



Bereaved Families of Ontario — Ottawa Region

The bereaved helping the bereaved learn to live with grief.

Inside this issue

Program Coordinator's Report.....	2
Donation and Volunteering	2

Continuing Bonds

Poems	3
-------------	---

Supportive articles

Experiences of Grief	4
----------------------------	---

BFO-OR Management Board	4
-------------------------------	---

Web Site	4
----------------	---

Upcoming Events

Support and Share Night	5
-------------------------------	---

Closed Support Groups	5
-----------------------------	---

Children drop in.....	5
-----------------------	---

Wish List	5
-----------------	---

Upcoming Fundraisers

Walk to Remember	5
------------------------	---

Diner and Entertainment with comedian Nancy White	5
--	---

Sponsorship	6
-------------------	---

Newsletter and Donations Form ..	6
----------------------------------	---

Bereavement Families of Ontario – Ottawa Region (BFO–OR) resources

Support and Share Monthly Nights
One-on-ones Support
Closed Groups
Handouts, Lending Library
Quarterly Newsletter
Facilitator Training
Educational Speakers

BFO-OR Charitable Donation
Number: 85343 2730 RR0001

Book Review: Journaling A Pathway Through Grief One Family's Journey After the Death of a Child

by Wendy Dean

Rachael Catherine Dean, only daughter of parents Wendy and Simon and only sister to Nicholas was killed at age 18 in a motor vehicle accident in May of 1993 not far from her home. Other passengers were also killed.

As a former psychiatric- mental health nurse, Wendy found that traditional and contemporary grief theory often did not resonate with her experience and left her feeling frustrated and at times, terrified. Thus, after Rachael's death, Wendy decided to share her "pilgrimage" of grief by publishing some of her actual journal entries, which she compares and contrasts through the lens of grief theory. It is her hope that this book will help other bereaved people who may not be able to journal or share their grief with others.

May 27, 1993: I got enraged and crazy this morning at the idea that all I have left of you are pictures and memories and already I am having trouble remembering your face—I can't BEAR to lose pictures of you in my head—so I'll need to tell "Rachel stories" to reassure me.

June 26, 1993: My soul feels so dark and despairing. I am so angry that our lives have been so shattered. I can't bear to hear about other normal families or normal events or normal anything.

July 27, 1993: I went into your room, lit the candle and turned on your light. I felt immensely calm and peaceful, that you were OK, very serene and happy.

October 8, 1993: The guilt is very bad today. I obsess that I must have been a terrible parent to somehow not have taught you the lessons.

December 10, 1993: Depression bad today. Price paid for going to social evening last night. Today feel like my insides have been excavated- hollow, stomach aching, sick. As could be predicted, I had to be the one last night to facilitate the conversation. I could tell that people felt afraid of me, didn't know what to say – therefore stupid silly conversation.

January 13, 1994: . . . I don't feel that I have the right to be happy again. How could a truly loving mother ever be happy if she survives her child? To have survived you, feels WRONG.

March 24, 1994: Have actually had a couple of days of relative peace. You are constantly on my mind but the pain seems less piercing. I am a little afraid of feeling better-before it has always been a prelude to feeling worse. We talked about that at the Bereavement Group last night-to accept it as a gift and enjoy it while it lasts.

Wendy's last journal is June 8, 1999. In her conclusion she brings the reader up to date with her work at Bereaved Families in Halton/Peel.

Note: Wendy Dean is currently the Executive Director of Bereaved Families in Halton/Peel area of Toronto.

Hilda Sabadash, Program Coordinator

Fundraising Event . . . Walk to Remember

Date: Saturday, September 27, 2003 (Rain or Shine!)

A Memorium Event . . . in the beautiful Arboretum: across from the Central Experimental Farm on Prince of Wales Drive. Come out with family, friends, neighbours, and colleagues.

See attached brochure with registration and pledge form!

