



From Us to You

Welcome to Newsletter No. 5
January ~ February ~ March

This first edition of From Us to You for 2016 has been dedicated to Emotions, Motivation and Inspiration.

Once again our thanks go to all those who have shared their thoughts and memories with us and given permission to share them with you.

To all my Friends who listen
when I'm mad
lift me up when I am sad
and laugh with me
whenever possible.
Thanks for being such
wonderful friends.

Sue

Emotions

Each person travels on his or her own unique journey in experiencing a loss. Each of our experiences of loss will have subtle differences that will make it unlike any other loss with the intense feelings of loss, anger, depression, loneliness, fear, frustration and desperation - these are the emotions that others will have also felt, endured and survived.

What we all have in common is that the grief response is felt most intense by the heart. Often there is a common "language" - those who have experienced grief who speak and those who can often understand without

saying a word. Many times, all that is required to let someone know you have been there, that you understand their grief, is just an understanding look, a gentle touch on the arm, a reassuring hug or a heartfelt note.

It is the sharing of losses, telling our grief story or expressing the feeling in writing or other creative endeavours, no matter how painful, that is important in the healing process.

That is why we are so grateful for those memories and thoughts that you have taken the time and energy to send to us enabling us to share with others.

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We feel that healing is beginning to be recognized when the grieving person is at a point of being able to share with those earlier in the process. With this knowledge the heart grows stronger, more sensitive and more understanding of the suffering of others.

We do hope that our Coffee Mornings are a place of hope on the road to healing from a loss.

A place to sit, to think, to cry, to be, to dream, to remember, to discover, and hopefully a time to heal. It is somewhere those who are bereaved can feel connected and not so alone,

to realise that others have experienced these same emotions, lived through them and survived. It is a place where the grieving can discover that there is hope.

The Coffee Morning was created to provide support and friendship for those on this very personal journey of grief following a loss or a significant life change; this journey is often without clear direction, but one that must still be travelled.

For further information about the Jonathan Terry Coffee Mornings please call:

023 8043 4444 or 023 8043 2243



Want To Read?

Surviving Grief and Learning to Live again.

by Catherine Saunders

As a therapist specializing in bereavement and having experienced significant loss herself, Catherine Saunders points out that we all go through common experiences or phases in dealing with grief. She defines and explains in detail the five different phases - shock, awareness of loss, conservation and the need to withdraw, healing and renewal.

In addition, the book examines different experiences of grief, whether it's the death of a child, parent or spouse, discusses the factors that increase problems in resolving grief

such as age, gender and religion and offers compassionate guidance for working through each stage of the mourning progress.

A message from Catherine.....

My hope in writing this book is that you will understand that grief has a progressive course and that your grief will move through the steps of that course.

Through all your pain, I hope to reassure you that you will survive and, in time, you **will** feel alive once more.

Motivation

It has been apparent that many people find poetry helpful and even therapeutic in processing their grief. A note came for this Newsletter, just before Christmas from Valerie with reference to "Friendship" - a poem in our last Newsletter of 2015.

"Words cannot express to you what your poem "Friendship" meant to me. I lost a very dear friend to cancer and then slipped off an emotional ledge of my life. Your poem was all about my friend. I felt it had just been written for me. Just wanted to say Thanks for being there,"

Jenny



Let's Get Sharing - Your Stories

Sarah has given us permission to share her very personal thoughts on the recent death of her close friend.

I am 38 years old, I had never experienced the death of a loved one. However, I lost in the same year, my dear father, a close friend and then my oldest and closest friend in the world. When someone leaves this earth does the world cry for them? Do the trees miss them? How do we go on? I am trying to think of what to do now, how to breathe or eat, how to get out of bed to take care of my three children and husband, how to get through a few minutes without crying. I have blindly picked up the phone three times already to call Karen, only to remember that she won't be answering this time. The pain is so vast and so deep that I have forgotten myself and the world. There is just me and my constant memories of our lives together, from the time I was 12 until a few weeks ago. I have to strain to remember a time in my life when she wasn't there to laugh with me, to bear the tough times with me or to smile with me. I know I have to face that journey of grief but how do I live with death? I can only hope that she is in a better place. I can only cry until I can't cry any longer and I can only live my life the way I know that she would want me to.

Thank you for letting me put this down on paper - it really has helped to release a few emotions. I know I have a long way to go.

In response to Sarah ...

Gerry sent us this poem Sarah - he is also feeling frustrated, mad, resentful, people telling him what he should be doing and feeling and all those things that we cannot understand so early in our grief.....

SO I'M TOLD

I'm told things will get better,
By those that can not relate,
Say it's time that I move on,
Now that I really hate!

Tell me that times' a healer,
Soon I'll be rid of this pain
To put this all behind me
And should look to live again.

It all seems kind of silly,
The notion just makes me mad
Why find it so hard to see
That it's normal to be sad.

My grief is normal and valid
They just don't know what to say,
Realizing that I am alone.
It's my hurt, my loss, my way!

Happy Birthday! after a death?

It's my husband's. My late husband's
And my mother's. My late mother's.

When Mum died a little over 9 years ago I was worried over whether anyone else would remember her birthday. I didn't want her to be forgotten and I know I'd miss her even more on her birthday than I did every other day without her.

