



SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE
King/ Pierce/ Thurston County Support Groups
MARCH/APRIL, 2022
NEWSLETTER



Website: www.auburnsos.com

e-mail: support@auburnsos.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 21st Ave. S.
 Federal Way, WA 98003

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

Many thanks for a love gift from Andee Church in memory of her brother Abel.

We also received donations from the following:

- Frontstream.com
- Washington State Combined Fund Drive
- Tisbest Philanthropy
- Kroger Foods (make sure to link with the Fred Meyer Rewards Program!)

Some say you're too painful to remember...
 I say you're too precious to forget

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!

Felipa Galaviz	253-376-3198	Lost grandson	Kathy Melsness	253-446-6500	Lost daughter
Andee Church	253-820-1911	Lost brother	Pam Driggers	253-921-7829	Lost husband
Janis Fesenmaier	360-866-2509	Lost brother	Kathy Sterling	206-244-8729	Lost grandson
José Martin	206-228-7413	Lost son	Kathy Crowley	253-471-9412	Lost son

Thinking of You Especially:

March	1	Kacie Gustafson	<i>Lost her brother Craig Davidson</i>
March	6	Roberta and Paul Shelton	<i>Lost their son Paul IV</i>
March	6	Lorey Tucker, Natasha Curenton	<i>Lost their son and brother Holly Wayne</i>
March	7	Dan Bosch, Norma Bosch	<i>Lost their son Brian</i>
March	8	Kate Yocum	<i>Lost friend Kory</i>
March	9	Ray Tellier	<i>Lost his father Chris</i>
March	9	Bethany Ferguson	<i>Lost her brother Peter</i>
March	9	Geno Hoff	<i>Lost his brother Perry</i>
March	11	Renaë Bolland	<i>Lost her son Brenden</i>
March	11	Jonnie Parker, Audrey Hornbuckle	<i>Lost daughter Brenda, lost her sister Brenda</i>
March	11	Lyn Radford	<i>Lost her son Joe</i>
March	12	Jackie Bryant	<i>Lost her daughter Marisa</i>
March	12	Andrew, Nicole, Donovan Driggers	<i>Lost their father 'Chuck'</i>
March	12	Pam Driggers	<i>Lost her husband 'Chuck'</i>
March	12	Cindy Cables	<i>Lost her husband John</i>
March	12	Kim Holmes	<i>Lost her son Wesley Martin</i>
March	15	Becky Crook	<i>Lost her son Tom</i>
March	16	Lori Halstead	<i>Lost her son Brandon</i>
March	16	Mark Johnson	<i>Lost his father Werner</i>
March	16	Ted & Peggy Warren	<i>Lost their son David</i>
March	18	Bruce Parker	<i>Lost his wife Lisa</i>
March	18	Annette Bryan & Nancy Haack	<i>Lost their son Erick Benjamin Bryan</i>
March	18	Diane Barmore	<i>Lost her best friend Lisa</i>
March	19	Christy Jarbu-Record	<i>Lost her husband Paul</i>
March	19	Patty Jarbo	<i>Lost her son-in-law Paul</i>
March	19	David and Paul Prestin	<i>Lost their mother Chris</i>
March	19	Marilou VanDeRiet	<i>Lost her husband Rick</i>
March	19	Catherine North, Julie Phillips	<i>Lost their brother John</i>
March	21	Des McGahern	<i>Lost his brother Noel</i>
March	22	Tonya Neuhausen	<i>Lost her daughter Jennifer Nichole</i>
March	22	Jamie Sabin	<i>Lost her niece Jennifer</i>
March	22	Bob & Sherri Ralston	<i>Lost their son Brien Michael Warren</i>
March	23	Ken Allen	<i>Lost his wife Beth</i>
March	23	Jim & Nancy Lawrence	<i>Lost their son Travis</i>
March	24	Steve, Marcia, Brett Larsen	<i>Lost son and brother Eric</i>
March	26	Andrea Hentschell, Ellen Hentschell	<i>Lost her husband Marcus, lost her son Marcus</i>
March	26	Brad Hentschell	<i>Lost his brother Marcus</i>
March	29	Irene Comacho	<i>Lost her boyfriend Mike</i>
March	29	Melinda LaCour	<i>Lost her son Robert</i>
March	29	Kaela Moontree	<i>Lost her twin brother Soren</i>
April	2	Crystal Pinero	<i>Lost her son Mark 'Antonio'</i>
April	3	Julie Hatfield, Angie Hatfield	<i>Lost her son, her brother Danny</i>
April	3	James Ridenour	<i>Lost his friend David</i>
April	4	Jeff Archer	<i>Lost his son Akira</i>
April	4	Tammy Bahr	<i>Lost her son Trevor</i>
April	5	Fern Cone	<i>Lost her son Liberty</i>
April	7	Marilee and Lyle Heiss	<i>Lost their son Jason</i>
April	8	Yvette Dean	<i>Lost her dad Rick</i>
April	8	Janet Laird	<i>Lost nephew Jeremy</i>
April	10	Sarah Grods	<i>Lost her son Caleb</i>
April	11	Vanessa Hipp, Sophia Hipp	<i>Lost their niece Alexandria</i>
April	11	Latrice James	<i>Lost her friend Alexandria</i>
April	12	Cheryl and Kelly Gustine	<i>Lost her husband, father Timm</i>
April	12	Julie Backman	<i>Lost her husband Paul</i>
April	13	Pat Farkas	<i>Lost brother Don</i>
April	15	David Garza	<i>Lost his nephew Anthony</i>
April	15	Jessica Perry	<i>Lost her brother Berry</i>
April	16	Mark Gorsline	<i>Lost his son Christopher</i>

