



# SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE

## King/ Pierce/ Thurston County Support Groups



**MAY/JUNE, 2023**  
**NEWSLETTER**

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

**e-mail:** [support@auburnsos.com](mailto: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 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!

*Our gratitude to all of you who donate at the meetings, your support is appreciated!*

*Many thanks to Liz Carr for a donation in memory of her brother Michael.*

*We also received a donation from the American Online Giving Foundation*

### **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 Nydegger	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:

May	1	Ann Good	<i>Lost her older brother Brian</i>
May	1	Jane Jenks	<i>Lost her son Matthew</i>
May	3	Annette Hicks	<i>Lost her brother Burton</i>
May	4	Cecilia Icenogle	<i>Lost her son Paul</i>
May	4	Misty Elledge	<i>Lost her husband Jake</i>
May	5	Stasi Abramson	<i>Lost her husband Neal</i>
May	5	Becky Fralick	<i>Lost her husband Clifford</i>
May	5	Kathy & Steven Gus	<i>Lost daughter Sally</i>
May	9	David Shepherd	<i>Lost his wife Tina</i>
May	9	Cindy Brooks	<i>Lost her brother Barry</i>
May	11	Dorothy Joan Ritchie	<i>Lost her son Shawn</i>
May	11	Karen Curnow	<i>Lost her husband Don</i>
May	11	Linda Bowen, Kristy Vardon	<i>Lost their friend Don</i>
May	12	Jamie Clair	<i>Lost best friend Antonio Morales</i>
May	12	Lindy Nagle	<i>Lost her brother Les</i>
May	13	Tom Fender	<i>Lost his wife Kathy</i>
May	13	Tristan Marshall	<i>Lost her husband Matt</i>
May	14	Linda Morris	<i>Lost her son Andrew</i>
May	15	Cindy Williams	<i>Lost her son Kolby</i>
May	17	Kristina Stokes, Kristin Bennett	<i>Lost her father, grandfather Gary Bennett</i>
May	20	Kelly Molano	<i>Lost her husband Alex</i>
May	20	Colleen Zevenbergen	<i>Lost her fiancé David</i>
May	21	Dane Nimaho	<i>Lost his mother Danette</i>
May	21	Debbie Endsley	<i>Lost her nephew Justin Campbell</i>
May	21	Bernadette Fong	<i>Lost her friend Kalani Whitney</i>
May	23	Ruth Conway, Stefanie Freeman	<i>Lost her son Asa, her brother Asa</i>
May	23	Linda Sabado	<i>Lost her daughter Victrina</i>
May	23	Gary Woempner	<i>Lost his son Asa</i>
May	23	Diane Lindfors	<i>Lost her husband John</i>
May	26	Rusty Ford	<i>Lost his sister Sonja</i>
May	27	Russell Munden	<i>Lost his brother Bradley</i>
May	27	Jennifer Harvey	<i>Lost her fiancé Angel</i>
May	28	Sandra Christian	<i>Lost her son Thomas</i>
May	29	Janet Miller	<i>Lost her boyfriend Ken</i>
May	29	Karrie Myton	<i>Lost her mother Sydney</i>
May	31	Joanne Nesta	<i>Lost her husband Jessee</i>
May	31	Ruth-Ann Johnson	<i>Lost her brother Jeremiah</i>
June	1	Iysha Matthews, Tina Matthews	<i>Lost her brother Jordan, nephew Jordan</i>
June	2	Shannon Whitemarsh	<i>Lost her husband Bryan</i>
June	3	Janet Renken	<i>Lost her daughter Natasha</i>
June	3	Diane Brown	<i>Lost her brother Don</i>
June	3	Bonnie Palin, Venita Cook	<i>Lost her son Jadon, her grandson Jadon</i>
June	6	Kara Olson	<i>Lost ex-husband James</i>
June	6	Rob Waldron	<i>Lost his partner Bill</i>
June	7	Elsie Dennis-Dofelmier	<i>Lost her son Jamie</i>
June	8	Heidi Sanders	<i>Lost her husband Kevin</i>
June	10	Nancy Ekdahl	<i>Lost her brother John</i>
June	10	Judy Kester	<i>Lost her brother Ed</i>
June	12	Sue Ray	<i>Lost her brother Robert</i>
June	12	Cherie Nordgren	<i>Lost her husband Dan</i>
June	14	Courtney Deel	<i>Lost her s/o John</i>
June	14	Colette August	<i>Lost her mom Lana Buffington</i>
June	14	Lavina Crosby	<i>Lost her Aunt Lana</i>
June	14	Jody Wilkins	<i>Lost her boyfriend Mike</i>
June	15	Jan Lumsden	<i>Lost her brother</i>
June	16	Brad & Susan Hicks	<i>Lost their son James</i>
June	17	Sarah Rapacz	<i>Lost her brother Jeff</i>
June	17	Jo Gunn	<i>Lost her son Jeffrey</i>

