

# Caring and Coping

## Thoughts on Spring

Spring. Just like clockwork, here it is. Well, maybe not clockwork, as we know from experience living in the south.

*"It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade."* — Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*

The days lengthen, and the air warms. We can't help but feel the natural pull of the hope that this season brings, more than any other time of the year. Even in the midst of our grief, when life feels so out of control and order, spring shows up, just as it always has.

*"All the buried seeds crack open in the dark the instant they surrender to a process they can't see."* — Mark Nepo

Truthfully, spring's unpredictability does cause us some frustration. Similar to our emotions of grief, one day we feel light and airy and the next day it is dark and cold again. We want order. A plan. A confirmation that the weather will do as it is forecasted. That we will "see" progress in our grief journey. But grief can feel chaotic, just like spring weather. Still, we feel the pull of hope.

*"No matter how chaotic it is, wildflowers will still spring up in the middle of nowhere."* — Sheryl Crow

Aside from being known as a season, the word "spring" also has these definitions:

- To be resilient or elastic
- To come into being

How extraordinary. There can be no better example for resilience than the bereaved parent. That through the devastating loss of our babies, we find ourselves transforming, slowly but surely, into new beings.

As we move through the season, be patient with yourself. Spend more time in the light. Slow down, and watch things silently begin to open and grow. Quiet is good. And spring is back.

*"The heart is like a garden. It can grow compassion or fear, resentment or love. What seeds will you plant there?"* — Jack Kornfield



### For Your Calendar

#### **Caring & Coping Support Group**

April 13, 2020

No May meeting

June 8, 2020

July 13, 2020

August 10, 2020

#### **May 3, 2020**

Northside Hospital H.E.A.R.T.strings  
Memorial Service

For information, call 404-851-8754.

### Hospital Tours

Special "Re-Entry" Tours Available by Appointment. If you would prefer, H.E.A.R.T.strings would be honored to guide you, revisiting as much or as little of the hospital as you desire. Contact us to set up a time.

### You've Got Mail

Send us your email address! We communicate upcoming events and announcements. We will NOT share this information publicly. You may "opt out" at any time. Email us at [northsidepnl@gmail.com](mailto:northsidepnl@gmail.com) to be added to the list.

### Newsletter Submissions

We welcome your participation. Email us your submissions.



### Contact Us

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## Beautification of a Sacred Space

For more than 20 years, a plot at historic Stone Mountain Cemetery has been the final resting place for many babies who were born and died at the Northside Hospital Atlanta campus. Of those very difficult decisions bereaved parents have to make in the hours following the death of their baby, making final arrangements is one of the hardest. For families who chose to allow Northside Atlanta this honor, those sweet babies are together at this cemetery.

The cemetery was founded in 1850, and sits quietly on the edge of the historic old Stone Mountain village. As you walk around the grounds, in addition to the Civil War soldiers, you see family plots and markers dedicated with love to people long gone. Many old markers are simply engraved, "Baby". It is indeed a sacred space.

The plot where our babies are interred by the Stone Mountain office of Wages & Sons Funeral Home is a large, rectangular space bordered by a low wall of granite. There is a marble bench engraved with a dove at one end, donated around the year 2000 by H.E.A.R.T.strings families. Several small, personalized markers and mementoes left by families make their home around the border. Over time, having endured years of changing seasons and storms (losing its beloved, large oak tree to Hurricane Irma), the plot was in need of attention.

Last spring, Farah and Mark Kar reached out to H.E.A.R.T.strings to spearhead a project to beautify the space. Working closely with the City of Stone Mountain, Farah received permission to implement the landscape plan she had developed which included planting a new oak tree and shrubs. The Kar family and their friends donated all of the materials and time for this labor of love. The H.E.A.R.T.strings office purchased a small, granite statue of an angel with an engraved base, dedicating it to H.E.A.R.T.strings families, for the center of the plot. For Farah, whose daughter Ella is buried there, this was a mission to bring a sense of peace back to the space: "We dedicate the plants and beautiful oak tree to Ella and all the other angles like her. We look forward to watching them grow as we visit and honor their lives. We thank Northside's H.E.A.R.T.strings program and the City of Stone Mountain for their support."

### *A dedication and blessing for this sacred space:*

Along with the Kar family and the Northside Hospital chaplains, H.E.A.R.T.strings wishes to invite families whose babies are buried at the plot to a small ceremony to re-dedicate the space. **Please join us on Sunday, April 19 from 3 – 4 p.m. at Stone Mountain Cemetery. Rain or shine. 1025 Silver Hill Road, Stone Mountain, GA 30087.**



Farah and Mark Kar, with daughter Arya whose twin sister Ella is buried at the Stone Mountain plot.



\*Note: Families who were cared for at Northside Forsyth can visit their babies at Sawnee View Memorial Gardens (contact McDonald & Sons for more information). Families who were cared for at Northside Cherokee can visit their babies at Macedonia Memoria Park in Canton (losses before May, 2017 are in the Sosebee niche and losses after are in the H.E.A.R.T.strings niche provided by Canton Funeral Home in the park. Contact Canton Funeral Home for more information.)

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## Pam's Story – A Labor of Love

I have thought about for many years a way to preserve the memory of my baby girl, Courtney Elizabeth, who passed away shortly after I gave birth to her on June 22nd, 1977. A long time ago, you might think to yourself...one would think the memory would not be so vividly etched in my mind. Well, it is profoundly there and after that many years, it's more than likely not going to lessen. Yes, the pain has gotten easier over the years, but not the memory of this precious and beautiful child. So this is my story.

What goes without saying is that children are not supposed to die before their parents do. Memories are so important especially when a child passes from us, no matter what age the child leaves this world. They are simply "our child" and the pain of losing them is something I've never experienced again in my 68+ years. I write this in honor of my daughter and with a heartfelt desire to help comfort others.