April	16	Annie Gorsline	<i>Lost her nephew Christopher</i>
April	17	Leslie Aronson	<i>Lost her son Forrest</i>
April	17	Julia Okitsu	<i>Lost her husband Forrest</i>
April	18	Beverly Berentson	<i>Lost her son David</i>
April	19	Bill and Carolyn Fisher	<i>Lost son Joshua</i>
April	19	Kathy Jacobus	<i>Lost son Chaz</i>
April	21	Wayne and Sue Knapp	<i>Lost their son Todd</i>
April	22	Pauline Steputis	<i>Lost her husband James</i>
April	22	Cassie Robert	<i>Lost sister Mandy</i>
April	25	Kathy, Kelly Crowley	<i>Lost son Michael</i>
April	25	Frank Holdener, Susan Odom	<i>Lost grandson Michael, lost her nephew Michael</i>

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

March birthdays: Clifford, Anthony, Danny, Peter, Shawn, Jadon, Todd, Clyde, John, James, David, Jeremiah, Tristen, Chaz, Nick, Michael, Shane, Harry, Arwen, Jonathan, Jenifer, Ira, Andy, Scott, Kristin, Holly, Ryan, Tom, Kelli and Linda.

April birthdays: Asa, Cesar, Shawn, Anthony, Erros, Keely, Cindy, Toni, Carrie, Jerry, Rich, Sean, Jessica, Don, Candice, Chris, John, James, Susan, Sonny, Soren, Mike, Jim, Upin, Beth and Bruce.

We strive for accuracy. If we are missing the name of your loved one or if the information is incorrect please let us know so we can correct it! Send an e-mail to newsletter@auburnsos.com

Pre-covid, at in-person meetings, we would have new people fill out a registration sheet so we could list their loved one here and so we could send them a newsletter. If you have attended a zoom meeting and would like to receive a newsletter and/or have your loved one acknowledged here, please send an email to support@auburnsos.com



*Hugs to all of our fellow survivors out there during this challenging time.
Take care of yourselves and those close to you – and be safe!*



Covid Update!:

As of this writing we are cautiously optimistic that we may be able to meet in person starting in April! In March proof of vaccination and the mask mandate will be lifted in *most* areas. Once we start meeting again in person, even if masks are not required, some may choose to wear one. We all need to stay safe and take care of each other. It will be so good to see each other again! (we will post updates on our website and FB page)

MEETINGS FOR MARCH AND APRIL - please note the changes!

Zoom Meetings! –

Until the pandemic and the lockdowns are over we all need to stay safe! Since we cannot meet in person we will be hosting Zoom meetings at the regular meetings times:

- 2nd Wednesday at 6 pm for the Tacoma Group
- 3rd Tuesday at 7 pm for the Olympia Group and
- 4th Tuesday at 7 pm for the Auburn Group

Go to our Facebook page to find the meeting, the **password is ‘Auburn’**.

