



# SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE

## King/ Pierce/ Thurston County Support Groups



**APRIL/MAY/JUNE 2026 NEWSLETTER**

**Website:** [www.auburnsos.com](http://www.auburnsos.com)

**e-mail:** [auburnsurvivorsofsuicide@gmail.com](mailto:auburnsurvivorsofsuicide@gmail.com)

**WHAT IS S.O.S.?**

S.O.S. stands for Survivors of Suicide. S.O.S. groups provide support for anyone who has lost a loved one to suicide. Based on guidelines established by the American Association of Suicidology, the groups are self-help and peer-led. The goal is to help deal with the loss and trauma and grief associated with that loss. Auburn S.O.S. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization as defined by the IRS.

**LOVE GIFTS:**

If you would like to remember your Loved One who has completed suicide in the form of a Love Gift it will be mentioned in the newsletter if we have your permission. There are no dues or fees at S.O.S. Donations are always welcome to help defray such costs as printing, postage, and the purchase of books and other material for our lending libraries and other costs associated with the community awareness programs we are involved in.

Donations may be mailed to the address below or made at any meeting. Please make your checks payable to Auburn or Olympia SOS.

Auburn Survivors of Suicide  
28824 21<sup>st</sup> Ave. S.  
Federal Way, WA 98003

**Contact information for each group and its facilitator is on page three.**

To all of you who left something in the donation boxes, thank you! You may not get mentioned by name – but please know that you are appreciated!

*Many thanks to Stephanie Ragland for a donation in memory of her son Michael*

**IF YOU NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE:**

Please do not hesitate to pick up your phone and call another survivor from a S.O.S. group if you are having a hard time. We've all been there!

Andee C.	253-820-1911	Lost brother	Kathy M.	253-446-6500	Lost daughter
			Pam D.	253-921-7829	Lost husband
Heidi S.	253-381-8717	Lost son			
José M.	206-228-7413	Lost son	Kathy C.	253-471-9412	Lost son

### THINKING OF YOU ESPECIALLY:

April	1	Patti I.	<i>Lost her daughter Emily</i>
April	2	Rick and Camille A.	<i>Lost their son Logan</i>
April	2	Crystal P.	<i>Lost her son Mark 'Antonio'</i>
April	3	Julie H.	<i>Lost her son, her brother Danny</i>
April	3	James R.	<i>Lost his friend David</i>
April	4	Jeff A.	<i>Lost his son Akira</i>
April	4	Tammy B.	<i>Lost her son Trevor</i>
April	5	Fern C.	<i>Lost her son Liberty</i>
April	7	Marilee and Lyle H.	<i>Lost their son Jason</i>
April	8	Yvette D.	<i>Lost her dad Rick</i>
April	8	Janet L.	<i>Lost nephew Jeremy</i>
April	10	Sarah G.	<i>Lost her son Caleb</i>
April	11	Vanessa H., Sophia H.	<i>Lost their niece Alexandria</i>
April	11	Latrice J.	<i>Lost her friend Alexandria</i>
April	12	Cheryl and Kelly G.	<i>Lost her husband, father Timm</i>
April	12	Julie B.	<i>Lost her husband Paul</i>
April	13	Pat F.	<i>Lost brother Don</i>
April	15	David G.	<i>Lost his nephew Anthony</i>
April	15	Jessica P.	<i>Lost her brother Berry</i>
April	17	Leslie A.	<i>Lost her son Forrest</i>
April	17	Julia O.	<i>Lost her husband Forrest</i>
April	18	Beverly B.	<i>Lost her son David</i>
April	19	Bill and Carolyn F.	<i>Lost son Joshua</i>
April	19	Kathy J.	<i>Lost son Chaz</i>
April	21	Wayne and Sue K.	<i>Lost their son Todd</i>
April	22	Pauline S.	<i>Lost her husband James</i>
April	22	Cassie R.	<i>Lost sister Mandy</i>
April	25	Kathy, Kelly C.	<i>Lost son Michael</i>
April	25	Frank H., Susan O.	<i>Lost grandson Michael, lost her nephew Michael</i>
April	25	Rashanna S.	<i>Lost her daughter April</i>
April	26	Kitty B.	<i>Lost her sister Pepper</i>
May	1	Ann G.	<i>Lost her older brother Brian</i>
May	1	Jane J.	<i>Lost her son Matthew</i>
May	3	Annette H.	<i>Lost her brother Burton</i>
May	4	Cecilia I.	<i>Lost her son Paul</i>
May	4	Misty E.	<i>Lost her husband Jake</i>
May	5	Stasi A.	<i>Lost her husband Neal</i>
May	5	Becky F.	<i>Lost her husband Clifford</i>
May	9	Cindy B.	<i>Lost her brother Barry</i>
May	11	Linda B.	<i>Lost their friend Don</i>
May	12	Dolores M.	<i>Lost her son Antonio</i>
May	12	Jamie C.	<i>Lost best friend Antonio Morales</i>
May	12	Lindy N.	<i>Lost her brother Les</i>
May	13	Tom F.	<i>Lost his wife Kathy</i>
May	13	Tristan M.	<i>Lost her husband Matt</i>
May	15	Cindy W.	<i>Lost her son Kolby</i>
May	17	Kristina S., Kristin B.	<i>Lost her father, grandfather Gary Bennett</i>
May	19	Donld R.	<i>Lost his wife Edie</i>
May	20	Kelly M.	<i>Lost her husband Alex</i>
May	20	Colleen Z.	<i>Lost her fiancé David</i>
May	21	Bernadette F.	<i>Lost her friend Kalani Whitney</i>
May	22	Hannah N.	<i>Lost her Father, Tom</i>
May	23	Ruth C., Stefanie F.	<i>Lost her son Asa, her brother Asa</i>
May	23	Gary W.	<i>Lost his son Asa</i>
May	23	Diane L.	<i>Lost her husband John</i>
May	26	Rusty F.	<i>Lost his sister Sonja</i>

