



Bereaved Families of Ontario — Ottawa Region

The bereaved helping the bereaved learn to live with grief.

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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
Web Site
Facilitator Training
Educational Speakers

BFO-OR Charitable Donation
Number: [85343 2730 RR0001](https://www.bfo-or.org/donations)

Managing Grief at Christmas

Ideas for coping with Christmas

Christmas may mean family and traditions, and everybody being together. Often, these gatherings remind us of our loved ones who are no longer with us. It may be a difficult time and everyone reacts differently. It may be that people react more sensitively to things. Everyone has their own way of coping. It is important that you look after yourself and have your way of getting through these difficult times.

Here are some ideas that may help you better manage the Christmas holidays.

Allow yourself to be sad – Christmas may have been a time you spent with someone dear to you. It is normal to feel sad that they are not with you. It may help to take some time out, to remember the person you love. You may want to:

- Find ways to incorporate memories of your loved ones into the holiday traditions.
- Start a new tradition.
- Do something that you used to do together.
- Write a letter to the person.
- Revisit that favourite spot you had.
- Share some of the memories.

It is OK to enjoy yourself – It may be difficult to celebrate when you are missing someone you love. It is not uncommon to have different feelings such as sadness, guilt or excitement. Getting together with family and close friends may be a chance to remember the good times and it is OK to relax and have a laugh. Having fun is not necessarily a sign that you miss that person any less.

Look after yourself – Remembering that this may be a tough time for you is important. This may mean that you have to treat yourself with a bit of care. If possible, treat yourself to something you enjoy doing. It may be that you:

- Relax at home with a book.
- Take time out for a nap.
- Go for a walk.
- Listen to music.
- Go shopping.
- Have a massage.
- Visit friends.
- Make an effort to eat two balanced meals a day.
- Be flexible, leave yourself open for changes and have tentative plans.

Talk to someone – Having someone you trust to talk to about how you are feeling may be helpful. This may be a family member, friend or youth worker. If you are finding it hard to cope with day-to-day items then it may help to talk to a counsellor or your doctor.

Avoid holding your feelings in – Grieving is a normal and healthy step in dealing with loss. Keeping things to yourself may mean that the tension builds up inside you. Finding a way to get out what you are feeling may help you to feel better. You may like to:

- Talk to someone.
- Write down your thoughts, draw.
- Cry or punch some pillows.
- Let yourself feel the pain.

Grieving does hurt. We just need to allow ourselves to express the various feelings. It does get better.

Doris Rose Audet

Program Coordinator's Report

I would like to welcome our new Social Work Student Georgina Ing. Georgina is doing her practicum with us until April of 2003. When Georgina Ing's husband died, she received support from Bereaved Families in Ottawa and became well fitted to offer support to others.

The office becomes busy this time of year and I would like to thank all the volunteers who have phoned to offer help in the office and those willing to help with the planning of the special events. Shirley Warren and Bill Drake are facilitating a closed spousal group. A group for Loss by Suicide will begin in the new year along with a Loss of Parent Sibling Friend group in the early spring. Children's groups will also be run if the numbers warrant a group. A Loss of Child support group will also be run. Please leave your name after the holidays and I will get back to you.

Doris Audet, Susan McKale, Lynn Wilson, Frankie Baird all took time off work to help on November 7 and 8 workshop on Children and Grief. June Wilson helped with the office materials. We have had all positive feedback concerning the workshop. The Bea Wickett Fund volunteers, Dr. Gene Shershen, Dr. Pol Zutterman, Dr. Robert Flewelling and Dr. Nishat Ali Kahn were a great team to work with. The financial benefit has not been calculated as yet but it definitely will be positive.

On behalf of all the staff, facilitators and volunteers working for BFO, I wish you peace at this holiday time. With all the decorations and music and advertising that comes into our homes and into our everyday environment, it is difficult not to be reminded again and again of the difference we feel this year from other happier years when we shared our season with the person or persons we loved. It is important not to get so busy that we forget to take time for extra rest during the day. We need to eat comfort food that seems everywhere, and stay alert while driving. If driving long distances, frequent stops, at least once every hour, are a must.

