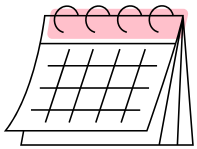


# Caring & Coping

a publication of the H.E.A.R.T.strings Perinatal Bereavement Office



## Caring & Coping Newsletter Goes Digital!

As 2023 begins, so does a new beginning for the Caring & Coping perinatal loss newsletter. We are excited to announce that we will be providing this newsletter in digital format going forward. As announced in the last print newsletter, this is the inaugural issue for the new format. We hope you like it and that you continue to follow along with us as we announce upcoming events and provide great resources. Same content, new face! We will continue to offer 3-4 editions per calendar year. If you are reading this from our website and would like to subscribe to receive this newsletter via email, please click the button to your right to subscribe to join our email list. If you are receiving this newsletter via your email, you do not need to subscribe again. You are already on our email list.

click here!

“It has been said, ‘time heals all wounds.’ I do not agree. The wounds remain. In time, the mind, protecting its sanity, covers them with scar tissue and the pain lessens. But it is never gone.”

Rose Kennedy



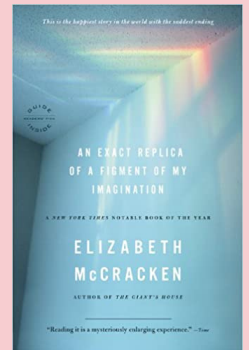
# March of Dimes Donates Special Vera Bradley Bags to Bereaved Mothers

Special thanks to March of Dimes for supplying beautiful Vera Bradley bags for some of our bereaved parents! Approximately 25 bags were donated and given out. They provided a little something beautiful for families experiencing loss. In addition, March of Dimes provided lunches for Labor & Delivery staff at the Northside Hospital Atlanta campus. Thank you, Shelly Owens & March of Dimes!

## Healing Hearts Book Club



*An Exact Replica of a Figment of My Imagination* by Elizabeth McCracken is a memoir of a writer who experiences a full term stillbirth of her baby boy. It is a powerful and remarkable story of grief and healing.



### *Our sweetH.E.A.R.T.s*

We have created a permanent Remembrance Page on our website (click image to your left) where you can add your baby's name to our list of "sweetH.E.A.R.T.s", who will always be remembered & loved.

### *Companions Program*

We are seeking interested mentors who have experienced pregnancy or newborn loss to become peer mentors in our Companions Program. We ask that you are at least one year from your loss before volunteering. With more than 30 trained mentors, this group is a wonderful community. Training is provided. Click on the image to your right for more information.



# Ask the Expert

Can Joy and Sorrow Coexist? Can they mingle together?  
Or, do they repel each other like oil and water?



When your pregnancy or birth results in an unexpected loss, you may feel a sorrow that runs deep in your soul... so deep that you think you may never feel joy again. You may experience a feeling of heaviness in your chest that can feel crushing or suffocating at times. You may not be able to see the good in anything because you are so overwhelmed with feelings of loss and despair. This is completely normal. Losing a child is not the “natural” order of life. You are stuck in this moment of time, yet others around you seem to be moving on. This can be very frustrating and hard to deal with.

As you take time to grieve, mourn, and process your loss, tears and sorrow may be plentiful and joy may feel far away. Be patient with yourself. Feel what you feel in the moment. Create a safe space in which you can grieve. This might be a physical space you’ve designated for grieving, but it can also be “safe” people with whom you can verbalize your deepest thoughts and feelings. If this feels too personal, difficult, or intimidating, try writing in a journal. There is no timeline for grief, but it can be exhausting. At some point along your grief journey, I would love to encourage you to open your heart and mind to the idea of joy.

Believe it or not, joy and sorrow CAN coexist. There is a misconception that we must be “done” with grieving before we can be happy again. Unfortunately, you are never “done” with grief. Grief has no timeline, and the baby you lost will always be a part of you. Over time, the hope is that you can find ways to integrate the loss into your life, finding ways to honor and remember your baby. As part of that, I would love to encourage you to intentionally create space for joy in your life. Start with small things that bring you moments of joy and allow them back into your life (ex. Watching the sun rise or set, the feel of your pet snuggled beside you, the sight of the leaves changing colors or flowers blooming, the smell of coffee brewing, the sound of a crackling fire or music you enjoy, etc.) Little by little, you might find that these small things can lead to bigger moments of joy, happiness, and even laughter. As you experience this, however, you might also feel guilt. After all, you just lost something immensely precious to you. A wise person once said the following to me after I lost my baby boy, “Just because you cry doesn’t mean you love him more and just because you laugh doesn’t mean you love him any less”. I found this to be true, and I hope you will too. As you move forward, remember that some days will be harder than others. But, also try to remember that in any given moment, joy and sorrow can coexist. You just have to establish a space for both of them in your life.

