



SHARING PARENTS

PREGNANCY & INFANT LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

November 2017

Sharing Parents is a Sacramento based non-profit organization devoted to supporting parents who have experienced the loss of a baby from the time of conception through early infancy.

Our Purpose is to provide a safe environment where grieving parents with similar experiences can come together and share their feelings about the loss and the love of their babies. Our meetings are also a place where parents express the love they have for their baby in their compassion for others, where they can give and receive emotional support by sharing common experiences and learn about the natural grief process while working through and resolving their loss.

We Offer a variety of meetings and support services that are designed to help parents throughout the different stages of their grief. There is never a fee to attend our meetings.

Our Meeting Place

Sutter Roseville Medical Center
1 Medical Plaza Dr.
Roseville 95661
Medical Bldg. 1, 2nd floor

Our Mailing Address & Phone Number

Sharing Parents
P.O. Box 19538
Sacramento, CA 95819-0538
(916) 424-5150

Upcoming Grief Support Meetings

- November 12:** Navigating the Holidays
December 10: Finding Healing through Keepsakes
January 7: Stepping into a New Normal in the New Year

Milestones Meetings

November 19, and January 28

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*Time may bring more sophisticated coping strategies,
but the absence of the loved child lingers in the heart
of the parent and remains there for their entire lives.*

~Julie Siri, Journey Through Loss

Message from the Sharing Parents' President

2017 Sharing Parents' Volunteers

President

Kurt Seckington

Past President

OPEN

Vice President

Isabel Ginsberg

Secretary

Amy Andrew

Assistant Secretary

Isabel Ginsberg

Treasurer

Tom Andrew

Volunteer Coordinator

Rachel Libby

Navigating Grief Coordinator

Sharon Cox

Pregnancy Interruption Coordinator

Amy Andrew

Listening Line Coordinator

Sharon Cox

Listening Line Volunteers

Sharon Cox & Lynne Genzel

October Memorial Coordinator

Sara Seberger

October Memorial Committee

Amy Andrew, Tom Andrew,
Toni Brabec, Geoff Brabec,
Rebecca Enes

Community Outreach Coordinator

Nicola Fertuna

Community Outreach Team

Amy Andrew, Geoff Brabec,
Audrey Cataldo, Nicola Fertuna,
Lisa Herrington, & Kurt Seckington

Bunco/Event Coordinator

Audrey Cataldo & Lisa Herrington

March of Dimes Coordinator

Sara Seberger & Toni Brabec

Librarian

Sara Seberger

Newsletter Editor

Dorinda Gregory

Newsletter Assistant

OPEN

Webmaster

JB Cox

Facebook Administrator

Rachel Libby

General Volunteers:

Melissa Bailey, Shelley Catanyag
Amber Dixon, Tasauna Euwing,
Gavin Ferguson, Kourtney Flagg,
Daniel Gensler, Aaron Gregory,
Casey Lauder, & Jessica Reade

Dear Sharing Parents' Families,

Thank you to all the parents, family, and friends who were able to join us for our annual October Memorial last month. Every year I have attended the memorial, I am struck by all the ways in which it connects and supports our families. It is such a wonderful opportunity for us all to expand our community of support. I want to thank our wonderful parent speakers, Melissa and Kelly Bailey, Shannon and Sean McPhedran, and Casey and Steve Lauder, for openly, honestly, and compassionately sharing their stories with the group. I would also like to express my deepest appreciation to Sharing Parents' amazing volunteers for all of their hard work to make the event such a special place for us to collectively remember and honor our babies. I wish to extend a special thank you to Sara Seberger, this year's October Memorial Coordinator. Next year's memorial is already on the calendar for Sunday, October 14, 2018. If you have never attended the October Memorial, no matter how long it has been since your loss, I invite you to join us for this special event.

I would also like to thank all the parents who have attended support meetings or participated in our private Facebook support groups this year. I am grateful for you all for sharing your stories and your babies with us. Sharing Parents thrives thanks to parents willing to open their hearts to give and receive support throughout their grief journey.

Finally, as we head into the holiday season, we, as grieving parents, are often faced with a tremendous mixture of emotions. Whether this will be your first holiday without your baby, or whether your loss was years ago, I encourage you to be mindful and accepting of your emotions and to practice compassionate self-care throughout the season.

