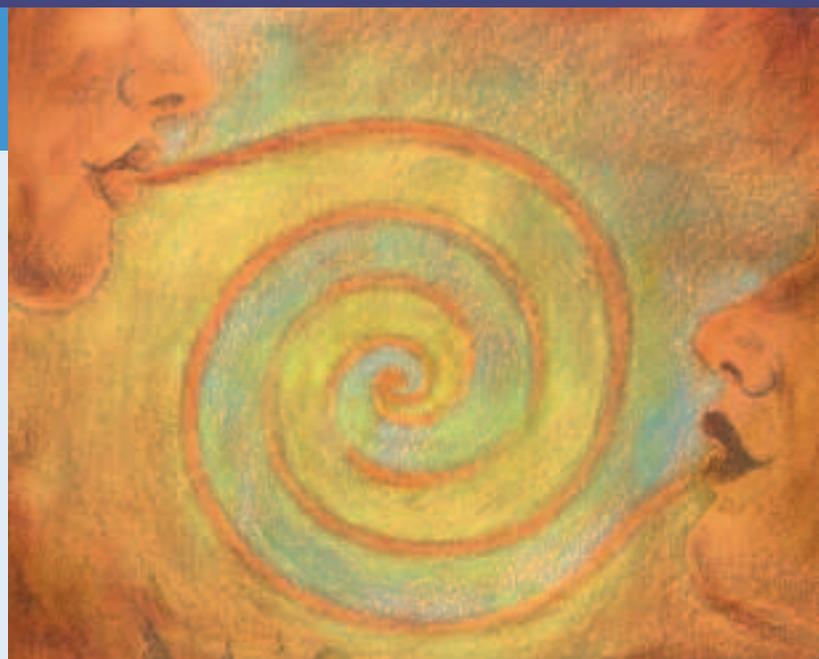
IT WAS NEVER ABLE TO FLY.

What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were Nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our life. If we were allowed to go through our life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been.

AND WE WOULD NEVER FLY.

~ Author unknown



PLEASE ASK

Someone, asked me about you today.
It's been so long since anyone has done that.
It felt so good to talk about you,
To share my memories of you,
To simply say your name out loud.
She asked me if I minded talking about
What happened to you...
Or would it be too painful to speak of it.
I told her I think of it every day
And speaking about it helps me to release
The tormented thoughts whirling around in my head.
She said she never realized the pain
Would last this long...
She apologized for not asking sooner.
I told her, "Thanks for asking."
I don't know if it was curiosity
Or concern that made her ask,
But told her, "Please do it again sometime...
Soon."

~ Barbara Taylor Hudson

photo courtesy of Jennifer Stewart





IN OTHER'S WORDS...

THE DOOR AHEAD

There is a door ahead that I must open and go through.
 I try to ignore it but it is always there.
 There is no other way to go forward except through that door.
 The walls are closing in.
 I have tried going back, but I crash into a solid wall.
 My Loved One is dead.
 I cannot accept what going through that door really means.
 I close my eyes, but when I open them, the door is still there.
 At night, when I do sleep, my dreams and waking moments
 are haunted with the reality not faced.
 So I stand here, looking at the corridor, with sides closing in,
 the door beyond.
 I stand here, frozen.

A hand touches mine, and I look into the face of a new friend.
 She lost her Loved One at the same time I lost mine.
 "I also need to go through that door and I cannot.
 Let's hold hands and, when the time is right,
 we can take the steps together."

I feel someone take my other hand.
 "I've walked this corridor, and I've gone through the door.
 I know what is on the other side.
 Look at me and know it can be done."

Do I imagine it? A hand is placed gently on my head
 and a voice whispers in my ear.
 "Remember I too had to go this way,
 and I am always with you."

Our bodies touching, slowly we start walking, step by step.
 A miracle! With each step the walls begin to move back on
 either side and the door moves closer.
 It opens for us to go through.

HIS VISIT

Last night you smiled and laughed
 As if you had never left.
 Your sister and I were witnesses
 To the you we had always known.

I didn't want to leave you
 When I realized where I was.
 Our happiness at night feels what
 should be—
 Not the sad stillness of the morning.

I rebel at what my dream voice warns
 When you stop and visit us.
 It whispers: this cannot be true
 Unless it really is.

*Philip S. Morse
 Chapel Hill, NC*



~ *Marta Felber*

*Reprinted with permission from Grief Digest
 Centering Corporation, Omaha, Nebraska*

MORE THAN A FRIEND CONT. FROM PAGE 1

of the wind, and because of her death, hear the soul of our departed one mending, shifting, searching and soaring.