I hope you take part in the 2 ceremonies we provide: December 3, the Candle Lighting Ceremony at 7 p.m. in the lower Hall at St. Timothy's Presbyterian Church, 2400 Alta Vista Drive and the Remembrance Tree Ceremony on December 8 at 2 p.m. in the Chambers of the City Hall at 111 Lisgar. See pamphlet enclosed.

The office will be closed from December 24 to January 2 inclusive.

*Hilda Sabadash,
Program Coordinator*

Developing BFO-OR

BFO-OR Gets Recognition

On November 8, 2002, our own Bereaved Families of Ontario—Ottawa Region received a plaque and a \$500 award from the Bea Wickett Foundation for its contribution to mental health in Ontario, primarily with respect to bereavement support and education for children.

Board member Gail Christy accepted the award on behalf of BFO-OR. In her acceptance speech, Gail spoke about the extensive resources of BFO and how widely they are used. In particular, she reminded the audience of the dedicated, hard-working staff—Hilda Sabadash, Martha Attridge Buffton and Jan Casselman. Because of their efforts and those of our volunteers, BFO is planning a combined parent-children support group pilot project, to assist those who have been bereaved.

In closing, Gail acknowledged the legacy of Dr. Bea Wickett, who attended the award presentation. The Bea Wickett Foundation was established by her friends upon Dr. Wickett's retirement as Chief Psychologist at the Ottawa Board of Education.

*Submitted by Gail Christy, Chair
Professional Advisory Committee
Board Member*

Recognizing Excellence

Over 30 volunteers and supporters attended the second annual BFO Recognition Tea on Tuesday, October 29, 2002. This is an important event – it is our opportunity to publicly thank all those folks whose time and talent make BFO such a wonderful organization.

Special guests of honour included Stephanie Burgetz and Stephen Beneteau, our volunteers of the year, Sharon McGarry of Hulse, Playfair and McGarry, our Corporate Friend of the Year and Christina Ullett, out-going Treasurer. It was also a pleasure to welcome BFO's Honourary Patron, Claudette Cain, who had the chance to meet some of our volunteers for the first time. "BFO helps families and children," said Claudette, "and I am happy to be able to help too."

Over 30 active volunteers and 250 donors make an enormous contribution to our bereavement programs every year. This level of excellence in community service ensures that families can get the help that they need, free of charge. Many thanks to all of you who give so generously—it does make a difference!

*Many Thanks,
Martha Attridge Buffton, Development Coordinator*

(continues on page 4)

Continuing Bonds . . . Featuring stories 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.

Realizing How Much We Care

A friend of mine was telling me recently of a sudden health crisis her sister had, and how this crisis made them realize how important their relationship as siblings continues to be. Like most of us, as we grow up and have families, jobs, lives of our own, we move gradually away from our family of origin. We keep in touch, but don't really know how deep that connection with our sibling is. Perhaps our lifestyles are different, perhaps distance separates us, perhaps we don't get a chance to be together alone, any more.

Then along comes life and throws us a curve ball. Two years before my brother died, he had a heart attack. To my surprise, I was thrown into emotional turmoil. The love we had shared as children became very evident, long dormant in expression; however, still very real. I felt panicked that he might die and I began to see clearly what he meant to me. For the next two years, I made a conscious decision to show him I still cared deeply and took time to keep in touch, and really get to know him again. We renewed our relationship as adults. I finally realized the importance he held in my life.

Two years later, Dad found my brother dead from a heart attack. I often am thankful that I had that wake up call two years earlier. One never knows what tomorrow may bring. Perhaps we never truly realize how much we care for one another until we can see clearly that there is a threat of losing them. At that moment, our feelings surface without our control and often to our surprise.

Take a moment to re-evaluate the important relationships in your life. How can you make time to reconnect? The time will be well worth it and give you comfort, when the unexpected occurs.

by Frankie Baird

Grief and the Holidays

From: Marie

With the winter holidays approaching, and Thanksgiving already past, I wanted to share one thing that made a big difference for me last year in coping with Christmas.