May	27	Russell M.	<i>Lost his brother Bradley</i>
May	27	Jennifer H.	<i>Lost her fiancé Angel</i>
May	28	Sandra C.	<i>Lost her son Thomas</i>
May	29	Janet M.	<i>Lost her boyfriend Ken</i>
May	29	Karrie M.	<i>Lost her mother Sydney</i>
May	31	Joanne N.	<i>Lost her husband Jessee</i>
May	31	Ruth-Ann J.	<i>Lost her brother Jeremiah</i>
June	1	Iysha M., Tina M.	<i>Lost her brother Jordan, nephew Jordan</i>
June	2	Shannon W.	<i>Lost her husband Bryan</i>
June	3	Janet R.	<i>Lost her daughter Natasha</i>
June	3	Diane B.	<i>Lost her brother Don</i>
June	3	Bonnie P., Venita C.	<i>Lost her son Jadon, her grandson Jadon</i>
June	6	Kara O.	<i>Lost ex-husband James</i>
June	6	Rob W.	<i>Lost his partner Bill</i>
June	7	Elsie Dennis-D.	<i>Lost her son Jamie</i>
June	8	Heidi S.	<i>Lost her husband Kevin</i>
June	10	Judy K.	<i>Lost her brother Ed</i>
June	12	Sue R.	<i>Lost her brother Robert</i>
June	12	Cherie N.	<i>Lost her husband Dan</i>
June	14	Cort D.	<i>Lost her s/o John</i>
June	14	Colette A.	<i>Lost her mom Lana Buffington</i>
June	14	Lavina C.	<i>Lost her Aunt Lana</i>
June	14	Stephanie R.	<i>Lost her son Michael</i>
June	15	Jan L.	<i>Lost her brother</i>
June	16	Brad & Susan H.	<i>Lost their son James</i>
June	17	Sarah R.	<i>Lost her brother Jeff</i>
June	17	Jo G.	<i>Lost her son Jeffrey</i>
June	18	Tabitha S.	<i>Lost her brother Benjamin</i>
June	18	Joni & Lino N.	<i>Lost daughter's boyfriend Walker</i>
June	19	Katie B., Kimmie H.	<i>Lost their best friend Jenna</i>
June	20	Randall S.	<i>Lost his brother</i>
June	21	Julie H.	<i>Lost her daughter Kristin</i>
June	22	Jamie B.	<i>Lost mom Jodi</i>
June	22	Carrie H. & Dennis K.	<i>Lost their son Jeffrey</i>
June	22	Brynn and Myrv R.	<i>Lost their son Kellen</i>
June	23	Greg and Faye B.	<i>Lost their daughter Candice</i>
June	24	Joy K.	<i>Lost her fiancé Shawn Bertsch</i>
June	25	Janis F.	<i>Lost her brother Paul</i>
June	26	Cindi W., Karin G.	<i>Lost her son Jacob, her nephew Jacob</i>
June	28	Linda and Kelly K.	<i>Lost son Derek</i>
June	30	Deb B.	<i>Lost her husband Mark</i>
June	30	Jennifer C.	<i>Lost cousin Carleen</i>