I wish you all a peaceful and gentle holiday season.

With gratitude,

Kurt



Remembering Our Babies With Love

Anniversaries, birthdays and holidays are difficult times for us. We remember with love....

Babies whose month of birth and anniversary of loss were not provided

Baby Adams
Baby Ahdan
Josiah Ridgeway Anderson
Babies Antolini
Baby Bailey
Baby Bansal
Baby Benevetis
Baby Boyle
Baby Brophy
Baby Camarena
Kaliyah Casto
James Robert Clarke
Babies Collier
Babies Diesslin
Baby Ellis
Baby Fatur
Baby Garrett
Baby Gastinell
Baby Gibson
Baby Gutierrez
Baby Hanson
Baby Harmony
Baby Henry
Baby Hernandez
Baby Holloway
Baby Hom
Baby Hoshovsky
Frances Jackson

Baby Knippen
Baby Lambert
Baby Lee
Baby Marr
Baby Marrow
Baby McAnelly
Baby McCarthy
Baby Bean McCrossen
Baby McDonald
Baby McNamara
Baby Millan
Baby Millar
Baby Millerd-Baker
Baby Moreno
Baby Mosley
Baby Muldonado
Babies Pambid
Baby Pascual
Maya Lauren Penn
Baby Puckett
Baby Ramos
Baby Rasmussen
Baby Ringenberg
Baby Boy Scacco
MaKenzie Lynn Scacco
Baby Scellato
Atlas Roland Schaefer
Baby Finley Schaefer

Baby Sheen
Baby Silva
Baby Snow-Schoepflin
Baby Teck
Baby Thompson
Joshua Shunk Thorne
Baby Tovar
Baby Vargas
Angel Villafán-Hermosillo
Gabriel Villafán-Hermosillo
Baby Xiong



Names are entered through the sign-in sheet at all Sharing Parents meetings.
If your baby is on this list, and you would like them included with their birth and anniversary month or months, please email hello@sharingparents.org

Remembering Our Babies With Love

Anniversaries, birthdays and holidays are difficult times for us. We remember with love....

November Birthdays & Anniversaries:

*Carmen Rose Acuna
Sally Adame
Ryan Aidan
Isaac Alcaraz
Sara Teresa Arreola
Arman Cameron
DeOnt'e Crawford, Jr.
Josiah Nicolas Davidson
Baby Davis
Elliott Davis
Baby Denny
Victoria Rose Domino
Baby Donaghy
Justin Daniel Fleming
Abigail Furtado-Rinker
Keegan Turner Gilwee
Malachi Ezekiel Harvey
Jaxon Holliday
Donavon Kyle Holly
Baby William Huffman-Fly
Faith Marie Jones
Baby Krebs
Grace Kukas
William Leonard
Bodhi Ren Mackin
Travis Adrian Maheras
Gabriel Moore March
Ava Lynn McCrossen
Grace Marie Nickles
Kori Peters
Elle Pop
Gabriella Rameriz
Baby Ranchod
Sapphire Robertson-Horner
Tara Marie Schmidt
Jody Lee Shunk
Emily Steele
Samantha Rae Troutman
Zoey Louise Van Eenennaam
Isadora Vargas
Kate Walker
Luke Edward Whitten
Baby Wyzanowski
Zachary Zielinski-Kristianous*



December Birthdays & Anniversaries:

*Adin Emmanuel Alvarenga
Cherish Catherine Amyx
Emerson Avila-DeRosa
Elijah James Barker
Ava Gabrielle Barnett
Baby Berger
Lynn Blackmen III
Baby Camarena
Caitlyn Hope Dunn Catanyag
Karolina Yelzavetta Cooper
Molly Ann Cottman
Olivia Grace Cowan
Baby Cruz
Colin Devey
Samuel Isaac Dressen
Christopher Eells
Lane Esser
Zoey Grace Flag
Baby Fraser
Graham Lynn Graham
Ryle Lynn Graham
Swasti Gupta
Rebecca Grace Hadsell
Baby Heckley
Blaine Kevin Heckley, Jr.
Zackary Herkins
Jack Ryan Hildebrand
Olivia Lane Hirschberg
Santrika Shayann Holloway
Blaine Husmann
Zane Edward Ira
Justice
Grace Kukas
Sarah Lampe
Theo Lin
Alex Marin
Alura Marrow
Timothy Daniel May, Jr.
Michael McNeese
Gino Mills
Nico Mills
Jeremiah Harrison Murray
Julia Faith Murray
Alexandros Nichols
Baby Ocel
Gwenyth Marjorie Page
Justin Pardi
Babies Patterson
Aiden James Plautz
Angel Ramirez Aguilar
Sofia Senna
Kai Alexander Shamiyeh
Baby Snell*