And so the cycle of life repeats itself and life takes on new meaning, again and again. And what are we to learn? Perhaps that through the synchronicities of life, we stretch, we change, we grow, we love more passionately, we're more present in the moment, and we "kiss the place that felt the thorn...because of the rose."

We own nothing, but we have everything we need. We touch one another through compassion, love and our humanness...especially through our woundedness. We become the wounded healers, like Sandy Martin, beloved by a world enchanted by her joy, integrity, loyalty, energy and generous spirit.

I dedicate this issue of *The Journey* to our beloved Sandy Martin. Sandy loved indigenous people from many different cultures. We went to Native American pow-wows to dance, drum and shop! She loved the saying from the Aboriginals of Australia, "To live in service, to live without judgment and to live in forgiveness."...And that's the way she lived her life. She is a role model for us all!

I'm reminded of the words of Jill Reeves, my husband's aunt, who wrote: "These days are the winter of the

soul, but spring comes and brings new life and beauty, because of the growth of the roots in the dark."

Sandy created the Lifekeeper Foundation. Her vision has become national through hundreds of state survivor quilts and through the jewelry she created to "keep life." The Lifekeeper has become an important symbol for many survivors. It is a circle within a circle, housing seven infinity signs. Created by Sandy, following the suicide of her son, Tony, the Lifekeeper represents hope and a belief that our loved ones live on, seven times longer than eternity, which is infinite.

Sandy wrote these words, always included with the symbol:

*Along with ownership must come a commitment
to keep life*

To remember the lives not kept

And to stay true to the course

*Beyond Life on Earth,
Which is Infinite.*

Life...Death...Mystery.

So Be It!

BOOK REVIEW

Surviving Suicide, Help to Heal Your Heart

A book by Heather Hays

Heather Hays, a news anchor and journalist in Dallas, is also a survivor of suicide and author of the new book, *Surviving Suicide, Help to Heal Your Heart*. Hays's fiancé, Brett, died by suicide, leaving Hays behind, but she remembers his spirit through this book.

She has collected stories from around the world from other survivors who share their pain and their healing in narrative and letter format. Hays relates her own healing process as she composed the book,

even including her own letter to Brett after his death.

Each section covers losses from the different relationships shared, including *Parents Left Behind*, *Siblings Left Behind*, *Friends Left Behind* and *Children Left Behind*.

To a survivor, not only is the section on the personal relationship valuable, but so are the other sections to relate how others are feeling over the same loss. For instance, a parent can read the section on *Parents Left Behind* and also the sections on *Siblings* and *Loves* to gain a better understanding of the pain the other survivors are feeling.

Surviving Suicide contains short entries which make reading a book amidst grief not such a treacherous

thing to do. The hope it provides is valuable, the hope offered from those still new to grief to those further on the path of healing. A daughter writes to her father, "I miss you more than you will ever know...I never dealt with your leaving. Now that I have a family of my own, I want to deal with it...I love you with all my heart, Daddy."

A friend left behind writes of her own journey after her loss, "I've come full circle...Thank you for the lessons I learned from your life and your death." Each story shared is tragic, but real and open, letting survivors see they are not alone.

After each section, Hays offers "Help to Heal Hearts." She

OUT OF THE DARKNESS BRINGS SURVIVORS OUT OF ISOLATION

by Chris Owens, RN, Atlanta Organizer—Out of the Darkness Community Walks, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

Those left behind when a loved one takes her or his own life are sometimes abandoned by the people closest to them. Family and friends may not know how to react or what to say. The support that survivors need to rebuild their lives may seem elusive. Sometimes, it is support from others who have “been there” that can help the most.

The Out of the Darkness Community Walks are a place for survivors to meet, a place to help ease the pain, a place to celebrate a life. To connect with people who understand can be very powerful; it can be such a relief to talk openly.

When Megan Frank of Atlanta lost her brother, Brennan, to suicide last July, she felt the immediate need to do something. “Getting involved with the Out of the Darkness Walk was a positive, productive way for me to deal with all the deep emotions I was dealing with at the time,” Megan said. “The support I received was overwhelming and made me

realize that I am not alone in dealing with my brother’s death or in working to prevent suicide.” Megan was the top fundraiser in the nation in 2005 raising \$16,000.

Shandy Arwood of Smyrna lost her father, her “hero,” last May. “I don’t think I have dealt with the fact that he’s gone because I can’t get past the fact that he took his own life,” she said. “The Out of the Darkness Walk has helped me better understand suicide and mental illness. Coming together with others who have shared my same tragedy helps the healing process in so many ways. I am grateful for events like this to honor my father.”