Celebrating my husband's birthday without my mother's was hard but he helped me get through each of hers. He said things like:

"I know today is a hard one"

*"I'm sure you're thinking
of your Mum today".*

"I miss her too."

When my husband died a little over 5 years ago I couldn't face the thought of Mum's birthday without him and I couldn't face the thought of his birthday at all. I was too broken.

A dear friend came to spend time with me. She listened when I cried and ranted. She reminded me to eat (and made me food when I forgot). By her presence she showed me how much she cared and that she remembered. By doing so she helped me gather up pieces of my fragmented self.

Fast forward to now

My life is good again - different but good. Most days are much easier to get through than they were in the first couple of years after he died.

But some days - like his birthday and like my Mum's, which fall close together, are harder than others. On those occasions grief leaks more easily through the patched up holes where I put myself together in my new 'normal'.

Kath

If you know someone who is grieving lost loved ones, share your memories with them and if you know their birthdays let them know you are thinking of them too.



**Even though these pieces
are glued back together,
this broken mug
will never fully be whole again.**

Let's Get Sharing - Your Stories

"I remember feeling curiously okay a few weeks after my Dad died.

One day I woke up feeling perfectly fine. Then I immediately felt guilty. A friend gave me great advice. She said to 'grab the good moments when they do come along, because you will soon feel rotten again'.

Sure enough by evening, I felt rotten."

In answer to Janet.....

Grief can come in waves. I wonder if our bodies do this to protect ourselves from the intensity of our emotion. While we may not have particularly 'happy' peaks, we may feel 'okay' or may feel 'flat' for a while, before the next trough hits once again.

Try to ride these waves for what they are and don't waste precious energy feeling guilty for having a good day or even a good few hours, Enjoy the break before the next wave hits.

Janet

Charity News

The Society of St. James (A Hampshire based charity)

Support in the home

People can struggle to live on their own home for a wide range of reasons. But often, with a little extra support they can carry on living independently. This might be domiciliary care, emotional support or practical support like shopping, managing money or property maintenance.

HP+ (Handy Person Service) provides a low cost property maintenance service. If you have maintenance jobs needed to be done around the house give them a call - they are there to help.

The Society of St. James (Handy Person Service)
125 Albert Road South, Southampton SO14 3FR
Telephone: 023 8063 4596
Website: www.ssj.org.uk



Inspiration



Songs and music can motivate and inspire us to trigger us into action, but do we always listen to the words? Songs that remind us of the beauty of life, songs that lift us up when we are down, songs to remind us of who we are. With hundreds and thousands of great songs out there, it is challenging to narrow it down. Find time to sit and listen.....

- 25 **Somewhere Over The Rainbow** - A version sung by Israel Kamakawiwo'ole makes it a very peaceful and calming experience.
 - 24 **Chariots Of Fire** - the build up of the tunes throughout makes you feel invigorated.
 - 23 **It's A Beautiful Day** - no matter how bad your day may be there's always something beautiful happening.
 - 22 **Walking On Sunshine** - brings a smile to anyone.
 - 21 **What A Wonderful World** - reminding us to appreciate the beauty of everyday life.
 - 20 **It's My Life** - All about personal empowerment.
 - 19 **That's What Friends Are For** - about the beauty of friendship.
 - 18 **You Get What You Give** - about being true to yourself. Don't give up on you ever.
 - 17 **Return To Innocence** - reminds you to be yourself.
 - 16 **Music Of My Heart** - in expresses gratitude to those who have been there for us.
 - 15 **Circle Of Life** - tells of the grandiosity of life and where we stand in it.
 - 14 **Heal The World** - reminds us of our responsibility to care for our world.
 - 13 **You Raise Me Up** - gives tribute to the people that raise us up.
 - 12 **True Colours** - about not feeling fearful or small.
 - 11 **When You Believe** - about the power of faith and hope in this world.
 - 10 **Win** - overcoming all obstacles and never giving up.
 - 9 **You Gotta Want It** - powerful song that will charge you up.
 - 8 **I Will Survive** - This is about someone who became stronger after a break-up.
 - 7 **Dare You To Move** - are you to stop looking back and finally move forward.
 - 6 **Never Surrender** - never give up however tough bit gets.
 - 5 **Hero** - You Don't have to be afraid of who you are.
 - 4 **I Believe I Can Fly** - there are no dreams that we can't achieve.
 - 3 **Gonna Fly Now** - powerful.
 - 2 **Reach** - doing our very best for the dreams.
 - 1 **Eye Of The Tiger** - this should charge you up into action!
- Next time you hear these songs listen to the words ... not many of us really take them in.
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Poet's Corner

A Valentine's wish for Every Day

*** LOVE ***



Love freely, love dearly, love purely.
Love yourself the way
You've always wanted to be loved,
And love others the same way.
Love well, love often
Find it in your heart
To love those who have been shown your love
- they need it most of all.
Give so much love
That you're certain to get some back
Love all that the earth has to offer....
people, birds, stones, insects,
trees, mice and oceans.
Love something - anything - with a passion!
Love something larger than yourself
Call it God, Call it Nature,
Call it Divine, Call it the Source, Call it Love.

This is a wonderful sentiment for Valentine's Day - but the message is one that is appropriate for every day of the year.

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Jonathan Terry Est. 1998

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