Submitted by: Tonya Lowry, Perinatal Bereavement Clinician



# Creating a Grief Support System

Grief can feel like a lonely place.

Find 3 people you are comfortable talking to.

Name a place that you can go that is comfortable and safe.

Name 3 things you can do, or 3 people you can be with, where you can let out anger without hurting yourself or others.

Name 3 things you can do or 3 people you can be with to let out sad feelings.

Name 3 non-harmful ways to release feelings of anger or sadness.

Name 3 things you can do when life feels meaningless.

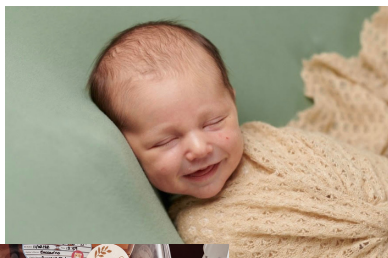
Name 3 activities you can do that will help you to express your feelings: Examples: writing, drawing, hitting pillows, singing, playing sports, dance.

Name some things that will help you get your mind off your loss.

Remember that it is normal to feel a lot of emotions....sad, mad, frustrated, anxious. Find your support system. Talk with your OB and ask him/ her for guidance. Don't forget that our office is here for you if you need us.



## Rainbows on the Horizon



Our sweet baby Brooks Preston was born at 31 weeks gestation on February 15, 2021 and went to be with Jesus on March 7, 2021 so he was only with us earthside for a short three weeks. We were at CHOA during this time and were shattered, heartbroken, and so many more emotions that words can't even describe after losing Brooks. My husband and I had a miscarriage 6 months later in October 2021 which again led to more heartbreak.

Finally in early 2022 I became pregnant with our double rainbow baby and gave birth to our second son, Liam Maverick Johnson on November 2nd, 2022 at Northside Forsyth.

We are so in love and know he's being watched over by his older brother (Brooks) and his older sister (Hope) in Heaven.  
We adore Liam so much! ~ Melissa Johnson



We would love to know if you have a new baby. Your good news is encouraging and we would like to congratulate you. Birth announcements can be submitted to the H.E.A.R.T.strings office by email at [northsidepnl@gmail.com](mailto:northsidepnl@gmail.com) or by calling 404-851-8177. Please send us your photos in the highest resolution possible.

After losing our daughter Anastasia at 23 weeks last year on October 2, 2021 I'm happy to announce the birth of our twins, Camden and Chloe, born on Oct 2, 2022 delivered by the same doctor who delivered Anastasia. She just so happen to be on call.

~Amara & Kendrick Seth



After losing our son, Harrison, at almost 39 weeks in October 2021, we were blessed with the birth our rainbow daughter, Abigail Louise Philbeck on November 12, 2022.

Heartstrings has been a wonderful resource for us and we love our Reagan Marie bear, we include it in our family photos.

We are happy to announce the arrival of our Rainbow baby this past year. Little Miss Raine entered this world 10/11/2022. Her big brother Rhylan was stillborn 6/2021 at NSC and we had such an amazing team during our time of grief and shock. We spent the pregnancy anxious and uncertain but blessed to have a supportive healthcare team that helped us through it. Even some of the nurses who delivered Rhylan were there to help us welcome our little miracle baby as we exited our season of sadness into a season of joy. We will never forget both experiences and the impact made, lessons learned, and tears shed. We know Raine's big brother is always watching and will guide her through her life. We can't wait to share our journey with her one day.

Lindsey, Rhett, Rhylan , and Raine Panter



*In case you're interested in donating....*



**Click to access our Amazon wishlist**



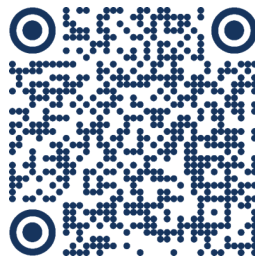
**Click to donate to the H.E.A.R.T.strings Legacy Fund, Reagan Marie Teddy Bear Fund or the Atlanta Walk to Remember Fund**



**Click to link your Kroger Plus card to H.E.A.R.T.strings Perinatal Bereavement & Palliative Care. Please follow the link to get started and choose the fund titled "Northside Hospital Foundation: Infant Bereavement"**

**THANK  
YOU!**

Thank you to all who have made memorial donations to benefit our program. We couldn't provide the level of support that we provide without your generosity. It means so much. Click [here](#) to view the list of memorial donations made since November, 2022.



**Need an extra layer of support? Check out our app by using the QR code above and following the registration instructions.**