*We also remember our loved ones whose birthdays are in the following months:*

**April Birthdays:** *Asa, Beth, Cesar, Anthony, Erros, Keely, Cindy, Carrie, Jerry, Rich, Sean, Jessica, Don, Candice, Chris, John, James, Sonny, Soren, Jim, Upin, and Bruce.*

**May Birthdays:** *Edie, Jim, Forrest, Jacob, Phil, Matt, Sean, Eric, Paul, Armand, Jason, Art, Alan, Kip, Roice, Jeffrey, Marshall, Robert, William, Thomas, Patrick, James, Tyler, Joshua, Scott, Vikki, Jeremy, Erik, Jodi, Stephen and Garrett.*

**June Birthdays:** *Dan, Perry, Brenden, Phillip, Erick, Jason, Joshua, Derek, Matthew, Chris, Jesse, Burton, Garrett, Jeff, Thomas, Paul, Carol, Andrew, Angel, and John.*

We strive for accuracy. If we are missing the name of your loved one or if the information is incorrect or missing please let us know so we can correct it! Send an e-mail to [auburnsurvivorsofsuicide@gmail.com](mailto:auburnsurvivorsofsuicide@gmail.com)

### **MEETINGS FOR APRIL, MAY AND JUNE -**

The **Auburn** Group meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month. Meetings are held at the Auburn Fire Station located at 1101 D Street in Auburn from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

If you have any questions or need directions please call Michelle at 206-920-9188.

The **Olympia** Group meets on the third Tuesday of every month. Meetings are held at the Westwood Baptist Church in room E-14, located at 333 Kaiser Road in Olympia from 6:30 to 8:15 p.m..

For more information or directions please call Heidi at 253-381-8717.

The **Tacoma** Group meets on the second Wednesday of every month. Meetings are held at the Tahoma Indian Center, 621 Tacoma Ave S., #505 at 6:00 p.m.

For more information or directions please call Colette at 360-490-3454 or [coletteaugust@gmail.com](mailto:coletteaugust@gmail.com).

There is no fee to attend any of these groups. For more information send an e-mail to

### Newsletter News

After writing this newsletter for over 20 years it is time for me to step away!  
I've seen it grow from 4 pages to 8, from 100 recipients to almost 500. From snail mail with a roll of stamps to now email only (well, also on the website!)

My hope is that someone out there is willing to take it over. Of course, I will pass on all the files and assist in any way possible. Call or text 206-384-5114 or send an email to [auburnsurvivorsofsuicide@gmail.com](mailto:auburnsurvivorsofsuicide@gmail.com)

I will finish out 2026 and then we will see what 2027 brings!

through you.

*i tried to run away from grief.  
it followed me.  
i tried to bandage it up.  
it split wide open.  
i tried to push it down into my chest.  
my heart began to burst.  
i tried to hide it in a smile.  
my tears still found a way.  
I tried to bury it in the ground.  
it sprouted and grew even bigger.  
i kept myself busy.  
it reached in and said,  
"i'm not done with you yet."  
grief cannot be walked around.  
it must come through you.*

ullie-kaye

### **BE GENTLE I'M GRIEVING**

Understand that my loss  
has brought me to my knees  
I need you to be  
gentle with me please.  
It is difficult to  
even get out of bed  
Let alone deal with  
what is going on in my head.  
My heart has never  
known such pain  
And I will not  
ever be the same.  
Please, be gentle  
I am grieving  
It takes all I have  
***just to keep breathing.***

Sharyn Marsh

## *Other Resources*

### **Widowed Information and Consultation Services**

The purpose of WICS is to provide a supportive environment to widowed people. WICS operates on volunteered time and donations from the community.

When: Monday- 2:00 pm

Where: Auburn Senior Activity Center, 808 Ninth Street SE, Auburn, WA 98002

Contact: 206- 241-5650

### **Grief Support Group**

When: 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of each month (excluding holidays), 10-11:30 am.