Program Coordinator's Report

Support groups for the fall are as follows:

Children ages 4 to 6 who have had a family member die: Parents and children will meet for pizza and pop together and then parents will be together in a facilitated support group and children will be in another room with a child care specialist. Times to be confirmed.

Children ages 7 to 12 who have had a family member die: Children will meet at the Bronson Centre at 211 Bronson Avenue on Saturday's October 4 and 18 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for a drop in. Lunch will be included. If there are enough children, we will lengthen the time on the 18th.

Loss of Spouse Group: there are spaces available.

Loss of Parent Sibling Friend Group: spaces available.

Loss by Suicide: spaces available.

Loss of Child: spaces available.

Support and Share Night is the first Tuesday of each month. Program begins with a speaker followed by support groups for each loss. This program is open to the public and no pre-registration is required. Fee is by donation.

*Hilda Sabadash,
Program Coordinator*

Bronson Centre Theatre

The newly renovated site, seating 900, is available for all types of performances, seminars or other events requiring a comfortable, accommodating auditorium.

Contact the Bronson Centre at 237-5550 for further information. "Providing quality services and rental facilities to our Community".

Helping Yourself Heal

Realize your grief is unique. Don't compare your grief with anyone else's.

Allow yourself to express your grief, openly and often.

Expect to feel a multitude of emotions, as loss affects your head, heart, and spirit. The wide array of emotions may affect you over any period of time and even simultaneously.

Allow for numbness. This serves a valuable purpose; it gives your emotions time to catch up with what your mind has told you.

Be tolerant of your physical and emotional limits, as loss may leave you fatigued.

Develop a support system. Find those people who encourage you to be yourself and acknowledge your feelings, both happy and sad.

Embrace your spirituality. Talk with those who won't be critical of your feelings of hurt and abandonment.

Donation and Volunteering

We wish to take a moment to recognize all those who are known or unknown to us as they have donated specifically to BFO-OR through the United Way. These funds can be used for non-specified projects as in the running of the office and offering ongoing support to the public.

During the holiday season shoppers at Zellers stores across the country donated \$1.00 in exchange for a themed gift box. Across Canada over \$960,000 dollars was raised for charity. Locally Zellers at the Gloucester Centre donated \$12,000 to 6 different charities, and BFO received \$1,000.00. Be sure to thank the store management when shopping at Zellers, Gloucester Centre.

Sandra Dietrich is our new volunteer librarian and is doing an excellent job.

Since we have many books that have not been returned for years, such as 6 books called "Empty Arms" by Sherokee Ilse, Sandra will be calling people whose returns are considered outstanding according to our files. This is a difficult job. It may be surface a connection to your loss. This is not our intention.

Please consider a donation to cover the cost of the book or video if you remember not being able to return the book(s), due to lending to others for support, or just getting lost. Thank you for your cooperation.

Thank you to everyone donating children's toys and books, and also to the three people who had a microwave to donate—just goes to show you that the wish list works (see page 5).

We did have a shredder but due to wear and tear is no longer serviceable. If anyone has an extra shredder, that would be most welcome.

Hilda Sabadash, Program Coordinator

Allow a search for meaning. Healing occurs in the opportunity to pose the questions, not necessarily in answering them.

Most importantly, treasure your memories. Memories are one of the best legacies that exist after someone leaves. Recognize that your memories make you laugh and cry. In either case, they are a lasting part of the relationship that you had with every special person in your life.

Move toward and embrace your grief. Recognize that the loss of someone you love changes your life forever.

The experience of grief is powerful. So, too, is your ability to help yourself heal. In doing the work of grieving, you are moving toward a renewed sense of meaning and purpose in your life.

The importance of this message is worth repeating, and restating in different ways, to help you heal

Continuing Bonds . . . Featuring stories, poems, or ideas from readers about how they include their loved ones in holidays or special events, how they observe anniversaries, or whatever they do to keep their loved ones alive in their hearts.