June	18	Tabitha Selby	<i>Lost her brother Benjamin</i>
June	18	Catherine Masucci	<i>Lost her brother Fred</i>
June	18	Joni & Lino Nordland	<i>Lost daughter's boyfriend Walker</i>
June	19	Katie Bukata, Kimmie Hummel	<i>Lost their best friend Jenna</i>
June	21	Julie Healy	<i>Lost her daughter Kristin</i>
June	22	Lane	<i>Lost her brother Jay</i>
June	22	Jamie Buccieri	<i>Lost mom Jodi</i>
June	22	Carrie Harper & Dennis Kitzmiller	<i>Lost their son Jeffrey</i>
June	22	Brynn and Myrv Rutherford	<i>Lost their son Kellen</i>
June	23	Greg and Faye Brown	<i>Lost their daughter Candice</i>
June	24	Lindsey King	<i>Lost her brother Dylan</i>
June	24	Joy Kinzer	<i>Lost her fiancé Shawn Bertsch</i>
June	25	Janis Fesenmaier	<i>Lost her brother Paul</i>
June	26	Cindi Wilson	<i>Lost her son Jacob</i>
June	26	Karin Gehrke	<i>Lost her nephew Jacob</i>
June	28	Linda and Kelly Keough	<i>Lost son Derek</i>
June	30	Deb Boulton	<i>Lost her husband Mark</i>
June	30	Jennifer Chapline	<i>Lost cousin Carleen</i>

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

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

**June Birthdays:** *Dan, Perry, Brenden Lee, Cassandra, Phillip, Erick, Bryan, Angela, Jacsha, Jason, Joshua, Derek, Terry, Matthew, Chris, Jesse, Fred, Garrett, John, Jeff, Thomas, Paul, Carol, John, Keith, Andrew, Angel, Austin, John and Burton.*

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 [support@auburnsos.com](mailto:support@auburnsos.com)

### MEETINGS FOR 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 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 6:30 – 8:15 pm.  
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, Address is 6315 S. 19<sup>th</sup>, Tacoma 98466, from **6:00 to 8:00 p.m., please note the time change for the winter months!**  
**This group also has a zoom option!**  
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](mailto:support@auburnsos.com)

Just a reminder –  
We welcome your stories, your poems and the pictures of the loved one you lost to suicide. This is your newsletter and we welcome your contributions.  
Send contributions to:  
[support@auburnsos.com](mailto:support@auburnsos.com)

### Health and Resource Fair

Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 10-2  
Federal Way Performing Arts and Events Center  
31510 Pete von Reichbauer Way

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

## How to help parents who are grieving on Mother's Day or Father's Day

- Meet them where they are in their grief
- Let your friend know you're thinking of them
- Say their child's name
- Share memories or do something to honor the child—if your friend is ready
- Support surviving siblings
- Encourage self-care
- Stay in the picture

*A mother instinctively  
Protects her child.  
A grieving mother  
Instinctively protects  
Her child's memory*



Mom, sometimes I wish you could come back, but I don't want you to suffer again. I know you are with me and I will always love and miss you with all my heart. Until we meet again!

Unknown

Dad  
I won't immortalize you in the stars  
Because they fade away  
I won't remember you with a poem  
For it will be forgotten one day  
I will just keep you safe in my heart  
So that you are with me in every way...

~author unknown



For those grieving on Mother's Day  
May your minds be filled with memory,  
And your hearts be warmed with love

### *A Word From Verywell*

If you've lost a father or father figure, it's normal to have mixed feelings that come and go throughout the days, weeks, and months. On a day of celebration like Father's Day, these feelings will probably be harder to cope with and may even be unexpected if you had been coping well. It's common for difficult feelings to emerge on a day when everyone else is experiencing joy.

Pay attention to where you are in the grieving process, and plan out how you will spend the day. Whether you quietly reflect, spend time with others, or keep yourself busy, try to find meaning where you can, pay attention to the feelings that come up, and go easy on yourself. Try reaching out to a grief counselor if the day feels too difficult to manage alone.

## *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.

Monday — 2:00 pm

Auburn Senior Activity Center

808 Ninth Street SE, Auburn, WA 98002

Contact for Details - (206) 241-5650

### **Grief Support Group**

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

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

Phone: (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 p.m.

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

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

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

Saint Columba's Episcopal Church

26715 Military Rd

South Kent, 98032

3rd Tuesday of each month 6:30 – 8:00 pm

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: 1st and 3rd Mondays of every month 6:00-8:30 p.m.

