

SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE

King/ Pierce/ Thurston County Support Groups



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, 2023
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.

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, many thanks for a love gift from Maria Icenogle/Forrester's

Many thanks to Kathy Melsness for a love gift in memory of her daughter Marlene

Whether you donate by cash at a meeting or by sending in a check – it all goes to spread the word about suicide prevention and to care for suicide survivors.

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:

Nov 2	Suzanne Gray	Lost her husband Marshall
Nov 3	Kristin and Charlie Evans	Lost her son Scott Roberson
Nov 3	Rick and Ellen Nelson	Lost their son Erik
Nov 3	Jan Strickland	Lost her spouse Jacob
Nov 3	Amanda Woods	Lost her father Dean
Nov 8	Tiffany Heredia	Lost her mom Diane
Nov 8	Lori Storm	Lost her son Randy
Nov 11	Nancy Babst, Kristen Fisher	Lost her son Garrett, lost her brother Garrett
Nov 11	Emily Wallace	Lost her friend Garrett
Nov 11	Jenine Ellisor	Lost her son James
Nov 11	Linda Page	Lost her daughter Stephanie
Nov 13	Jessica Tinius	Lost her husband Sean
Nov 16	Carolyn Noesen	Lost her son Issac
Nov 16	Hayley Sterling	Lost her son Michael
Nov 16	Kieth and Kathy Sterling	Lost their grandson Michael
Nov 18	Beth Poler	Lost her husband Rick
Nov 19	Deloris Brodt	Lost her daughter Toni
Nov 19	Sharon Baughman	Lost her daughter Rachel
Nov 20	Gretchen Price	Lost her spouse Jeff
Nov 23	Jeni Jones	Lost her boyfriend Derek
Nov 24	Eric and Kathy Swanson	Lost their son Anthony
Nov 24	Dru Gonja	Lost her daughter Kara
Nov 26	Leslie Phillips	Lost her son Robbie
Nov 27	Heidi Johnson	Lost her son Jake
Nov 28	Jon and Shannon Hennessy	Lost their son Baxter
Nov 28	Lydia and Larry Garrett	Lost their son Phil
Nov 29	Anna Johnson	Lost her son Jens
Nov 30	Lilli Blaylock	Lost her son Andy
Nov 30	Sandy Payne	Lost her son George
Nov	Aaron Hendrickson	Lost his nephew Xay
Dec 1	Britni Owens	Lost her mother Vikki
Dec 1	Elisa Jungbauer	Lost her brother Arthur
Dec 1	Jennifer Nelson	Lost her mother Linda
Dec 2	Angela Cunningham	Lost her partner Upin
Dec 2	Shawna Myers	Lost her son James
Dec 2	Cathy Johnson	Lost her son James
Dec 4	Andi Church	Lost her son Travis
Dec 5	Stephanie DeVault	Lost her daughter Vanessa
Dec 7	Rosemary Schilz	Lost her nephew Joshua
Dec 7	Kelly Paulsen	Lost her spouse Jim
Dec 7	Glenda Binford	Lost her father Larry
Dec 7	Betty Hamilton	Lost her husband Larry
Dec 9	Linda Ferguson	Lost her son Mark
Dec 10	Helen Jordan	Lost her spouse David
Dec 10	David Jordan	Lost his father David
Dec 10	Denise and Jim Tiller	Lost their son Matthew
Dec 10	Jaclyn Ehli	Lost her brother Matthew
Dec 13	John Thomason	Lost his son John Matthew
Dec 15	Jan Lumsden	Lost her brother
Dec 15	Lynn Nieland	Lost her former spouse Brian
Dec 16	Emily Gould	Lost her friend Sean
Dec 16	Jan Lumsden	Lost her mother
Dec 19	Monica Gockel	Lost her dad Tim
Dec 21	Shelia Anderson	Lost her daughter April
Dec 22	Marjorie Silver	Lost her dad Mac
Dec 23	Kim Dickson	Lost her husband John
Dec 24	Stacy Mayer	Lost his brother Scott
Dec 28	Cliff Whipple	Lost his son Lance
Dec 28	Tiffany Christie	Lost her dad Thomas



Dec 30 *Karen Nash*
Dec 31 *Gary Keizer*

Lost her son Bobby
Lost his daughter Rachel

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

November birthdays: Diane, Robin, Dean, Diesel, Marnie, Liberty, Sandi, Marcus, Diesel, Craig, John, Mac, Randy, Tom, Mark, Garth, Samuel, Caleb, Akira, Austin Kyle, Stephen Lee, Aaron, Kevin, Robby, Danielle, Bill, Ken, Kolby, Kathleen, Alex and Anthony.