December Birthdays & Anniversaries Cont'd

*Owen Staley
James Terrence Waldron
Nicholas John Waldron
Christopher Thomas Webster
Lane Williams
Coleman Winje*

January Birthdays & Anniversaries:

*Lannette Jasmine Adams-Steptoe
Liberty Annette Amyx
Payton Hadley Bazzocco
Baby Beck
Brandis Behnken
Logan Henry Berry
Lynn Blackmen III
Faith Ann Blakely
Andrew Bond dos Reis
Darian Brooks
Naomi Brown
Baby Cairel
Hector Campbell-Lockwood
Michael James Cromeenes
Corbin David Crouch
Samantha Dahl
Lily Grace DaPrato
Samuel Alan Demmin
Baby Donaghy
Baby Dressen
Baby Errichetti
Seeley Hiatt
Elsabella Brophy Jett*



Remembering Our Babies With Love

Anniversaries, birthdays and holidays are difficult times for us. We remember with love....



January Birthdays & Anniversaries Cont'd:

*Kamore Kahealani
Tanner Kelley
Zachary Mikalos Kristianous
Gracie Ann Laackmann
Evelyn Lang-Cannon
Christian Lewis
Selma Livadic
Emelio Alexander Lopez
Levi Blake Losoya
Cashew Martinez-Gardner
Hananiah James Oates
Baby Payne
Angelica Robertson-Horner
Oliver Robertson-Horner
Jane Belle Rodriguez
Brayden Rose-Siefker
Raleigh Rose-Siefker
Baby Schreck
Nathan Russell Scott
Owen Staley
Mallory Van der Veer
Matthew Van der Veer
Jordan Vose
Presley Vose
Tyce Donald Wagnon
Baby Wildermuth
Elias Matthew Ponce Zepeda*



Baby names are entered through the sign-in sheet at all Sharing Parents meetings. If your baby is not on this list, and you would like them included with their birth and anniversary month or months, please email hello@sharingparents.org

News and Announcements

*To our new Sharing Parents families of these babies,
our deepest sympathies for your loss*

*Lydia Perez
Kenzie Ann Harnagel
Olin Madrone Kistner
Giselle Gonzalez
Collin Dekker
Baby Raybourn
Isaiah Duarte
Aakash Madan*

There is no foot
too *small*
that it cannot leave an
imprint
on this **WORLD**

<https://www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org/>



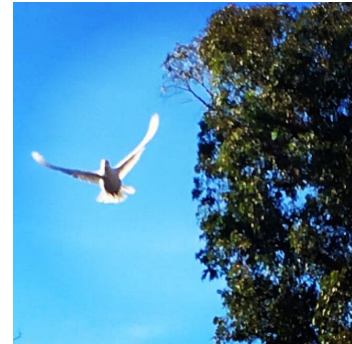
News and Announcements



31st Annual October Memorial

October was Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness month. Thank you to those who joined us at our 31st annual October Memorial. This year was an amazing event that allowed many parents the opportunity to remember, celebrate and honor their babies. We are so grateful to be able to come together as a community and say our babies' names with you.

Sharing Parents would like to thank all of our sponsors and vendors for their generous contributions in support of the October Memorial. A special thank you to John McCalmon of Wings of Love Ceremonial Dove Release for the donation of his time and beautiful birds year after year. The dove release is such a moving part of the ceremony every year. For more information, please visit <http://www.wingsoflovodi.com/index.html>



For those who missed the event, we would like to share a speech written by a parent who generously shared her story. It was an honor to hear the stories from those who shared with us at the memorial.



