



Bereaved Families of Ontario

Bereaved Families of Ontario—York Region

Mission: To provide bereavement support by trained volunteers and staff to individuals and families grieving the death of a loved one.

Vision: To provide a lifeline to individuals and families grieving a death, by providing compassionate support in order to cope with their journey through grief.



WINTER 2017 NEWSLETTER

FACEBOOK DAILY INSPIRATIONS

~NEW: FACEBOOK DAILY INSPIRATIONS POSTINGS! ~ LIKE US ON FACEBOOK AND FOLLOW OUR DAILY INSPIRATIONS, EDUCATION , STRESS RELIEVERS, CALM SCENES/PICTURES, TIPS/TOOLS AND ENCOURAGEMENT ON GRIEF/BEREAVEMENT! See page 2 for a sneak peek of what you may see.

PASS THIS ON TO FRIENDS, FAMILY, CO-WORKERS, NEIGHBOURS OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW WHO IS GRIEVING THE DEATH OF A LOVED ONE.

Also, follow us on **TWITTER!**

***SEND ME YOUR IDEAS OF POEMS/QUOTES, PICTURES, TIPS AND STRATEGIES. You may see them on our face book page.



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*****Purse Auction & Jewellery Party: SAVE THE DATE*****

WHEN: Wednesday, May 10, 2017
TIME: 6:30pm-9:30pm
WHERE: Newmarket Community Centre
200 Doug Duncan Drive, Newmarket

Bring your friends and family for a fun filled evening for ladies only! Book a table of 8 for a women's night out!

Funds raised from this event support the FREE programs and services offered by Bereaved Families of York Region in support of children, youth, families, seniors, individuals and companies following the death of a loved one.

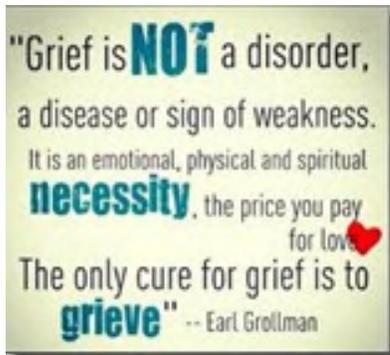
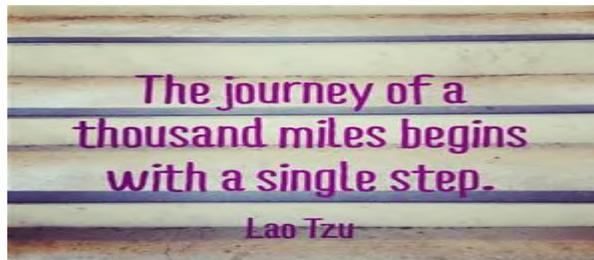
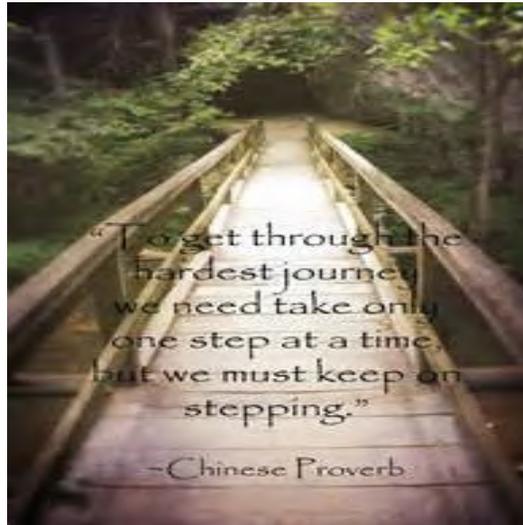
LAUNCH OF FACEBOOK DAILY INSPIRATIONS!

Like us on Face book and you will see daily inspiration, education on grief/bereavement and encouragement. Below is a sample of some things that will be posted in January.