December birthdays: Kory, Terry, Victrina, Travis, Michael Shane, Rick, Robert, Paul, Noel, Bobby, Kevin, John, Cameron, Brian, Brad, Randy, Scott, Robbie, Rich, Debbie, Jack, Thomas, Paul, Christopher, Jens, Chris, Jennifer, Derek, Jon, Berry, and Devin.

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 support@auburnsos.com

MEETINGS FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER -

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-14, located at 333 Kaiser Road in Olympia from 6:30 to 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 Tahoma Indian Center, 1809 E. 31st Street in Tacoma from 6:00 to 8:00 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



SOS Holiday Gatherings

Please join us for a special holiday meeting of Auburn SOS on Tuesday, December 19th . **(Note - this is a week earlier than usual.)** The meeting will start at 6:00 p.m. Bring finger food to share and a picture of your loved one. The meeting will close with a candle-lighting ceremony.

Our hosts, the Auburn Fire Department participates in the Toys for Tots program; we invite you to bring a new toy to donate. This is a way many survivors commemorate the one they lost to suicide – by giving a favorite toy of their loved one to someone else.

The Olympia Group will hold a special holiday meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 19th at their regular time (6:30 pm.) They will end the meeting with a candle-lighting ceremony.

The Tacoma Group will be meeting at their regular time and invite you to bring a picture of your loved one to share and they will end the meeting with a candle-lighting ceremony.

Coping with Grief and Missing Your Loved One at Thanksgiving, Dani Hart

The turkey is hot out of the oven, potatoes are mashed, the table is set. You're surrounded by loved ones at Thanksgiving dinner, and yet you somehow feel empty inside.

A once joyous time filled with laughter, good food, and even better memories, now feels like nothing more than a trigger to miss the one who's so painfully not there.

When we enter the holiday season grieving the loss of a loved one, everything feels different, flipped upside down. A piece is missing and we're often expected to go on living like everything is normal.

Bereavement is heavy and can easily become too much to carry alone when Thanksgiving, Christmas and other holidays approach.

As Megan Devine explains in "[It's OK That You're Not OK](#)"...

"The reality of grief is far different from what others see from the outside. There is pain in this world that you can't be cheered out of. You don't need solutions. You don't need to move on from your grief. You need someone to see your grief, to acknowledge it. You need someone to hold your hands while you stand there in blinking horror, staring at the hole that was your life. Some things cannot be fixed. They can only be carried." So, if you're heading into the Thanksgiving meal missing a loved one who's recently passed away, know that you're not alone and it's totally okay to feel whatever you're feeling.

3 Reasons Thanksgiving Can Be Tough

Thanksgiving and other holidays are embedded in traditions – the ultimate routines – that connect us to our loved ones and allow us to relax. When someone in our lives passes away, whether expected or unexpected, the memories stay with us, yet the routines that kept us grounded get thrown up to the wind.

Thanksgiving can be especially tough for those going through grief for a handful of reasons.

1. It was a loved one's favorite holiday

Good food, comfy pants, and leftovers to last through the week make Thanksgiving dinner and break a favorite holiday for many people. It's a holiday that crosses religions and ethnicities to bring people together.

If the person who passed away loved Thanksgiving and did things to make it memorable for family and friends, them not being there makes it hurt that much more.

Whether it's an aunt who always enjoyed cooked the turkey or a grandfather who put his heart into making the homemade cranberry sauce, the missing love for the holiday is easy to recognize when the passed person is no longer there.

This can make it exceptionally hard for those left grieving to enjoy the big Thanksgiving Day feast without them.

2. Traditions do not feel the same

Whether it's waking up early and watching the Macy's Day parade, watching football in sweats, or running in a turkey trot before the big meal, families often have traditions during Thanksgiving.

These traditions may feel difficult to do without the energy of the missing loved one. The traditions will likely feel different for everyone involved and some people in the family may not know how to handle their emotions without the loved one present.

It's not uncommon for grieving people to protest carrying on the tradition without their loved one present, while others may want to carry on the tradition in their honor. Everyone experiences holiday grief differently, and that's OK.

3. Pressure to live up to their legacy

Whether it's continuing on a big get together with all of the extended family members or trying to replicate the exact meal just like mom used to make, in many instances family members feel pressured to do the things the loved one who passed did during the holidays.

Many people want to please people in the way their loved one did, and will try to do whatever it takes to ensure they live up to the legacy.

This can often leave a grieving person running around, potentially avoiding the pain of grief while family is around, and then breaking down when everyone finally leaves, right when they may need someone's comfort the most.