Parent Submissions

By Casey Lauder

I am normally not someone that shares in front of a large group, but last year at the October Memorial, I was so touched by the other families that shared. As I listened to their stories, I felt my own story being validated. I too belong here with these families. I truly thank everyone that volunteers here at Sharing Parents. This organization's topics are not always easy to share, but it is so important for us all to have a safe space.

Our story is similar to many of yours. We struggled to start our family. We went to many appointments and finally found ourselves at the fertility center. We worked through some struggles even there and finally were able to start treatment. I remember being excited, but reserved because they warned it rarely works the first time. We were beyond thrilled to find that we were pregnant. We opted to do the special screening, just to be safe. We learned that our baby had an abdominal wall abnormality, and it was pretty severe. The doctor urged us to consider termination. We chose to continue to carry the pregnancy, all the while praying for a miracle. We enlisted family and friends to help with the prayers.

Through the screening process, we learned that we were carrying a baby girl. So many prayers had already been answered. We were looking forward to our ultrasound at 19 weeks. We would see that she was a girl and hopefully there would be improvement with her condition. As we waited to be called into the room, I felt strongly that we should decide on her name. She would be Addison Rose.

Only moments into the ultrasound, we learned that there was no heartbeat. I wish no one ever had to hear, "umm, just a moment" as the technician quickly slides out of the room. We decided that we would induce labor, and gave birth to little Addie on April 1, 2014.

So many questions swirled through our heads. Why did this happen? This wasn't the plan! What do we do now? We prayed that God would use us and Addison's story for good. We joined Sharing Parents and learned the benefits of being in a community with others that had lost their babies. I met other parents that worked with organizations to support families that had also had babies born too soon.

We still desperately wanted to start a family, but some of our fertility struggles seemed so big. We decided to look into adoption. It can also be a challenging process, filled with the scary potential for loss. With the support of our family and friends, we decided to take the leap. We were thrilled to adopt Isabella last March, and hopefully soon we can adopt her brother, AJ.

I love that Sharing Parents comes together to support families at one of the most challenging and devastating times in our lives. This group is very important to our family.

Thank you.

Parent Submissions

**We know the importance of remembering our babies during the holidays.
Here are some of the ways that we honor them.**



- 1) Every year, I buy and hang Christmas Ornaments for them.
- 2) We hang a stocking for each one.
- 3) We buy two toys to donate in honor of my beloved boys. We donate the toys to the Sleep Train Foster Kid's program.
- 4) We include our boys names on our Christmas Cards.
- 5) Each family member receives a small gift in memory of the two boys.

Dionne Martinez



"We hang ornaments in our Christmas tree to honor Cherish and Liberty. We try to do something different to honor them each year."



Dorinda Gregory

"We have a stocking for Everett and we give a gift to the boys from Everett (the first Christmas after Everett died it was a giant trunk full of used dress up clothes and costumes that still get used a ton...good gift!). Also, last year, I went shopping with Ian and bought a present for his school's "Toys for Tots" drive, it wasn't specifically as a replacement for gifts we would buy for Everett, and they were not age specific to the age

he would be, but we definitely talked about how Everett's death has made us more compassionate to the needs of others and how truly blessed and fortunate we are!"

Kurt Seckington



"Every year, our family hangs a stocking for each of our family members, including our Ethan Maxwell, on the mantel. Last year, we started a new tradition, we took time first thing on Christmas morning to each write him a letter. We had the fire going, and gentle music playing, and we let our 'missing him' fill the pages. We acknowledged how much we wished he was with us.

We filled his stocking with these letters. It was so meaningful to each one of us. We, as a family, decided we wanted to continue this tradition every year. It's a way to speak to how much we miss him, and honor our hearts in the process. The missing never goes away, but the acknowledging of it soothed our hearts."



Sharon Cox



Community Resources

Some parents find it helpful to start a new tradition around the holidays in honor of their baby(ies). Here are a few resources you may find helpful if you are searching for something to try.

Locally:



Worldwide Candle Lighting December 10, 2017

11th Annual Bereaved Parents USA Candle Lighting Ceremony
Sponsored by the Sacramento-South Placer County Chapter

This year's theme is *Hearts Filled With Love*

December 10, 2017

6-8:30pm

Creekside Church, 290 Technology Way, Rocklin

<http://sspcc.org>

On the December 10, 2017, The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting will unite family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon. TCF's WCL started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance, but has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

Register online at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2017-candle-lighting-tickets-20023359407>

There is no charge to attend the event. More information is provided on their invitation flyer on the next page.