Diversions

I put on some clothes and make-up,
painted a smile on my face,
and walked out into my strange new world.
Friends said, "You are doing so well"
And I though, "Diversions"
and held back my tears of grief.

I busied myself with work,
survival and maintenance – having to learn
new skills that I have no interest in,
and trying to find people to trust
with the jobs I can't begin to handle

Friends said, "You are doing so well"
And I though, "Diversions"
and held back my tears of frustration.

I tried new activities,
met new people, even went on some outings
to try and fill in the voids.
Friends though, "What a great life she's
leading — she can do whatever she wants"

And I wanted to say, "Diversions –
if only I could share some of this with him . . ."
and fought back the tears of loneliness, once again.

Beth Hebbell

Remember always
even in dark moments,
that the grief journey is a journey of hope.
The dark times are not destinations;
they are places you move through on your way.
And the way is designed to take you to a good place,
a place where you have not yet been.
In time you will be grateful for the journey.

Gone

I am no hole
one part is gone
It burns inside like an annoying pest
nothing seems to be the best
I don't think it will until I rest

*by Michael Loch,
13 years old*

Michael's Dad, Dan, dies in February of 2001. This poem was submitted by Michaels' grandmother, BFO-Toronto Parental Facilitator, Florence Dale.

Rest

Are you very weary? Rest a little bit.
In some quiet corner, fold your hands and sit.
Do not let the trials that have grieved you all the day
Haunt this quiet corner; drive them all away!
Let your heart grow empty of every though unkind
That peace may hover round you, and joy may fill your mind.
Count up all your blessing, I'm sure they are not few,
Soon you'll feel so rested, glad you stopped a bit,
In this quiet corner, to fold your hands and sit.

Death of a loved one
and the end of caregiving
mark a transition in life,
both an ending and a beginning.
Moving on involves coping with pain and grief,
reestablishing priorities, and
refocusing on what truly matters.

". . . once you are Real you can't become unreal again.
It lasts for always."

*from The Velveteen Rabbit
by Margery Williams*

Poetry is not written to be analyzed; it is meant to inspire without reason, to touch without understanding.

The Newsletter is seeking your contributions. It is a voice for the bereaved. Please share your thoughts, ideas, and requests. Recommend a book and write what you like about it. Share your story, submit a poem, or tell of things that help you. *Thank you!*

Supportive articles . . . how we feel, what we are experiencing, and other challenges we face are very difficult to place into words. Poems, books, articles, and stories are a good supportive source to turn to where you will find that “you are not alone”.

from BFO-OR supporting handouts . . .

Experiences of Grief

Grief is a normal and natural reaction to the death of a loved one. Most of us are not prepared for the long journey of grief, which is sometimes devastating, frightening, and often lonely. We may think, do, and say things that are unlike us. There seems to be no respite, no end to the intense feelings that we experience.

Grief has been likened to a raw open wound. With great care it eventually will heal but there will always be a scar. Life will never be the same but eventually you will get better.

The experiences of grief have been compared to enduring a fierce storm at sea. The waves are peaked and close together. Eventually the sea becomes calmer, but occasionally the storm regroups, strengthening without warning. For several hours, day, OR weeks, you may not feel grief; then suddenly you meet someone, or see something, or hear something, and grief resumes. It seems as if you are taking one step forward and two back.

Grief has its common and unique sides. Although it is a universal experience, no two people grieve the same, even in the same family. Like a snowflake or a fingerprint, each person's grief has characteristics all its own.

It is important to understand some of the following concepts about grief:

GRIEF WORK: The expression "grief work" is very true. It may be the hardest work that you will ever perform. It is draining.

CONTROL: We CANNOT control the feelings that arise within us. These feelings come from deep inside, but we can choose what to do with them. We can accept or reject them. To deny only prolongs our grief. Remember, what we do determines whether we remain in our grief or survive. Feeling are not bad or wrong. They should be recognized and faced honestly.