Lisa Leathers of Canton lost her 21 year old son, Johnny, to suicide five years ago. Lisa and her daughter, Tina, have been on the Atlanta Walk committee since its inception in 2004 and she is the spokesperson for The Johnny Foundation. Lisa and her family walked the first Out of the Darkness Overnight in Washington, D.C. in 2003.

“Awareness is the key to saving lives, and with every flyer and promotional effort about The Walk people will have the opportunity to hear and learn that this is an illness that can be treated and lives can be saved.”

~ Lisa Leathers

“Meeting others that have lost someone to suicide helped us realize we are not alone but that’s the problem, one suicide is one too many and we need to bring about awareness to help put a stop to this on-going tragedy. Awareness is the key to saving lives and with every flyer and promotional effort about the walk, people will have the opportunity to hear and learn that this is an illness that can be treated and lives can be saved,” Lisa said.

Since the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention started the Out of the Darkness Community Walks in 2004, the number of walks has doubled. Last year, there were 48 walks nationwide. In Atlanta, we have raised nearly \$100,000 in the past two years.

Please join us for the 2006 Out of the Darkness Community Walk in Atlanta on October 29th. See *Upcoming Events* in this issue.



Out of the Darkness Walk

In Memory, In Honor, In Remembrance

Survivors and friends often wish to give a donation in memory of their loved ones lost by suicide. If you would like to give a donation towards the National Resource Center's Memorial Fund, we will recognize your gift and include a message of remembrance in the next edition of *The Journey*. Space will also be dedicated in each edition to recognize memorial gifts made in honor of someone still living.

We will list the name, birth date, and anniversary date of the death of loved ones when the information is provided. You may wish to contact a friend or acquaintance on significant days just as a reminder that you care, remember, and understand the pain of important calendar dates that others may miss. Please see page 11 for more details.

Memorial Gifts were received from:

Carolyn and James Duren in memory of *Christopher Ryan*

Charlotte Hubbard in memory of *Christopher Ryan*

Charlotte McCoy in memory of her beloved daughter, *Melissa McCoy Grimwade*, born January 31, 1970, died February 11, 2000. *Forever in my heart.*

Dennis and Frankie Reed in memory of *Christopher Michael Reed*, born June 22, 1979, died October 20, 2005. *Our love for you will never die. You will live on in our hearts.*

Nancy Whitehead in loving memory of *John Meredith Whitehead*, born May 23, 1967, died August 11, 1995.

Vickie and John Haines in memory of *Jason E. Haines*

Joan and Richard Gargiulo in memory of *Linda Ueberschaer*.

Jennifer L. Raymond in memory of *Barbara E. Raymond* born December 4, 1949, died June 29, 1998. *"Miss you, Mom. You might be gone from my arms*

but you'll be forever in my heart."

Mrs. Evelyn Rubin in memory of *Jerry Muldawer*.

Kathryn Rishak in memory of *Art Kats*.

ON MEMORIALS

Recently I read that "a memorial is anything intended to preserve the memory of a person or event." How fitting, especially for those of us who dearly desire to maintain memories of loved ones however we can. We hold special events, establish funds, plant trees, donate to worthy causes, and through many, many other personal efforts, we honor their lives.

Several months following our daughter's suicide in 2002, we wanted to honor her memory in a meaningful way. Susan grew up in Oregon, IL, then moved to Minnesota where she earned a masters degree in social work and met her husband. She led a very active and creative life. Her untimely death occurred in the Twin Cities area at age 40.

Susan had lived with periods of depression for a number of years. She received excellent treatment and care and had the devotion of her family and a large, responsive support

network. Eventually, however, the inner darkness became overwhelming and she chose to end the pain by taking her life. She left behind her husband, two young sons, her two brothers, parents and many, many relatives and friends from around the country and beyond.

Susan was an outstanding student, a loving wife and mother, and a concerned citizen of the world. She was always the eager student and a supporter of education and the school that her boys attended. She volunteered there and was an effective informal instructor.

Her family and friends in Minnesota were carrying out projects in her memory, and we wanted to develop an idea that could be implemented in the home area that she loved so much. We felt there was something we could do locally that would contribute to understanding and preventing suicide, especially of youth and teenagers.

We created *The Wiener Family Award* for any Oregon High School student to address causes, signs and myths of suicide and depression, and preventive measures, especially in young people. Entries are supplemented with original art work, poetry, etc. and can include personal ideas, beliefs and recommendations. A monetary prize is awarded along with publishing the winning piece.