Community Resources



Annual World Wide Candle Lighting

Presented locally in Rocklin by the Sacramento-South Placer County
Bereaved Parents of the USA
Chapter



HEARTS FILLED WITH LOVE

Our theme this year is "Hearts Filled With Love." We are designing this very special memorial service as an opportunity to share the love we will always have in our hearts for our children who left too soon. We encourage you to invite your family and friends to join us.

Candle Lighting Service

6:00 Doors open

6:30 Service begins

Welcome, Speakers & Music
Lighting of Candles (provided at the event)
Reading of our children's names
Slide show of our children's photos
Words of Inspiration
Food and Fellowship

Registration

Register online at www.sspcc.org/CandleLighting.

Our Registration Form in PDF format is available on our website. You can bring your completed form to our November Family & Friends Event or scan and attach it to an email to CandleLighting2017@gmail.com. You may also email to request the form in MSWord format so you can complete it and email it back to us.

Slide Show

We will ask you for up to 3 digital photos to be emailed to CandleLighting2017@gmail.com.

Framed Photos to Display

Plan to bring a framed photo of your child to display at the front of the auditorium.

Refreshments

You are encouraged to bring your child's favorite holiday finger food to share during our refreshment time following the service.

Memorial Items

We will have a selection of memorial items and beautiful cards available for a suggested donation.

Photo buttons and magnets may be ordered in advance.

Questions

Need more information? Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are available on our website, or you can email us and we will get back to you.

Sunday, December 10, 2017
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.



This is a beautiful event that you won't want to miss!



Hosted by Creekside Church
290 Technology Way, Rocklin 95765

History of the Candle Lighting

The Worldwide Candle Lighting started in 1997 by The Compassionate Friends (TCF). Many candle lighting services are held each year across the nation and throughout the world.

Candles will be lit from 7-8 p.m. local time, creating a virtual wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone around the world, honoring children who have died.

You are invited to post a message in the Remembrance Book which will be available on December 11 on line at www.compassionatefriends.org.

This year is the eleventh candle lighting sponsored by the Sacramento-South Placer County Chapter of the BP/USA. Our local children will be remembered during this very beautiful and touching memorial service. Families are invited to bring friends. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide child care.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting gives bereaved families everywhere the opportunity to remember their child . . . that their light may always shine!

Donations

There is no charge to attend this event, however donations are received with gratitude to help defray costs. 501(c)(3). A list of needed items is available on our website. Business sponsors will be listed in our printed program and posted on our website. A donation basket will be available at the event.

Helping Yourself Heal During the Holiday Season

by Dr. Alan Wolfelt

Holidays are often difficult for anyone who has experienced the death of someone loved. Rather than being times of family togetherness, sharing and thanksgiving, holidays can bring feelings of sadness, loss and emptiness.

Love Does Not End With Death

Since love does not end with death, holidays may result in a renewed sense of personal grief—a feeling of loss unlike that experienced in the routine of daily living. Society encourages you to join in the holiday spirit, but all around you the sounds, sights and smells trigger memories of the one you love who has died.

No simple guidelines exist that will take away the hurt you are feeling. We hope, however, the following suggestions will help you better cope with your grief during this joyful, yet painful, time of the year. As you read through this article, remember that by being tolerant and compassionate with yourself, you will continue to heal.

Talk About Your Grief

During the holiday season, don't be afraid to express your feelings of grief. Ignoring your grief won't make the pain go away and talking about it openly often makes you feel better. Find caring friends and relatives who will listen—without judging you. They will help make you feel understood.

Be Tolerant of Your Physical and Psychological Limits

Feelings of loss will probably leave you fatigued. Your low energy level may naturally slow you down. Respect what your body and mind are telling you. And lower your own expectations about being at your peak during the holiday season.

Eliminate Unnecessary Stress

You may already feel stressed, so don't overextend yourself. Avoid isolating yourself, but be sure to recognize the need to have special time for yourself. Realize also that merely "keeping busy" won't distract you from your grief, but may actually increase stress and postpone the need to talk out thoughts and feelings related to your grief.