7 Ideas for Coping With Grief During Thanksgiving:

1. Talk about your loved one
2. Journal
3. Reminisce over old photos
4. Continue Thanksgiving traditions
5. Start new Thanksgiving traditions
6. Talk to a support group or therapist
7. If needed, take time for yourself

FIRST THANKSGIVING

The thought of being thankful
fills my heart with dread.
They'll all be feigning gladness,
not a word about her said.
These heavy shrouds of blackness
enveloping my soul,
pervasive, throat-catching,
writhe in me, and coil.
I must, I must acknowledge,
just express her name,
so all sitting at the table,
know I'm thankful that she came.

Though she's gone from us forever
and we mourn to see her face,
not one minute of her living,
would her death ever replace.
So I stop the cheerful gathering,
though my voice quivers, quakes,
make a toast to all her living.
That small tribute's all it takes.

Written by [Genesse Gentry](#), November 12, 2009
Genesse Bourdeau Gentry
from *Stars in the Deepest Night –
After the Death of a Child*



Coping With Sadness During the Holidays By Rev. Gwendolyn Phillips Coates

The seasons are changing, there is a chill in the air, and the holidays are quickly approaching. For some this is the most wonderful time of the year. For others it is the saddest and loneliest time of the year. As we grow older our experiences with grief and loss crescendo as our losses become more common. Age and the life cycle while taking their natural course, leave many in a state of loneliness due to constant losses in their peer circle. These feelings are exasperated during the holiday season. The times changes, the weather patterns change, and the days are shorter leaving many in a state of sadness and depression.

The holidays are often a difficult time for those who are bereaved and coping with loss. A common question asked by those mourning a loved one or struggling to make sense of other losses is, "How can I get through the holidays?" There is no single answer of what one should or shouldn't do. Hospice Foundation of America offers one guiding principle: do what is comfortable.

The key to coping with grief during the holidays is to find the way that is right for you. Some people find it helpful to be with family and friends, emphasizing the familiar. Others may wish to avoid old traditions and try something different. Others will find new ways to acknowledge the season.

Kenneth Doka, PhD, HFA(Hospice Foundation of America) Senior Consultant, recounts a session with a group of widows. "One woman whose husband recently died asked, 'Who should sit at the head of the table?', taking her husband's place. The group was asked how they would handle it. One woman placed her youngest grandchild there to remind the family of its continuity. Another said her eldest son sat there. Another woman said that she sat there since she was now the family leader."

Which response was right? "They all were. Each response met the needs of the person, and each was a comfortable choice," explained Doka. This is the key to coping with the holidays: find the way that is right for you.

Some people find it helpful to be with family and friends, emphasizing the familiar. Others may wish to avoid old sights and sounds, perhaps even taking a trip. Others will find new ways to acknowledge the season.

Whatever your response, remember these points:

Plan ahead for approaching holidays. Be aware that this might be a difficult time for you. It's not uncommon to feel out of sorts with the celebratory tone of the season. The additional stress may affect you emotionally, cognitively, and physically; this is a normal reaction. It is important to be prepared for these feelings.

Recognize that holidays won't be the same. If you try to keep everything as it was, you'll be disappointed. Doing things a bit differently can acknowledge the change while preserving continuity with the past. Different menus, changing decorations, attending a different service, or even celebrating in a different location may provide that slight but significant shift. However, be aware that your feelings will still be there. If you decide on a change, be careful not to isolate yourself.

Holidays may affect other family members too. Talk over your plans. Respect their choices and needs, and compromise if necessary. Everyone (including you) should participate in ways that are comfortable.

Avoid any additional stress. Decide what you really want to do, and what can be avoided. Perhaps cards don't need to be sent, or shopping can be done by phone or catalog.

Do what feels right for you, what you need and want to do, and not what others think is right.

We wish you all the best holiday season possible!



**American
Foundation
for Suicide
Prevention**

The Community Walks, held in hundreds of cities across the country, are the core of the Out of the Darkness movement, which began in 2004. These events give people the courage to open up about their own connections to the cause, and a platform to create a culture that's smarter about mental health. Friends, family members, neighbors and coworkers walk side-by-side, supporting each other and in memory of those we've lost.

Now, more than ever, it's important to be there for one another and take steps to safeguard our mental health and prevent suicide.



For the Olympia Walk it was bright and sunny! Here are some Olympia Group walkers, Dominique, Linda, Diane, Christie and Janis Fesenmaier

The Seattle Walk is always the last one of the season. It was cloudy but we didn't get rained on! A very good turnout at Seattle Center.



Donations are always appreciated and are tax deductible



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

Please mail your donations to:

28824 21st Ave. S., Federal Way, WA. 98003

In memory of: _____

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Auburn SOS
28824 21st Ave. S.
Federal Way, WA 98003

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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.



Weather Alert!

If the weather is inclement (as in 'snow'!) we will follow the guidelines of the local school district as to whether or not to cancel our meeting.

Grief never ends, but it changes. It's a passage, not a place to stay. Grief is not a sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith. It is the price of love