Where: Lacey Presbyterian Church, 3045 Carpenter Road SE, Lacey

Contact: 360-493-4667 or (800)869-7062 (Providence Sound Homecare & Hospice)

### **The Compassionate Friends, Olympia**

What: Loss of Child Support Group

When: First Monday of every month, 7-8:30 pm

Where: Providence St. Peter Hospital (Executive Meeting Room), 413 Lily Road NE, Olympia

Contact: 360-402-6711 (Providence SoundHomeCare & Hospice)

### **The Compassionate Friends, Kent**

When: 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month 6:30 – 8:00 pm

Where: Saint Columba's Episcopal Church, 26715 Military Rd, South Kent, 98032

Contact: Michael 206-369-7366

**BRIDGES: A Center for Grieving Children** is a family-based support program where families with children ages 4-18 who have experienced the death of a parent or a sibling come together to heal. We offer support groups just for children as well as groups for adults.

When: 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of every month 6:00-8:30 pm

Where: Christ Church, 310 North K St, Tacoma, WA 98403

Who: Surviving families of suicide who have children between the ages of 4-18

Contact: Matt 253-403-1966 for more information

### **Griefshare – Federal Way**

Faith based grief support group. Nominal fee includes workbook.

When: Wednesdays, 12-2pm

Where: St Luke's Lutheran Church, 515 S. 312th St., Federal Way, WA 98003

Who: this group is not specific to suicide loss

Contact: Alice Phillips, 253-941-3000

## Coping with Grief on Father's Day

If your dad has passed away, it can be difficult to watch others honor their dad at the backyard barbecue or shared interest outing. Your father may have impacted the life choices you made; from partnering to playing to your chosen profession. A byproduct of that impact is in how you ultimately grieve and how you live after his death. Of course, the emotional pain of loss can hit hard on Father's Day, yet grief isn't self-selecting when it takes up residence, affecting your mental and spiritual wellbeing. You might be surprised at how capable you are in facing grief, being in its grip, and transforming because of it.

### If Your Father Has Recently (Or Not-So-Recently) Died

To grieve is to know you've loved. Other than the loss of a child, losing a parent is one of the most painful experiences you can have. How you navigate through that grief is completely personal—it doesn't need to take the shape of anyone else's grief. Actually, it can't and it won't. It belongs completely to you.

Whether you had your father by your side last Father's Day, have been missing him for many years, or rarely spent Father's Day with him, honor your emotional and spiritual needs by listening to the internal voices we all have. Here are a few things to keep in mind as the day approaches.

Be kind to yourself. This is not the time to avoid your feelings or play the part of everyone's resilient hero. It is a time to be a hero to yourself. That includes getting enough sleep, eating well, getting some exercise, and taking care of your soul by listening and breathing. Don't forget to breathe!

Plan for the day. If you know this will be a difficult day for you, don't ignore the occasion.

Even if you think you might be OK on Father's Day, don't risk it. Reach out to family and friends so you don't have to feel alone. If that is not normally how you do things, maybe your father would want you to take this chance to do things differently.

Embrace joyful memories. If you are able to look at pictures of your father, bring out a couple that fill you with joy. Engage in his favorite activity or wear a color he liked. Tell a story that reflects what he meant to you. Even if it was a difficult relationship. The storyline about that guy, regardless if he was your hero or a prick, offers memories coming alive and can bring a certain grace to the grief experience.

Address the difficulties in your relationship. Most father-child relationships have had their good points and bad points. Think about what your relationship with this imperfect human being taught you. How those imperfections cause you to live differently may be a great gift. Healing is not forgetting. It is a choice to heal. Past trauma can offer illumination and insights into emotions that need to be expressed.

Write letters to your father. Yes, write. Tell your dad about what's been going on in your life or simply begin a new ritual of making a Father's Day card for him. These small moves can soothe a grieving heart.

Is there something in the way that you choose to live that can help your spirit to heal? Perhaps it is merely to remember that fathers may not have had the skill set needed to parent, or were trauma/grief survivors themselves and had never worked it out. As we mature, so do the memories, so does understanding.

Edy Nathan, MA, LCSWR, is a therapist and the author of *It's Grief: The Dance of Self-Discovery Through Trauma and Loss*.

## **I Am Still Your Daughter...You are Still my Mother**

### **Understanding Grief / Understanding Grief : Eleanor Haley**

I am still your daughter and, though I often feel motherless, you are still my mother. Our here-on-earth connection has been severed and that sometimes makes things feel... well... ambiguous. One gets so used to defining relationships through physical connections and tangible two-way interactions that, when someone dies, it seems as though they cease to exist completely. At least at first.

For a long while after you died, I thought "*I have no mother.*" But this defies logic: Everyone has a mother. The truth is that I have a mother, but my mother is dead—and the fact that you are dead makes you no less my mother. It does mean that you can no longer fill the spaces you used to in the same way that you did before, but you do still fill so many spaces. In fact, I can think of very few cracks and corners where you don't exist. You are nowhere physically, but everywhere psychologically and so, you are still my mother and I am still your daughter.