I encourage others who have had a child die by suicide at whatever age, when the time seems right, to consider appropriate memorials. In that way you will honor their lives and help make for a better world.

~ Bud Wiener, Oregon, IL

Bud and Pat Wiener are active members of the support group "Touched By Suicide, Survivors Gather." Bud is editor of their quarterly newsletter "The Lighthouse." bpwiener@lycos.com

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR SURVIVORS

NCSP (National Council for Suicide Prevention) member organizations

AAS (American Association of Suicidology)
4201 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 408
Washington, DC 20008
Phone: 202-237-2280 • www.suicidology.org

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
120 Wall Street, 22nd Floor
New York, New York 10005
Toll free: 888-333-AFSP • www.afsp.org

NOPCAS (National Organization for People of Color Against Suicide)
4715 Sargent Road, NE • Washington, D.C. 20017
Toll free: 1-866-899-5317 • www.nopcas.com

The Link Counseling Center's National Resource Center for Suicide Prevention and Aftercare (The Link's NRC)
348 Mt. Vernon Hwy. NE • Atlanta, GA 30328
Phone: 404-256-2919 • www.thelink.org

Kristin Brooks Hope Center and The National Hopeline Network
609 E. Main St. #112 • Purcellville, VA 20132
1-800-SUICIDE • 1-800-442-HOPE
www.livewithdepression.org • www.hopeline.com

SAVE — Suicide Awareness\Voices of Education
9001 E. Bloomington • Suite 150 • Bloomington, MN 55420
Phone: 952-946-7998 • Fax: 952-829-0841 • www.save.org

OASSIS — Organization for Attempters and Survivors of Suicide in Interfaith Services
4541 Burlington Place, NW • Washington, DC 20016
Phone: 202-363-4224 • www.oassis.org

The Samaritans
P.O. Box 1259 • Madison Square Station
New York, NY 10159
Phone: 212-677-3009 • www.samaritansnyc.org

Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program
P.O. Box 644 • Orchard Court School
Westminster, CO 80036-0644 USA
Phone: 303-429-3530 • www.yellowribbon.org

The Jason Foundation
116 Maple Row Blvd. • Suite C • Henderson, TN 37075
Phone: 615-264-2323 • www.jasonfoundation.com

SPANUSA (Suicide Prevention Action Network USA, Inc.)
1025 Vermont Avenue, NW • Suite 1066
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-449-3600 • www.spanusa.org

The Jed Foundation
583 Broadway #8B • New York, NY 10012
Phone: 212-647-7544 • www.jedfoundation.org

Additional Resources

The Compassionate Friends Bereaved Parents and Siblings
P.O. Box 3696 • Oak Brook, IL 60521
Phone: 630-990-0010 • www.thecompassionatefriends.org

Friends for Survival
Sacramento, CA • Phone: 916-392-0664

Suicide Information and Education Center (SIEC)
201-1615 10th Ave. • Calgary, Alberta Canada T3C0J7
Phone: 403-245-3900 • www.suicideinfo.ca

UPCOMING EVENTS

Combined for the first time at The Link...
SOS Support Group Facilitator's Training and Support Team Training

September 15-17, 2006, Atlanta, GA
Contact The Link's NRC for more information:
404-256-2919
Register On-Line at thelink.org

The Miracle Ball

You are cordially invited to experience a night of fine dining, casino games, open bar, prizes, live music and a fabulous live auction.

On Saturday, September 9, 2006
From 7pm – Until

At the Renaissance Waverly Hotel,
2450 Galleria Pkwy NW, Atlanta, GA
Contact the Link for more information, 404-256-2919
Purchase Tickets On-Line at thelink.org

Survivors of Suicide

SOS Dream Group, Atlanta, GA
Wednesdays, 6 - 7:30 pm for 8 weeks • \$25 per session
Dreams can be a powerful part of the grieving process. If you have experienced significant dreams of your loved one since the death or a change in your dream life, this group may be beneficial to you. Recommended reading: *Where People Fly and Water Runs Uphill*.

Led by Donna Johnson, LCSW, ATR-BC, CST-T
Call Donna at The Link to sign up: 404/256-9797.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)

Out of the Darkness Overnight
August 12-13, 2006 July 22-23, 2006
Chicago, IL San Francisco, CA

For more information, please visit the AFSP website at www.afsp.org.