At the suggestion of our art therapist, we made ornaments using photos and photocopies of photos with Don (my deceased husband) in them. We used some that were just him, some with one or another of us and him, and a family picture. We got out ribbon, glitter, sequins, glue and I don't remember what else – your basic collage materials and went to town. It was very therapeutic – it brought Don into our Christmas. We hung some of the ornaments on the tree, we gave some to other family members including his mother, and we used some for decorations around the house.

It was very simple, yet very meaningful. Before that, I hadn't found a way to incorporate him into our celebrations.

Wishing you all the best of holiday celebrations!

Weekend Blues

The best way I know of coping with change and stress is to plan ahead. When you know a stressful event is coming up, think about how to defuse it.

After Martin died, I dreaded weekends and holidays. Sunday became the dreariest day in the week. Sunday was the day I would wake up in the morning and miss Martin the most bitterly. Sunday was the day the telephone never rang. Sunday was the day the children fought with each other and whined until I was ready to climb the wall. Saturday was bad, but Sunday was hell. Sunday was the day everyone else, husbands and wives, lovers and friends, spend together in lazy compatible pleasures.

It was some time before I realized how stressful weekends actually were. It was a measure of how much I feared weekends. I had once believed that my deep loneliness was unique. But now I know that it is not. I have met too many other women who suffer from "the Sunday blues".

And so I made plans. I told myself that weekends offered me time to do the things I enjoyed. I exercised, called friends to do things with, and did things for myself.

*excerpt from: Lifelines
by Lynne Caine*



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. http://www.bfo-ottawa.org	Martha Attridge Bufton (Staff) .. 989-1010 Christine Durocher 825-9343 Gail Christy (PAC) 733-5227 Mark Steele 567-4278 Kerri-Lynn Herbert 567-4278	Barbra Hills-Labonté 738-9128 Hilda Sabadash (Staff) 567-4278 June Wilson (Book-keeper) 567-4278 Tim Sen (work)..... 564-8585

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

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”.

The Elephant In the Room

There's an elephant in the room.
It is large and squatting, so it is
hard to get around it.
Yet we squeeze by with, “How are you?”
And, “I'm fine” . . .
And a thousand other forms of trivial
chatter.
We talk about the weather.
We talk about work.
We talk about everything else—
except the elephant in the room.

There's an elephant in the room.
We all know it is there.
We are thinking about the elephant
as we talk together.
It is constantly on our minds.

For, you see, it is a very big elephant.
It has hurt us all.
But we do not talk about the elephant
in the room.
Oh, please say her name.
Oh, please, say “Barbara” again.

Oh, please, let's talk about the elephant
in the room.
For if we talk about her death,
Perhaps we can talk about her life?
Can I say “Barbara” to you and not have
you look away?
For if I cannot, then you are leaving me
Alone . . .
In a room . . .
With an elephant.

by Terry Kettering

Grief Therapy *(in BFO's library)*

- ... Respect the power of grief.
Know that it can affect you
psychologically, physically, and
spiritually in intense and
sometimes surprising ways.
Stay gentle with yourself.
- ... Sometimes the best thing to do is to
comfort yourself with small
pleasures: a cup of tea, freshly cut
flowers, a soothing bath, moments
by the fire.
- ... Your grieving is among the most
sacred and the most human things
you will ever do. It will plummet
you into the mystery of life . . . and
death . . . and resurrection. Honor it.

by Karen Katafiasz

Developing BFO-OR (continued)

Management Board News

The Board of BFO would like to thank Lori Parsons and Christina Ullett for their many volunteer years as Board Members.

Although they have said they will continue to support BFO projects, their contributing hours will be missed at the Board level. We wish them well in the future.

Hilda Sabadash

Making a Difference Forever

At a time of loss, consider a memorial in the name of a loved one. You may also want to consider making a bequest to BFO in your will or naming BFO as the beneficiary of your life insurance or retirement plan. Through your will you may leave a specific monetary gift or asset, a percentage of your estate, or the residual after gifts to family or friends.

This is a significant way to honour a beloved family member or friend. Making a bequest ensures that your gift is made once your lifetime needs and other obligations have been met.