Be With Supportive, Comforting People

Identify those friends and relatives who understand that the holiday season can increase your sense of loss and who will allow you to talk openly about your feelings. Find those persons who encourage you to be yourself and accept your feelings—both happy and sad.

Talk About the Person Who Has Died

Include the person's name in your holiday conversation. If you are able to talk candidly, other people are more likely to recognize your need to remember that special person who was an important part of your life.

Continued on next page

Helping Yourself Heal During the Holiday Season

by Dr. Alan Wolfelt

Continued from previous page

Do What Is Right for You During the Holidays

Well-meaning friends and family often try to prescribe what is good for you during the holidays. Instead of going along with their plans, focus on what you want to do. Discuss your wishes with a caring, trusted friend. Talking about these wishes will help you clarify what is you want to do during the holidays. As you become aware of your needs, share them with your friends and family.

Plan Ahead for Family Gatherings

Decide which family traditions you want to continue and which new ones you would like to begin. Structure your holiday time. This will help you anticipate activities, rather than just reacting to whatever happens. Getting caught off guard can create feelings of panic, fear and anxiety during the time of the year when your feelings of grief are already heightened. As you make your plans, however, leave room to change them if you feel it is appropriate.

Embrace Your Treasure of Memories

Memories are one of the best legacies that exist after the death of someone loved. And holidays always make you think about times past. Instead of ignoring these memories, share them with your family and friends. Keep in mind that memories are tinged with both happiness and sadness. If your memories bring laughter, smile. If your memories bring sadness, then it's alright to cry. Memories that were made in love—no one can ever take them away from you.

Renew Your Resources for Living

Spend time thinking about the meaning and purpose of your life. The death of someone loved created opportunities for taking inventory of your life—past, present and future. The combination of a holiday and a loss naturally results in looking inward and assessing your individual situation. Make the best use of this time to define the positive things in life that surround you.

Express Your Faith

During the holidays, you may find a renewed sense of faith or discover a new set of beliefs. Associate with people who understand and respect your need to talk about these beliefs. If your faith is important, you may want to attend a holiday service or special religious ceremony.

As you approach the holidays, remember: grief is both a necessity and a privilege. It comes as a result of giving and receiving love. Don't let anyone take your grief away. Love yourself. Be patient with yourself. And allow yourself to be surrounded by loving, caring people.

<http://www.centerforloss.com/tag/blending-mourning-and-celebration/>

Little Snowdrop

The world may never notice
If a Snowdrop doesn't bloom,
Or even pause to wonder
If the petals fall too soon.
But every life that ever forms,
Or ever comes to be,
Touches the world in some small way
For all eternity.

The little one we long for
Was swiftly here and gone.
But the love that was then planted
Is a light that still shines on.
And though our arms are empty,
Our hearts know what to do.
Every beating of our hearts
Says of our love for you.

~ Author Unknown

<http://www.grievingparents.com/Poems.html>

Coping With Holidays and Celebrations

By Sherokee Ilse

Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, New Years - celebrations that bring families together. A time to appreciate friends, God, family and the gifts of life. They also serve as reminders of who will not be with us when our family comes together.

Holiday times can be bittersweet for families who have had a loved one die, particularly a child. There are ways for you to gain some control and minimize the difficulty of the often tense, yet special time. Long before the day, make plans, speak up about your needs and desires and follow your heart. In your decision-making process do take into account the rest of your family, but remember it's okay to put your needs at or near the top of the list.