BFO-OR support:

Bereavement handouts: The above article is only one of a great variety of supportive articles offered at our monthly Support and Share Night. See page 5 for locations and dates to our upcoming monthly Support and Share Night.

CHOICES: About grief, there are no choices, you MUST go through it. The expression of grief is essential for good emotional and physical health even though it is painful and difficult. There are no easy answers or short cuts, no way under, over, or around your grief. Although grief may hurt desperately, you must get through it.

MAJOR DECISIONS: It is strongly suggested not to make major decisions (such as moving, money matters, etc.) unless absolutely necessary during the early stages of grief when judgement is cloudy. The conversational wisdom, "Never act in haste" was never more applicable.

LISTENER(S): Find someone who will listen. Talking is therapy.

GRIEF HAS NO TIMETABLE: Grief often takes much longer than the bereaved or people in their lives expect. It helps to take one hour, one day at a time.

REMEMBER: People have a natural inclination to recover. Eventually you'll look back and realize; you weren't going crazy . . . you were grieving.

BE PATIENT WITH YOURSELF. RECOVERING FROM GRIEF TAKES TIME.

It is important to understand the various experiences of grief. Everyone does not necessarily go through every experience, nor do they go through them in any set order. Each person has his or her own timetable and his or her own style of grief. You may struggle with several feelings at the same time. The depth and duration of each experience is different for everyone. You may experience a feeling briefly, intermittently or struggle with it daily. Understanding the various phases helps you to cope. Knowing that others have gone through this pain and have eventually been able to reinvest themselves in life gives one a sense of HOPE.

BFO-OR supports include: Telephone support; monthly Support and Nights meetings; One on One discussion; closed Support Groups; Public Education; Lending Library; Newsletter; and more. Contact Hilda Sabadash at 567-4278 for further information.

Check us out—web site!	BFO-OR Management Board*	
Managed by Stephen Beneteau. Enables access to the newsletters as well as support information, up to the minute announcements, and valuable links. www.bfo-ottawa.org	Martha Attridge Bufton (Staff) .. 989-1010 Gail Christy (PAC) 733-5227 Mark Steele 567-4278 Kerri-Lynn Herbert 567-4278	Hilda Sabadash (Staff) 567-4278 Sue Fisher (Book-keeper) 567-4278 Tim Sen (work)..... 564-8585 Linda Lizotte-MacPherson 327-2238

* Positions available for BFO-OR Management Board. Contact Hilda Sabadash for further information.

Upcoming Events . . . BFO-OR offers a wide array of support, information, and in remembrance events, supporting all losses. Take a close look; we have much to offer. If you do not find what you are looking for, give us a call at (613) 567-4278.

Support and Share Night (SSN)

Dates: First Tuesday of each month
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Location: St. Timothy's Presbyterian Church,
2400 Alta Vista Drive, Ottawa
(downstairs hall)

Oct. 7 — to be announced

Nov. 4 — to be announced

Dec. 2 — Candle Light ceremony

Dec. 7 — Remembrance Tree ceremony

Closed Support Groups

Closed Support Groups are scheduled for this fall.

If you have not been contacted yet, and wish to be included contact Hilda at 567-4278.

- Children ages 4 to 6 who have had a family member die: Parents and children will meet for pizza and pop together and then parents will be together in a facilitated support group and children will be in another room with a child care specialist. Times to be confirmed.
- Children ages 7 to 12 who have had a family member die: Children will meet at the Bronson Centre at 211 Bronson Avenue on Saturday's October 4 and 18 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for a drop in. Lunch will be included. If there are enough children, we will lengthen the time on the 18th.
- Loss of Spouse Group: there are spaces available.
- Loss of Parent Sibling Friend Group: spaces available.
- Loss by Suicide: spaces available.
- Loss of Child: spaces available.