Martha Attridge Bufton

A Walk To Remember

Our fourth “**Walk to Remember**” this fall was on a beautiful day! On the morning of Saturday, September 28th, participants gathered in the Arboretum of the Experimental Farm to walk in remembrance.

Many brought pictures of their loved one(s) and walked alone, with other participants, or with supportive friends and family while remembering their connections.

A heartfelt thanks to all those who walked and pledged their support, donated prizes, made us feel so very welcome and worked behind the scene.

Doris Rose Audet



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)

December 3 — Candle Lighting Ceremony

A candle lighting service will be held on December 3rd as part of Support and Share Night. Marie Tilk will be the speaker.

January 7, 2003 — Christine Jannash, MSW RWS

SSN's also on: February 4th; March 4th; and April 1st.

Closed Support Groups

Closed Support Groups are scheduled for this spring. If you have not been contacted yet, and wish to be included contact Hilda at 567-4278.

Remembrance Tree

Celebration of Remembrance

Date: **Sunday December 8th, 2002**

Location: City Hall, 111 Lisgar Street
Chambers Room

Time: 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Contact: Hilda Sabadash

Telephone: (613) 567-4278

Tree Sitting in the City Hall Foyer

Dates: **December 6th and 7th, 2002**

Time: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and

Date: **December 8th, 2002**

Time: 12 noon to 2 p.m.

Parking on the street or underground (with a fee).

BFO thanks Hulse Playfair & McGarry for their sponsorship.

A time for healing and remembrance.

See attached brochure.

New Pilot Project

A new pilot family group will be offered jointly by BFO and Catholic Family Services next spring. This is an exciting initiative that will allow grieving parents and children to attend groups on the same evening, in the same location. We hope that this opportunity will make it more convenient and easier for families to get the help they need after the loss of a loved one.

This group would not be possible without the support of the Community Foundation of Ottawa, the Gloucester and Nepean Professional Firefighters Benevolent Fund and the Royal Bank of Canada. Thank you for making this possible.

Upcoming Fundraisers

Golf Tournament – Dinner & Auction
Friday May 30th, 2003

Walk to Remember
September 27th, 2003

Fundraising Event

Good News!

If you thought you missed it, you didn't.

We just found a better date for our Claudette Cain Roast.

A toast to our new Honourary Patron
Former Mayor of Gloucester Claudette Cain



Date: **Wednesday, February 26, 2003**

Location: Hellenic Banquet Centre
1315 Prince of Wales Drive

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Tickets (limited): \$95 each

Corporate Tables of 8: \$1000 — includes souvenir
program & signage at your table

Please mail your cheque payable to:

The Claudette Cain Roast

56 Houlahan Street, Nepean, Ontario K2J 3Y6

email: dack10@sympatico.ca

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*

<p>Hulse Playfair & McGarry</p> <p>315 McLeod, Ottawa, Ontario (613) 233-1143 www.hpmc.ca</p>	<p>Brophy Financial Planning & Insurance Agency</p> <p>99 Holland Ave. Suite 106, Ottawa, Ontario (613) 728-9573 www.brophyfinancial.com</p>
<p>Bumbles & Blossoms Inc.</p> <p>1500 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario (613) 736-6636 New and Consigned Fashions: baby, kids, and maternal.</p>	<p>Lundy M P Construction (Ontario) Limited</p> <p>375 Metcalfe, Ottawa, Ontario (613) 233-8484 www.mplundy.com</p>
<p>Mail Boxes ETC</p> <p>1769 St. Laurent Blvd. & Innes Rd. (613) 526-4898 MBE112@travel-net.com</p>	<p>Hope Cemetery</p> <p>4660 Bank Street, Gloucester, Ontario (613) 822-1212</p>
<p>Notre Dame Cemetery Ottawa</p> <p>455 Montreal Rd., Ottawa, Ontario (613) 746-4175</p>	<p>BFO-OR Wish List: Fax Machine</p> <p>If you have this item or other supplies you would like to donate, please call the office.</p>

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 remove my name from the mailing list.
I will be accessing your web site at: <http://www.bfo-ottawa.org>

I would like to continue receiving a mailing of the BFO-OR Newsletter.

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.