The 2006 Out of the Darkness Community Walk

Sunday, October 29th at 2:00 pm., Atlanta, GA
Please join us for our third year at Piedmont Park for the 5 kilometer walk. Please refer to www.afsp.org for online registration info this coming summer or contact Chris Owens at christinafowens@yahoo.com or 404-374-5197.

National Suicide Awareness Week (SPANUSA)

September 6-9
Washington, DC

AFSP National Survivor's of Suicide Day

Saturday November 18, 2006
For information: www.afsp.org

SAVE THE DATE

April 21, 2007
A Celebration for Iris Bolton's Retirement
With Judy Collins in Atlanta, GA

FINDING SUPPORT

SURVIVOR OF SUICIDE (S.O.S.) SUPPORT GROUPS

These groups provide a comfortable setting for sharing and support to anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one by suicide. They are open to parents, children, spouses, siblings, other relatives and friends. Attending a support group is a big step, and it may feel painful at first. Try to attend at least three meetings to give the process a chance. Because meeting times or locations change occasionally, we suggest you contact the group leader before attending a meeting. If you live outside of the Atlanta area, you may wish to contact The American Association of Suicidology at 202-237-2280, or The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention at 888-333-2377 for groups in your area.

THE LINK'S NRC SOS SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS:

1st Tuesday at noon: Day Group

2nd Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

4th Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

If you live in the greater Atlanta area and would like information on SOS support groups near you, please call The Link's National Resource Center at 404-256-2919.

For a national listing of suicide support groups visit www.suicidology.org or www.afsp.org.



The Journey is produced by The Link's National Resource Center for Suicide Prevention and Aftercare

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Design/Printing:

TH Design, LLC
404.377.8899
www.thdesign.com

The Link's NRC is a project of The Link Counseling Center.

www.thelink.org

Book Review Continued from page 6

explains emotions, gives steps to healing, and offers understanding of the losses felt by each relationship. Her advice differs to help those left behind. She gives parents tips on writing and gathering family and friends together. She explains to siblings her PARD idea (protect, accept, reject and detect) to help them in their healing.

Hays provides encouragement in her book through her understanding and positive outlook. She writes, "There are so many ways to honor your loved one, and at the same time to heal yourself. I hope you can take care of your heart and find the path to a positive life. Your pain is real, but so is life. Embrace it, knowing one day you will have all the answers you are seeking."

*Review by
Heather Legg*

Please submit your own reviews and recommendations of books you have read that you feel will be helpful to others.

THE *Journey*

SUBSCRIPTION, MEMORIAL AND DONATION INFORMATION

Do you wish to receive *The Journey*?

Upon request, *The Journey* is sent free of charge to survivors in the aftermath of suicide, to support group facilitators, community mental health centers, and to organizations with an interest in suicide prevention, awareness, and survivor services.

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All donations received will be used to support and expand The Link Counseling Center's National Resource Center for Suicide Prevention and Aftercare. This center is dedicated to reaching out to survivors of suicide, and to providing suicide prevention, intervention, and aftercare education services. Your support is deeply appreciated. Checks may be made payable to The Link Counseling Center, and please note that it is for the National Resource Center.

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We welcome and encourage your participation. Send your work to us and we will try to include it in future issues. **Please send any correspondence, including questions, donations, comments, etc. to:**

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Mail this form to *The Journey* • 348 Mt. Vernon Highway • Atlanta, GA 30328
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THE LINK'S NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION AND AFTERCARE

The Link Counseling Center has served the greater Metro Atlanta area since 1971, and currently offers:

- Individual, Couples, Family and Group Counseling and Psychotherapy
- Telephone Counseling and Referral
- Educational Groups
- Supervision, Training, and Consultation for Other Mental Health Professionals
- Training for Students
- Management Consultation for Business Professionals

The Link's National Resource Center for Suicide Prevention and Aftercare offers a variety of services for Survivors of Suicide nationwide. These services include:

- Local Support Groups and National Referral
- Support Group Facilitator Training
- Grief Counseling
- Telephone Counseling and Referral
- Survivors of Suicide Support Team Home Visits
- Survivors of Suicide Support Team Training
- Suicide Aftercare Services for Businesses, Schools, etc.
- Survivors of Suicide Support Packet
- Resource Library
- Newsletter, *The Journey*
- Speeches and Seminars on Bereavement After Suicide
- Training for Clergy and Law Enforcement as First Responders

For information concerning the services listed above, call The Link's National Resource Center at (404) 256-2919.

THE LINK HOURS:

Sandy Springs office:

Mondays through Thursdays
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Fridays – 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Cobb County office:

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