If you decide you want to do things differently this year, let your family know your desires (either personally or through a note). Be tactful and use "I" and "we" statements. For instance, "We are feeling the need to do things differently this year. We miss our baby so much that we can't imagine sitting around a dinner table without her. Please understand that we do not want to hurt anyone's feelings. We ask for your support during this difficult time and request that you not challenge our decision." As you attempt to discover what seems right for you during the upcoming holiday(s) ask yourselves, "What usually happens in our family to celebrate this holiday or family event? If there were a few minor changes could we handle it better? What do we want to do differently?" If you come to the conclusion that you want to make changes, maybe you will find some of these suggestions helpful:

- Buy or make a special ornament or item that could be put on a shelf, on the tree, on the wall or some other place. Put your baby's name on it along with significant dates.
- Get a candle that you can light during the festivities as a reminder of your baby. Either tell others the significance of the lit candle or write a poem or note to set near it to explain.
- Make a donation to a children's hospital, Toys-for-Tots program, your church or synagogue or some other charity in memory of your baby. Or volunteer your time with a local charity.
- Take holiday decorations to the cemetery.
- Seek advice and input from clergy, your faith, community, and the Bible. Maybe you will find comfort in the Lord and that your baby is under God's care.
- If you feel a strong need to get away rather than joining the family, do that. Let your family know that it is hard right now and that you need to alter your plans to help you cope during this holiday season. Hopefully, it won't always be like this. Pick a place you have wanted to visit. Plan some quiet time as well as some activities to keep you busy.
- Set aside some time to remember. Cherish the memories - keep them alive. Write a note or a poem to your baby. Make a present or ornament for them. Say a prayer for them.

Continued on next page

Coping With Holidays and Celebrations

By Sherokee Ilse

Continued from previous page

- Write a holiday letter to your family and friends telling them what has happened and how you are coping. Ask them for support by being specific about how they can help. For instance, you could tell them you hope they will keep saying your baby's name out loud. You could invite them to make a donation to a favorite charity in memory of your child. Be brave and open about what you are going through.
- If you have other living children, be sensitive to their needs. They may think that their sibling who died is getting more attention than they are. Find special ways to include them. Yet, be honest and open with them if you are having a hard time coping.
- If you feel it best to not talk about your baby during a certain time of the holidays make that known to others. Maybe they will want to bring up your baby and you prefer that they don't.
- Use your creativity to express your emotions. You could write, play or create music, sculpt, paint, draw, make something out of wood, work in your yard, weave, do needlepoint or any number of other creative activities. Either keep what you make or share it by giving it to someone else.
- Avoid holiday shopping by buying from catalogs or online. Go shopping early in the season or during times when crowds are lessened.
- If you find yourself getting quite emotional during holiday gatherings, escape to a quiet room and consider telling the hosts you need to leave early.
- Take one day at a time. Don't push yourself too hard. Deal with the moment and what you can do today. The tension and anxiety of worrying about the tomorrows will not help you cope with today.

<http://www.storknet.com/cubbies/pil/holidays-ilse.htm>



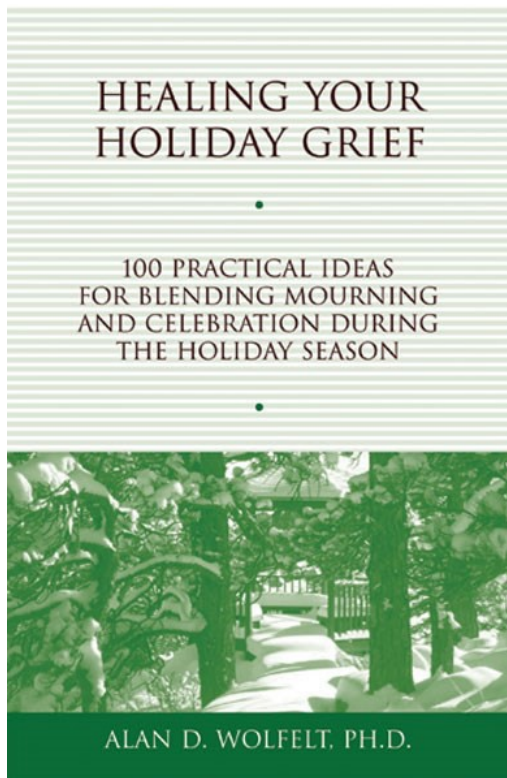
Librarian's Corner

Book Highlight

Healing Your Holiday Grief

by Alan D. Wolfelt, PH.D.