Ours is a relationship that many others cannot understand. Just as they say you can't fully know what it is to love a child until you become a parent, it's sometimes true that a person can't fully know what it is to love someone who has died until they have lost someone themselves. I think this is why many grieving people feel like their relationship with deceased loved ones isn't validated in broader society. So even if they feel psychologically connected, they may ask themselves: *Am I still a mother, brother, sister, son, or daughter?*

For these reasons and many others, it seems like death unceremoniously robs people of their titles and thrusts new identities upon them. Mothers and fathers become bereaved parents; sons and daughters become orphans; brothers and sisters become only children. Identity formation is not something people easily come by to begin with so, for many, this can feel very disorienting.

It's normal to feel like all is lost for a little while, but I think, in time, many people come to see they don't have to fully abandon their relationship or their identity. True, they will likely grieve how the relationship has *changed...* but maybe not the relationship altogether. Obviously, things are not how anyone wants them to be, but to quote *Downton Abbey* (which I'm currently binge-watching and which you, Mom, would have loved):

"It's the worst thing in the world, except for the alternative."

Which is to say, staying connected to your memory in death is better than nothing.

I will take what I can get of you and I am grateful for what I have. This is not to say that I don't feel robbed and cheated by death at times, but I have to remind myself that I am not motherless. You are still my mother and I am still your daughter and death cannot take that away from me.

I am still your daughter. I still look to you for guidance. I still allow the values you taught me to serve as my compass. I still read the letters you sent me, cherishing your cursive letters scrawled across the page. I still think about you sitting at the piano every time I sit down to play the piano. I still sing my daughters the songs that you sang to me. I still worry too much or, as Dad says, "*I borrow trouble*" just like you always did. I still think about you. I still talk about you. I still need you.

Many of you reading this may, at times, find yourself questioning whether you are still a mother, son, daughter, father, grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, best friend, etc. This is totally normal; grief takes a toll on identity and it often takes a long time to understand who you are and how you relate to others in the context of life after loss.

Regardless of where you are in your grief, I'd like to ask you to give the following exercise a try. Take a few minutes to complete the sentence below:

*I am still your [mother, father, son, daughter, brother sister, etc.] because...*



*Ron, Cathy, Catherine and Char*

*Ron Callahan*

July 29, 1940-March 2, 2026

.Ron volunteered at Auburn Survivors of Suicide for nearly 30 years. He facilitated the group. He wrote and distributed the newsletter. He organized many barbecues, fund-raising yard sales and participated in many walks for suicide prevention, including the walk in Washington DC and San Francisco. The past few years he has helped with Senior Wellness Fairs in Federal Way and Auburn. He will be greatly missed.

*CharAshcraft*

September 21, 1934 - March 5, 2026

.After losing her brother-in-law and a long time friend to suicide Char volunteered as a board member and then as treasurer. She volunteered at the Overnight in Seattle and at virtually every Seattle Community Walk in Seattle and often in Tacoma and Puyallup and Olympia. She did a lot of work in the background, assisting with the newsletter and other issues. She will be greatly missed.

**Health and Resource Fair**

Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 10-1  
Federal Way Performing Arts and Events Center  
31510 Pete von Reichbauer Way

SOS will have a table there, stop by and say hello!

And let us know if you'd like to help staff the table.

The sun has set,  
You are no more.  
How blind I am,  
For you are here,  
Pervasive as my breathing.  
You fill my cup,  
Enabling me to see  
the ripples as a stone is tossed  
Impacting always,  
Your subtle ways have taught,  
will teach,  
For you to live to those who see!

Written in Memorial to my beloved  
Margaret, taken from me suddenly  
on May 3, 1998, Jack Waller 1998

*Donations are always appreciated and are tax deductible*



**YOUR DONATIONS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED, APPRECIATED AND ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE.**

Please mail your donations to:

28824 21<sup>st</sup> Ave. S., Federal Way, WA. 98003

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip



You can find Auburn SOS on Facebook. Go to Facebook and type 'Auburn SOS' in the search box or go to our website and follow the link on the first page.



Grief isn't just about the moment you lost them...

It's about all the moments that keep coming after.

The ones where something good happens... and they're not there to share it.

The quiet seconds that stretch too long because their voice isn't there anymore.

Loss happens once... But missing them rewrites your days over and over again.

And somehow... that's where love refuses to let go.