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

### **The Compassionate Friends, Federal Way**

What: Loss of Child Support Group

When: 2nd Wednesday of every month, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Where: St. Francis Hospital, 34515 9th Ave. S, Federal Way

Phone: 206-241-1139, Email: [tcfmarge@aol.com](mailto:tcfmarge@aol.com)

## **Suicide - The Most Misunderstood of All Deaths** Ronald Rolheiser, OMI 2004-07-25

Death is always painful, but its pains are compounded considerably if its cause is suicide. When a suicide occurs, we aren't just left with the loss of a person, we're also left with a legacy of anger, second-guessing, and fearful anxiety.

So each year I write a column on suicide, hoping that it might help produce more understanding around the issue and, in a small way perhaps, offer some consolation to those who have lost a loved one to this dreadful disease. Essentially, I say the same things each year because they need to be said. As Margaret Atwood once put it, some things need to be said and said and said again, until they don't need to be said any more. That's true of suicide.

What needs to be said, and said again, about it?

First of all that it's a disease and perhaps the most misunderstood of all diseases.

We tend to think that if a death is self-inflicted it is voluntary in a way that death through physical illness or accident is not. For most suicides, this isn't true. A person who falls victim to suicide dies, as does the victim of a terminal illness or fatal accident, not by his or her own choice. When people die from heart attacks, strokes, cancer, AIDS, and accidents, they die against their will. The same is true suicide, except that in the case of suicide the breakdown is emotional rather than physical - an emotional stroke, an emotional cancer, a breakdown of the emotional immune-system, an emotional fatality.

This is not an analogy. The two kinds of heart attacks, strokes, cancers, breakdowns of the immune-system, and fatal accidents, are identical in that, in neither case, is the person leaving this world on the basis of a voluntary decision of his or her own will. In both cases, he or she is taken out of life against his or her own will. That's why we speak of someone as a "victim" of suicide.

Given this fact, we should not worry unduly about the eternal salvation of a suicide victim, believing (as we used to) that suicide is always an act of ultimate despair. God is infinitely more understanding than we are and God's hands are infinitely safer and more gentle than our own. Imagine a loving mother having just given birth, welcoming her child onto her breast for the first time. That, I believe, is the best image we have available to understand how a suicide victim (most often an overly sensitive soul) is received into the next life.

Again, this isn't an analogy. God is infinitely more understanding, loving, and motherly than any mother on earth. We need not worry about the fate of anyone, no matter the cause of death, who exits this world honest, over-sensitive, gentle, over-wrought, and emotionally- crushed. God's understanding and compassion exceed our own.

Knowing all of this however, doesn't necessarily take away our pain (and anger) at losing someone to suicide. Faith and understanding aren't meant to take our pain away but to give us hope, vision, and support as we walk within it.

Finally, we should not unduly second-guess when we lose a loved one to suicide: "What might I have done? Where did I let this person down? If only I had been there? What if ...?" It can be too easy to be haunted with the thought: "If only I'd been there at the right time." Rarely would this have made a difference. Indeed, most of the time, we weren't there for the exact reason that the person who fell victim to this disease did not want us to be there. He or she picked the moment, the spot, and the means precisely so that we wouldn't be there. Perhaps it's more accurate to say that suicide is a disease that picks its victim precisely in such a way so as to exclude others and their attentiveness. This should not be an excuse for insensitivity, especially towards those suffering from dangerous depression, but it should be a healthy check against false guilt and fruitless second-guessing.

We're human beings, not God. People die of illness and accidents all the time and all the love and attentiveness in the world often cannot prevent a loved one from dying. Suicide is an sickness there are some sicknesses that all the care and love in the world cannot cure.

A proper human and faith response to suicide should not be horror, fear for the victim's eternal salvation, or guilty second-guessing about how we failed this person. Suicide is indeed a horrible way to die, but we must understand it (at least in most cases) as a sickness, a disease, an illness, a tragic breakdown within the emotional immune-system. And then we must trust, in God's goodness, God's understanding, God's power to descend into hell, and God's power to redeem all things, even death, even death by suicide.



Mark your calendars! These are the upcoming local walks ~ but keep an eye on the website for possible added walks. [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)

09/09/2023	<a href="#">Thurston County Walk, Marathon Park - Olympia</a>
09/23/2023	<a href="#">Whatcom County Walk, Bellingham High School - Bellingham</a>
09/30/2023	<a href="#">Snohomish County Walk, Boxcar Park - Everett</a>
10/22/2023	<a href="#">Seattle Walk, Fisher Pavilion - Seattle</a>



Charae Ashcraft often supported and volunteered with SOS, here she is staffing the table at the Wellness Fair at the Auburn Senior Center. She was a crew member on two Out of the Darkness Overnight Walks, in Seattle and San Francisco. Just a month before her birthday we lost her to the cancer she thought she had beat. Our hearts are heavy and she will be missed. She is survived by her mother Char, a SOS board member and her brother Ray.

*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

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in the search box or go to our website  
and follow the link on the first page.

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*Grief is the last act of love  
We have to give to those we  
Loved. Where there is deep  
Grief there was great love*