Don't have Zoom? Download it for free at Zoom.com. If you are not familiar with Zoom, it is a way to meet with many people on the computer (or phone). The link to the meeting is on our Facebook page – or ask and we can email it to you if you aren't on Facebook. Please join us!

Time to "Spring Clean" Your Grief By Megan Meade-Higgins LMSW

Winter is finally almost over! Trees are budding, animals are coming out of hibernation- even people are "thawing out" after the long, cold days of winter. It's time to get ready for spring!

AFTER A LOSS

The death of a loved one can feel like the bitter days of winter. You go into hibernation, and turn inside yourself to cope with your pain and sorrow. It may be months before you pick your head up and look around and realize you've been immersed in your grief for so long that you've tuned out everything else- your family, your friends, even the change of seasons. You can only just now start to look around and move a little more outside yourself. This is what I call the heart and soul's "spring awakening." It is the time in your grief journey when your heart and soul begin to "bud" with little shoots of hope- where you can recall your loved one's death and still feel sorrow, but you also begin to remember the joy of your relationship. "

SPRING CLEANING" YOUR HEART AND SOUL

You will feel a momentum inside you when it is time to start "spring cleaning" your grief. Many people in your life may think they know when it's best for you to start this process. Friends and family may tell you to "get over it and move on," often before you are ready. Only you will know when the time is right. Respect your own timeline for grief; it will be different from everyone else's. One suggestion for everyone, however: **DO NOT DO ANYTHING DRASTIC FOR ONE YEAR.** The first year after a loved one dies is full of "firsts:" first holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. Your loved one's death is often too new and the grief too overwhelming for you to make any major decisions such as moving, changing careers or beginning new relationships. Let yourself ease back into life. How you feel right after a death and how you will feel in a year will be different. Commit to the one year rule, and when that is over, take a deep breath and take stock of your life. Where are you now?

THE "STUFF" DOES NOT EQUAL THE PERSON

When you are ready to begin to "spring clean" your grief, you will begin to go through your loved one's "stuff," clothes, belongings, etc. It will be a sort of "life in review" for you. As you look through those papers and clothes and files and personal items, the things they loved and used and cherished, don't be surprised if it opens up the sadness all over again. The intensity of this grief may take you by surprise, like an unexpected snow in April. This is normal! Remember: as you go through their belongings, you are **NOT** giving away the person; you are only giving away and throwing out the stuff. You can never give them away; your love for them will always be with you. It is actually very healthy for you to reminisce and cry and daydream of your loved one. While you are literally cleaning out your house, you are also cleaning out your heart and soul... and that is healing. "

SPRING CLEANING" TIPS

One really great way to do this "spring cleaning" is with someone who loves you and understands this bittersweet time. Reminisce about your loved one. As you go through their belongings, tell stories of the life you shared with that person. There is comfort in the shared joy and sadness this task will bring. Sometimes, knowing you are helping others can relieve some of the grief you are feeling. Many people give away some of the stuff they clean out to charities so that the gift of your loved one's life can go on. Keep your most treasured, favorite items to celebrate the life of the person who has died, and if you want, display them proudly! Time by yourself can often be good for "spring cleaning" your heart and soul, too. Alone time gives you the chance to reflect on your life with your loved one, and to start thinking about where you are headed. Lots of people will tell you it will take time, but you'll get "back to normal." A very important thing to understand about losing a loved one is that you will never be "back to normal." Things can never be exactly the same as when your loved one was alive. Instead, you will have to go on without that person physically in your life and create a "new" normal. Your loved one will always be with you, but now, it will be in a different way as you learn to live in the world without them there. How will it all turn out? No one knows... you cannot control the future or plan too far in advance. Make small changes, lean on your friends and family for support, and take it one step at a time. You **CAN** do it.

SEASONS CHANGE, BUT LOVE NEVER DIES

The death of a loved one is devastating. But death and loss are **NOT** the final word. Seasons change, and with death, relationships change, too. But in the circle of life, spring always follows winter, and new life grows from the greatest despair and loss. Embrace your pain, and when you are ready, do some "spring cleaning" and start letting it go. Your emptiness will be filled with new gifts and ways of loving your loved one.