BFO-OR wish list:

- Hearing device including ear phones and receiver from Canadian Hearing society with a cost of anywhere from \$600 to \$1000
- Board members
- Fundraisers
- Marketing position for volunteer
- Paper shredder for office use
- Poems, stories, letters submission for newsletter
- Children's toys and drawing supplies for closed groups and workshops

In Memorium Event

Walk to Remember September 27, Arboretum, Prince of Wales Drive, East of the traffic circle. Once in the arboretum, turn left and you will see us by the white buildings. Time 10:00 a.m. until noon. Ending with hotdogs for lunch. Prizes drawn.

A time for healing and remembrance. Bring pictures of your loved one(s) if you wish and walk alone or with supportive friends while remembering their connections to you and yours. Event for all ages.

Donations help BFO-OR maintain their programs.

See attached brochure, registration and pledge form.

Fundraising Event

Diner, Auction . . . and Live Entertainment

With Canada's funniest singer-songwriter:

Nancy White ! ! !

Bring your friends and join Jim Watson and Kevin Nelson for dinner and an evening of great entertainment with Canada's funniest singer-songwriter Nancy White.

Coming: February 2004

Check our web site for finalized date
www.bfo-ottawa.org

Where: The Hellenic Centre
1315 Prince of Whales Dr.
Ottawa, Ontario

Time: Silent Auction 6:00 p.m.
Dinner served at 7:00 p.m.

Diner: \$75 person (tax receipt for % of cost)
\$850 corporate table

A great Christmas present!

Tickets can be purchased at:

- Mother Tongue Books
- Ottawa Folklore Centre
- Compact CDs
- Bereaved Families of Ontario – Ottawa Region

Please forward registration fees to:

Bereaved Families of Ontario – Ottawa Region
Charitable Donation Number 85343 2730 RR0001

Sponsorship

Many wonderful individuals and corporations have helped Bereaved Families in our community by supporting the programs of Bereaved Families of Ontario—Ottawa Region.

In order to respect the privacy of our individual donors, we will not list any here. However, we want you to know that your contributions are important to the families that you help.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the corporations; foundations and other charitable organizations that have also helped us help the healing begin.

*Martha Attridge Bufton,
Development Coordinator*

Bumbles & Blossoms Inc.

1500 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario
(613) 736-6636

New and Consigned Fashions: baby, kids, and maternal

Crab Tree Foundation

Ottawa, Ontario

Health Grants Program

The City of Ottawa, People Services Department
Ottawa, Ontario

Hulse Playfair & McGarry

315 McLeod, Ottawa, Ontario
(613) 233-1143
www.mcgarryfamily.ca

Lundy M P Construction (Ontario) Limited

375 Metcalfe, Ottawa, Ontario
(613) 233-8484
www.mplundy.com

Hope Cemetery

4660 Bank Street, Gloucester, Ontario
(613) 822-1212

Mail Boxes ETC

1769 St. Laurent Blvd. & Innes Rd.
(613) 526-4898
MBE112@travel-net.com

Notre Dame Cemetery Ottawa

455 Montreal Rd., Ottawa, Ontario
(613) 746-4175

Province of Ontario

Ministry of Community, Family and Children Services
Early Years Challenge Fund

Zellers, Friends of the Family

Gloucester Centre
Gloucester, Ontario

Newsletter and Donations

Please take a moment to revise your information with the selections listed below.*

Mail this slip, with your donation, to Bereaved Families of Ontario—Ottawa Region 308-211 Bronson Ave., Ottawa, ON K1R 6H5

To reduce overhead cost to BFO—OR, please add my name to the electronic mail-out listing.

My e-mail address is: _____

I would like to continue receiving a mailing of the BFO-OR Newsletter through regular postal service.

I would like to make a donation in the amount of:

\$15.00 ____ \$25.00 ____ \$50.00 ____ \$100.00 ____ Other _____.

BFO-OR Charitable Donation Number: 85343 2730 RR0001. Donations over \$15.00 will receive a Charitable Donation Receipt.

Name

Mailing Address

City

Postal code

* Names are removed from mailing list following a period of 3 years of inactivity.