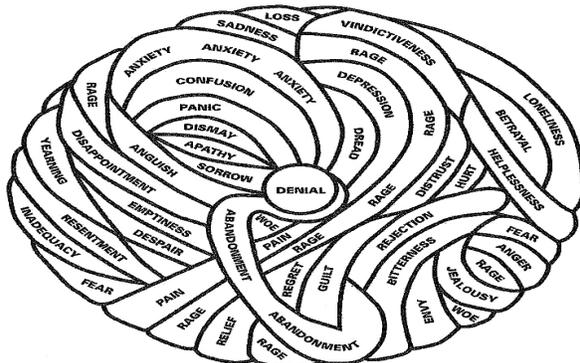
It's Up to You

One song can spark a moment,
 One flower can wake the dream.
 One tree can start a forest,
 One bird can herald spring.
 One smile begins a friendship,
 One handclasp lifts a soul.
 One star can guide a ship at sea,
 One word can frame the goal.
 One vote can change a nation,
 One sunbeam lights a room.
 One candle wipes out darkness,
 One laugh will conquer gloom.
 One step must start each journey,
 One word must start each prayer.
 One hope will raise our spirits,
 One touch can show you care.
 One voice can speak with wisdom,
 One heart can know what's true.
 One life can make the difference,
 You see, it's up to you!

Author Unknown



**BALL OF GRIEF
 A TANGLED "BALL" OF EMOTIONS**





Missing You: Memory Tree Speech by Anne-Marie Theberge

Good evening, my name is Anne-Marie and I have volunteered at Bereaved Families for about 1 year and have the honour of being asked to speak tonight. When I was trying to think about what to say it was hard because there is so much to say yet how can words describe how it feels to lose someone.

For me it was a very lonely process. I did not have the courage to reach out like those of you that come to drop-in or group sessions. A counselor once told me that with all the pain that I carried, she was amazed I was still alive. I also took a forgiveness yoga course. In one of the session we had to draw a horizontal line which represented our life from birth to now. We then had to draw anything across that line. I closed my eyes and drew random vertical lines. Once I opened my eyes I was surprised and shocked to see that each of the lines corresponded to each of my losses. That's when I realized that I've been losing a family member every 10 years; my brother, my sister and my dad.

I'm from Québec and my brother moved out west when I was little so I have very few memories of him. At his funeral I was angry with him because I did not get the chance to know him. Everybody told me how nice he was but it didn't matter to me because all I knew was that he didn't take the time to know me. Where I'm from, the custom for the viewing is to have the family of the lost one sit by the casket and wait for people to offer you their sympathies. My mother was mad at me because I refused to be beside her at the viewing. My sister understood and she protected me.

My sister was 9 years older than me. She had depression and suicidal episodes and died from cancer after suffering for 7 years. I had that love/hate relationship with her. We had many fights but so many good laughs too. Again my mom was mad at me because I did not sit besides the casket to receive sympathies from people. But this time my sister could not be there to protect and understand me.

My dad suffered from Alzheimer and I had the chance to spend the last few days of his life with him. This is very precious to me. This time at the funeral I could not refuse to be by my mom's side to receive sympathies as there was no one left except me.

I miss them so much. Sometimes the pain was so great that if I was alone in the house I would sit on the floor right where I was, and cried. Time would then stop, all that was left was pain. When it subsided I would just lie down from exhaustion, as it was much easier than getting up! Sometimes I felt other emotions such as sadness, anger or guilt. I think the worse for me was to feel so alone. How could that feeling be possible when there are billions of people on this planet. But still that's what I felt, regardless of how many people were around me.

Sometimes I would choose to write, draw, go for a walk, being in an empty church. As long as I was alone and did not have to hide my feelings. It took me a long time to figure out that was much better than putting on a face or burying my feelings. If I did not have the time I would close my eyes and breathe or go to the bathroom. Once I was at work in the storage room by myself, a particular song that reminded me of my sister came on the radio. I just stopped what I was doing and listened to the whole song. I was lucky, nobody came in!

There were so many things I was angry about each of the ones that are gone but that feeling is gone. But the sadness and tears still come once in a while. Like those broken lines across my lifeline in the forgiveness course, those losses left deep scars from my pain. But when we let that pain be expressed safely, we realize that love doesn't stop with the person that has left us. Love continues to live within us.

It changed my perspective on life in general. I said anger is gone about the ones I lost but there is a residual of that feeling when I see people fuss over little things. I'm still working on that! I guess it's so much easier to complain about things than facing them. Losing half my family made me over sensitive about certain things, and I have to be gentle and understanding to myself and others as I don't know what they may be going through.