Review by Dorinda Gregory



This book outlines 100 different ideas on how to get through the holiday season. Each idea also has a *carpe diem* exercise on point with the numbered idea. The ideas vary from suggesting to simplify gift giving to singing, starting new holiday traditions, crying, observing a moment of silence, etc. My favorite "*carpe diem*" exercise relates to Item #70 - Ignoring Hurtful Advice. This idea described how sometimes well-intended, but misinformed family or friends will say hurtful things unknowingly (i.e. keep your chin up, this is a blessing, think of all you have to be thankful for, time heals all wounds, he/she wouldn't want you to be sad, the holidays are a time to be happy, etc.). The exercise said that the next time someone gives you this type of advice to tell the person how you honestly feel, or give yourself permission to walk away. I realized that I really need to practice this.

I also liked the idea of making handmade gifts in memory of the person who died (decorate frames & insert photos of your babies, make holiday ornaments with the name, birth/death dates on them, paint, etc.).

The ideas in this book were extremely helpful and I found a lot of ideas that I hadn't thought about or hadn't given myself permission to do (i.e. cry, embrace my pain, etc.). I almost want to start 100 days before Christmas and follow one idea per day.

There were a few quotes that really stood out to me too. For example:

"Mourners don't recover from grief. We become "reconciled" to it...we learn to live with it and are forever changed by it."

"The only way to the other side is through." - Helen Keller

I'm adding this book to my collection and I know I'll flip through it for coping ideas as the holidays approach. It was a very therapeutic read!

If you find a poem or article that is helpful to you, please consider sharing it with others in our next newsletter. Please send newsletter contributions along with the source and author of the poem or article, to hello@sharingparents.org with "newsletter contribution" in the subject line. The deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is January 15, 2018.

Safe Arrivals



Welcome Baby
Lorelai Libby Gensler
8/17/17

Little sister to Oliver, Sam, and Eli

Proud Parents
Daniel and Rachel Gensler



Welcome Baby
Ryder Michael Fertuna
11/03/17

Little brother to Ezekiel

Proud Parents
Ed and Niccla Fertuna



Safe Arrivals



Welcome Baby
Delaney Hope Herrington
8/22/17

Little sister to
Luke, Ty, Jake, and Brady

Proud Parents
Gregg and Lisa Herrington



Welcome Baby
Lina Diane Seberger
9/05/17

Little sister to
Max Seberger

Proud Parents
Dustin and Sara Seberger



Safe Arrivals



Welcome Baby
Cedar Aalis Vernon
9/25/17

Born at 31 weeks, small, but mighty!
Many thanks to our surrogate, Alice

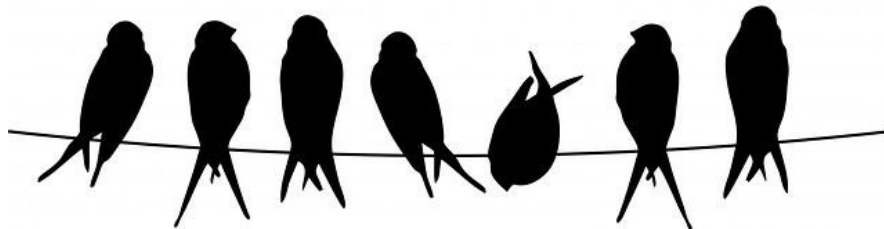
Proud Parents
David Vernon and
Ryan Wessells



Welcome Baby
Ethan Thomas Andrew
9/30/17

Little brother to
Emily and Katherine

Proud Parents
Tom and Amy Andrew



Love Gifts

A love gift was made in loving memory of

Everett Leimbach Seckington

5/22/12

By Bill and Carol Leimbach

A love gift was made in loving memory of

Jaymes L. Loville

1/05/16

By Almisha Dodd



Love Gifts

A love gift was made in loving memory of

Jalena Ann Jackson

1/13/17

By Ciara B.

A love gift was made in loving memory of

Olivia Hope Brabec

10/05/13

Always in my heart, little one. Love, Tita Suseh

By Suseh Nievares



Love Gifts

To honor your child's memory, send a "Love Gift" to Sharing Parents. A Love Gift is a monetary donation given in honor of someone or as a memorial to a baby, relative or friend. Not only will you be memorializing your baby but you will be helping Sharing Parents, which survives on donations and fundraisers.

If you would like to donate a Love Gift to us, please visit our website at sharingparents.org/donate. Donations to Sharing Parents are tax deductible. The deadline for inclusion in the next newsletter is **January 15, 2018**.