When things are back to 'normal' – this is when and where we meet:

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 Pam at 253-921-7829.

The **Olympia** Group meets on the third Tuesday of every month. Meetings are held at the Westwood Baptist Church in room E-10, located at 333 Kaiser Road in Olympia from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.

For more information or directions please call Janis at 360-866-2509.

The **Tacoma** Group meets on the second Wednesday of every month. Meetings are held at the TACID Building, Room 2, the address is 6315 S. 19th, Tacoma 98466, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

For more information or directions please call Colette at 360-490-3454 or coletteaugust@gmail.com.

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

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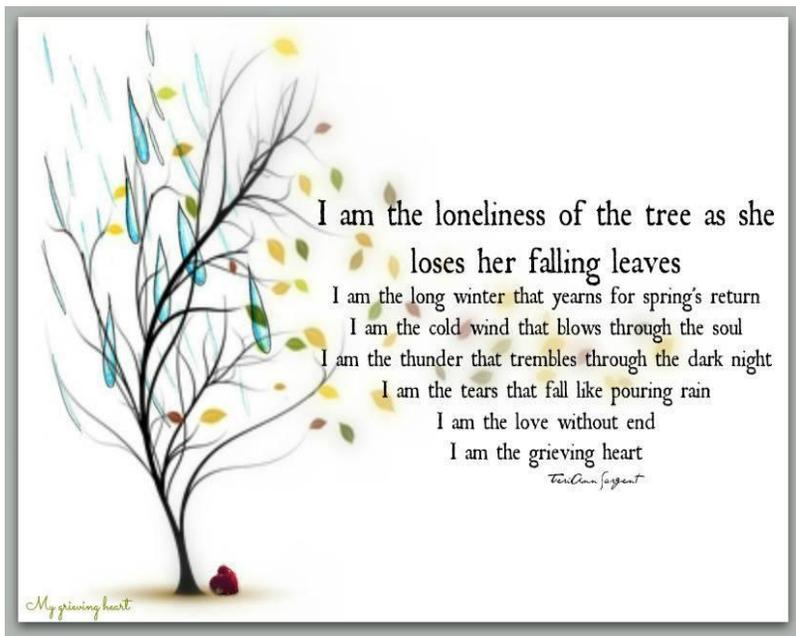
If Spring makes you feel better and to feel new hope, that is a good, positive and nurturing thing. But it may not be true for everyone, and no one should feel they have to hide their true feelings. It is perfectly normal to experience new heightened grief and/or grief-related anxiety in Spring, just as it is in other seasons of the year. Although warmer, sunnier months can be nurturing and inspire new hopefulness, grief does not suddenly go away just because seasons change.

Spring generally brings a sudden flurry of change and things begin to move faster all around us. There is rebirth and renewal in nature as flowers and trees bloom and everything turns green again, and people quickly begin to flock to their favorite warm-weather activities. Try to take time to sit down make some plans that can nurture you and help you cope with your losses and grief.

A helpful way to respond to one's anxiousness about spring and summer is to remind yourself that YOU are in control and that the warmer months offer unique opportunities for nurturing activities such as travel, planting gardens, nature walks, photography, family gatherings, star-gazing, and many other things.

And if it helps, take comfort in the belief that your precious loved ones are with you wherever you are and whatever you are doing.

John Pete



## *grief attacks*

We can be going along and everything seems to be okay.  
Then, out of nowhere,  
grief hits full force.  
These are not set backs.  
They are simply a part  
of the grieving experience.

-Unknown

NotSoMommy.com

**Suicide grief - A loved one's suicide can be emotionally devastating. Use healthy coping strategies such as seeking support — to begin the journey to healing and acceptance.**

[By Mayo Clinic Staff](#)

When a loved one dies by suicide, emotions can overwhelm you. Your grief might be heart wrenching. At the same time, you might be consumed by guilt — wondering if you could have done something to prevent your loved one's death.

As you face life after a loved one's suicide, remember that you don't have to go through it alone.