Honouring is very important to me, there is nothing easier because it can be little or big, involving just me or other people, and I can do it as many times as I want. It can be as simple as just remembering or thinking of them for just a second. Here are some examples of what I do.

My sister:

- She told me before she died to say "Hi" every time I saw the moon or pink clouds. Now my kids, husband, niece, nephew and some of my aunts and uncles do it too.
- Every time I see 22 like on a clock or license plate, because it's her birthday.
- I took a picture of a "Happy Birthday Sister" and kept it as a wallpaper on my phone for a few days.
- A card she sent me that I found and she wrote beside her signature "Smile, the world is strange!". It sounds much better in French! So I say it when things are a bit odd.
- She was the one that could give me a good belly laugh. So when I have that type of laugh I think of her.
- As I mentioned, I'm originally from Québec and sometimes I miss joking around in French so we had an understanding that I would call and just say bad words to each other. Well I cannot call her but sometimes I say a bad word out loud as if she were listening.

My dad:

- He was a great listener so sometimes I talk to him as if he was besides me to help me sort through things. I usually do that when I'm alone. People would think I'm crazy!
- He was also a good teacher. Usually words of wisdom that he used to say comes to mind or is said by someone else when I need it. I was once at a concert that I was determined to hear even though I was late. The last song was an Italian song titled "Life is beautiful". Those were the last coherent words my dad said to me. I remember as if it were yesterday. It was a beautiful spring day and I was visiting him at the long term care facility. He had Alzheimer, was stuck in a bed because he forgot how to walk, had everything done for him because he did not remember how to take care of himself. Yet, with a smile and a twinkle in his eyes he said to me "La vie est belle!" As if he was trying to teach his last words of wisdom while he could.

~ Continued on page 7 ~



Thank you to Memory Tree of Light Volunteers:

Memory Tree of Light Volunteers: Elizabeth Hempen, Carole Danard, Pat McMillan and elves, Brenda Eng, Iolanda Rilli, Amy Bauer, Sean McCloskey, Dakota Goguen, Colby Goguen, Teri Hardy and Sean, Ghislaine Boulianne, Vaselle Covelli, Alan Hardwick and Joanne Jonovich our emcee

Special Thanks To: Pickering College for allowing us to use their facility & our wonderful guest speaker Anne Marie Theberge, Thompson Funeral Home, Chouinard Bros. Roofing,



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

Cheers for our volunteers: 1:1 initial meetings: Gwen Broadmore, Ken Bone, Mary Pataki **Co-Facilitators:** Peter Wong, Gwen Broadmore, John Wild, Ann-Marie Theberge, Ken Bone, Nancy Guan, Bill Tassie, Deborah Rotta-Loria, Ghislaine Bouliane, Mary Pataki, Fionagh Halwig **PAC Members:** Bev Ogus, Sean McCloskey, Goldi Barack
Board Members: Cathy Chouinard, Jodi Munroe, Joanne Jonovich, Wes Playter, Teri Hardy, Phil Shessel, Nancy Dal Cin, Sun Drews
Bingo: Kathleen, Carlene, Diana, Gordon, Rena, Gail and Sarah

VOLUNTEER??

I would like to help people who are grieving or help a great organization that helps people. Why don't I volunteer for BEREAVED FAMILIES OF YORK REGION!?

JANUARY

Paul Ashton
Feb 2, 1976 – Jan 4, 1993
Beloved son of Penny and Bill



Jan 19,



Justin Baker
1995-
Jan 20,
2015
Mom,

Beloved by
Tyler, Dad
And

Kaitlyn
Jan 17,
2009
Beloved
chelle &

I grieved the death of a loved one over 2 years ago. I would like to and am ready to help others. Help with 1 on 1's, support sessions and groups.

I would like to help by being on the Board of Directors, help plan the Purse Auction & Jewellery Party, help plan the Golf Tournament or help with marketing.

Cheryl

Rose Bishop
2009 – Jan 17,

daughter of Mi-
Chris

Ryan
Robert
Jul 3,
– Jan 23,
Beloved
Debbie

Chad

1) Go to website (bfo-yorkregion.com) and print a Volunteer Application, then fill it out.
2) Send in application to the office at 17070 Yonge St, Suite 203, Newmarket, ON L3Y 8Z4
3) Call the office at 905-898-6265 to set up a meeting.
4) If helping support bereaved individuals, then sign up for Facilitator Training for March/April 2017.

John
Bone
1981
2010
son of

Ash-

Continued from page 3... *Missing You: Memory Tree Speech by Anne-Marie Theberge*

And even my brother:

My mom found a letter he sent us in 1984 from Vancouver. Reading it made me understand better who he was and just the words he used made me realize that we were not so different. I think we would have got along very well. He shared a poem that he composed and mentioned that he tried to live by it but found it difficult. It sounds better in French but I did my best to translate it.

Seeing is the essence of having.
Giving is the essence of receiving.
The best of attitude,
Is the perception of goodness.
And goodness,
Is the essence of happiness.



Here is my brother's letter that I framed. Tonight I am wearing the earrings my sister gave me and my dad's sweater. I happened to be wearing this sweater when I heard the Italian song at the concert. I use those to remember them but at the end they are only things. The process of losing someone never reaches its destination. My relationship with each of the ones I lost has not ended, it has only changed. And it's up to me to decide how that relationship evolves.

As I said at the beginning, there is so much to say but it is hard to describe what the heart feels when love is lost, when love is found again, and everything in between.

My heart is with you.
Anne-Marie Théberge

Dates To Remember Calendar



WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2017: PURSE Auction & Jewellery Party

When: Wednesday, May 10, 2017

Where: Newmarket Community Centre—200 Doug Duncan Drive, Newmarket, On

Time: 6:30pm-9:30pm

Please call the office for more details or check out our website.

905-898-6265 or 1-800-969-6904—bfo-yorkregion.com

SPRING 2017**CALL FOR SPRING BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP NOW, as individuals who have called us first are given the first right of refusal**

Journey Through Grief: Support Session Series 2017(6:30PM-8:30PM)

Thursday, February 9: SPECIAL OCCASIONS: HOW TO COPE?

Thursday, February 16: HOW DOES GRIEF IMPACT YOU

Thursday, February 23: HOW TO WORK THROUGH YOUR GRIEF

Thursday, March 2: TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF & PRACTICAL DAY TO DAY STRATEGIES

Thursday, March 9: HOW TO GET THE SUPPORT YOU NEED

Thursday, March 16: HONOURING & REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES

Thursday, March 23: GRIEF AFTER THE 1ST YEAR

Thursday, March 30: OPEN DISCUSSION

Please call the office to RSVP for each date. These are for adults only and you may bring a support person with you. All dates are at our Newmarket office.



FEBRUARY 12-18, 2017 RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS WEEK

This year, find a person you know who is grieving the loss of a loved one and do a random act of kindness for them. It can be a secret or you can let them know. Either way, it will be appreciated!

Bereaved Families of Ontario—York Region respects your privacy. We protect your personal information and adhere to all legal requirements with respect to protecting your privacy. We do not rent, sell or trade our mailing lists or other personal information. We use your personal information to assist us in providing you with appropriate services, and to keep you up-to-date on the activities of BFOYR, including programs, services, special events, funding needs, opportunities to volunteer.

If at any time you wish to be removed from any of these contacts, please advise us by telephone at 905-898-6265 or via e-mail at bfoyr_program@bellnet.ca and we will gladly accommodate your request.

In The Community:

Part of BFOYR's mandate is to provide public education about bereavement issues, and to sensitize the community to the needs of the bereaved. Staff and volunteers are available for presentations and workshops for adults, children and teens on a variety of topics.

BEREAVED FAMILIES OF ONTARIO, YORK REGION AN ASSOCIATION OF FAMILIES WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE THROUGH DEATH

Suite #203, 17070 Yonge St.

Newmarket ON L3Y 8Z4

Phone: 905-898-6265; toll free 1-800-969-6904

Fax: 905-898-5870

Executive Director, Mary Beatson: bfoyr@bellnet.ca

Bereavement Services Coordinator, Christine Goguen:

bfoyr_program@bellnet.ca

Website: bfo-yorkregion.com

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Evening appointments are available on request.