### **Brace for powerful emotions**

A loved one's suicide can trigger intense emotions. For example:

- **Shock.** Disbelief and emotional numbness might set in. You might think that your loved one's suicide couldn't possibly be real.
- **Anger.** You might be angry with your loved one for abandoning you or leaving you with a legacy of grief — or angry with yourself or others for missing clues about suicidal intentions.
- **Guilt.** You might replay "what if" and "if only" scenarios in your mind, blaming yourself for your loved one's death.
- **Despair.** You might be gripped by sadness, loneliness or helplessness. You might have a physical collapse or even consider suicide yourself.
- **Confusion.** Many people try to make some sense out of the death, or try to understand why their loved one took his or her life. But, you'll likely always have some unanswered questions.
- **Feelings of rejection.** You might wonder why your relationship wasn't enough to keep your loved one from dying by suicide.

You might continue to experience intense reactions during the weeks and months after your loved one's suicide — including nightmares, flashbacks, difficulty concentrating, social withdrawal and loss of interest in usual activities — especially if you witnessed or discovered the suicide.

### **Dealing with stigma**

Many people have trouble discussing suicide, and might not reach out to you. This could leave you feeling isolated or abandoned if the support you expected to receive just isn't there.

Additionally, some religions limit the rituals available to people who've died by suicide, which could also leave you feeling alone. You might also feel deprived of some of the usual tools you depended on in the past to help you cope.

### **Adopt healthy coping strategies**

The aftermath of a loved one's suicide can be physically and emotionally exhausting. As you work through your grief, be careful to protect your own well-being.

- **Keep in touch.** Reach out to loved ones, friends and spiritual leaders for comfort, understanding and healing. Surround yourself with people who are willing to listen when you need to talk, as well as those who'll simply offer a shoulder to lean on when you'd rather be silent.
- **Grieve in your own way.** Do what's right for you, not necessarily someone else. There is no single "right" way to grieve. If you find it too painful to visit your loved one's gravesite or share the details of your loved one's death, wait until you're ready.
- **Be prepared for painful reminders.** Anniversaries, holidays and other special occasions can be painful reminders of your loved one's suicide. Don't chide yourself for being sad or mournful. Instead, consider changing or suspending family traditions that are too painful to continue.
- **Don't rush yourself.** Losing someone to suicide is a tremendous blow, and healing must occur at its own pace. Don't be hurried by anyone else's expectations that it's been "long enough."

- **Expect setbacks.** Some days will be better than others, even years after the suicide — and that's OK. Healing doesn't often happen in a straight line.
- **Consider a support group for families affected by suicide.** Sharing your story with others who are experiencing the same type of grief might help you find a sense of purpose or strength. However, if you find going to these groups keeps you ruminating on your loved one's death, seek out other methods of support.

### Know when to seek professional help

If you experience intense or unrelenting anguish or physical problems, ask your doctor or mental health provider for help. Seeking professional help is especially important if you think you might be depressed or you have recurring thoughts of suicide. Unresolved grief can turn into complicated grief, where painful emotions are so long lasting and severe that you have trouble resuming your own life.

Depending on the circumstances, you might benefit from individual or family therapy — either to get you through the worst of the crisis or to help you adjust to life after suicide. Short-term medication can be helpful in some cases, too.

### Face the future with a sense of peace

In the aftermath of a loved one's suicide, you might feel like you can't go on or that you'll never enjoy life again.

In truth, you might always wonder why it happened — and reminders might trigger painful feelings even years later. Eventually, however, the raw intensity of your grief will fade.

Understanding the complicated legacy of suicide and how to cope with palpable grief can help you heal, while still honoring the memory of your loved one.

*Grief is like the ocean;  
It comes in waves,  
Ebbing and flowing.*

*Sometimes the water is  
Calm, and sometimes it  
Is overwhelming. All we  
Can do is learn to swim.*

Vicki Harrison

*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

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

Return Service Requested



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.

*Non profit Org  
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## INTERREGNUM

The span between life and death

Can be as quick and sudden

As a puff of wind

That blows out a candle.

But the candle does not suffer

After darkness comes.

It is the person

Left in the dark room

Who gropes and stumbles.

~~ Helen Duke Fike ~~