I suffered a miscarriage in 1977 and was so very hurt because I longed for a child of my own with my former husband, Michael. A miscarriage to me implied that I had somehow made a mistake in carrying my baby. Miscarriage is painful enough as those who have experienced one know all too well. It is the loss of a child.

Becoming pregnant shortly thereafter was exciting and the pregnancy went well. It went so well, in fact, that I was way over due in delivering. Three weeks in fact, which should have been a red flag, so to speak, but apparently the doctors didn't view it that way at the time. I went for my last doctor appointment on the afternoon of June 21st and the attending physician in the group that examined me told me that he saw no signs that I would go into labor any time soon. I was informed if something didn't happen soon, labor might need to be induced. I was told to go home and wait and see what happened and we would make a decision in a couple of days. Dejected and miserable at being so very pregnant, and swelled, I went home to begin very hard contractions that had very short breaks in between, about two hours later that afternoon. This was not how I had understood that labor started... another red flag. The classes and books just didn't read this way.

No stranger to physical pain due to rough menstrual periods and years of Cluster/Migrane headaches, I knew in my heart that something was wrong. But then it was my first full term pregnancy, so I reasoned that my labor and delivery was just destined to be 'different' or at least not average. Different it was, to say the least. Soon after arriving at the hospital, and being examined by the doctor on call, he ordered an x-ray of the baby's positioning since my baby had not dropped into the birthing position. He then informed us that he was going home to get some rest and would see me sometime around 7:30 or so in the morning. The thoughts raced through my head of how can you leave me in such pain, but he assured me that the anesthesiologist would be on their way soon for my epidural.

My pains were so intense, that I could barely lie still for the technician to get the views they needed. I cried to the labor nurse who stayed with me, and was obviously of age, knowledgeable and experienced, "how can I possibly go until morning like this?" I asked as I was doubled over on the x-ray table and just in continual pain and I'm sure the annoyed x-ray tech thought what a weak thing I must be. The kind nurse said emphatically, "Honey, you won't last until morning, we will be getting your doctor back in here well before the morning." I just wanted them to understand that this was horrible pain that just didn't seem right.

Back in the labor room, I felt the urge to go to the restroom to urinate and when I did, my water broke. It struck me odd that the massive amount of liquid was greenish gray in color but again I reasoned that I might have mis-read that page of one of my many expectant mother books. So back to the bed to try to lie still with a fetal monitor put in place, and what seemed like an eternity, until an epidural was administered. Shortly thereafter, my husband was watching the monitor and questioned the erratic reading. Things changed quickly and I was rushed to the delivery room and apparently my doctor was on his way back to deliver our baby.

In the wee morning hours of June 22nd, at around 2:00 a.m., I delivered a baby girl, who we had chosen to give the name Courtney Elizabeth. Courtney sounded like a strong but feminine female name and Elizabeth was for my mother's and grandmother's namesake. Vividly aware of urgency in the room after she was delivered, it began to "sink in" that something was wrong. There was a muffled gurgling sound from her and all in the room went into frantic action with their attention turned away from me and toward my newborn. I remember thinking, "fix her" please, so I can hold her and see her! But instead it seemed the attending medical personnel blocked my view of her across the room as they frantically worked with her. Please hurry, I thought. I expected to see my newborn move and above all, cry. But she just lay there like a lifeless baby doll. Now what, I thought? My husband had elected not to be in the room for the delivery. Could someone explain to me what was happening? Then the moment came when the doctor that I had seen only a few times during my pregnancy, came to my side and said, "I'm sorry, your baby didn't make it." Everything seemed so surreal and dreamlike but my logic kept telling me, full term newborn babies don't die...I just cried out and uttered begging words of "please don't put me where the mothers and babies are!"

I'm sure I must have been given an injection to calm me as we left the delivery room for my next destination. It seemed like an eternity before I would see any of my family. And then there was the something administered to 'dry up breast milk'. But then I thought, why would I need that milk anyway? My baby was gone. As a Christian, my faith was greatly shaken and I started asking why had God taken my child? What had I done so bad to punish me this way? I was in so much mental pain that I wasn't very aware of the physical pain at first. My mother is really the first person that I remembered at my side, holding me and sopping, as she said, "Honey, I'm so sorry, I've always been able to make things OK for you and this time

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I can't." Ironically, I wanted to apologize almost for not "doing well" with giving her and my dad a grandchild that they had hoped and prayed for. I stared into the night after I was alone in the hospital room and ironically could see the nursery where the new babies were. How odd and cruel, I thought and asked the nurse to please close the blinds. For whatever reason, even though given sleep medication, I fought to keep my eyes open.

I can't remember at what point I vaguely heard that my baby girl had died following meconium aspiration. I had read the word meconium in reference to the first bowel movement after their birth. How does this happen? Courtney had been so over due in being born that she had expelled the meconium in the birth canal and had aspirated it before she could be delivered. They had tried to resuscitate her but to no avail. She was in fact, 'in trouble' when the monitor reading was erratic. As the hours wore on, I asked my dad and husband to please go and dismantle everything we had so lovingly created in the nursery for our new baby for when we brought her home. Furthermore, I asked them to close the door before I came home.

Minutes crept by, hours dragged on and I couldn't close my eyes. Well-meaning people came by and I just couldn't bear to talk to them very much. I didn't want to hear their words of condolence. I just wanted this to be some kind of nightmare and wake up with my baby in my arms. Instead, people around me were looking into funeral arrangements and burial plots and what Courtney would wear for the burial. A Christening gown was decided upon by my mother-in-law. How ironic, I think now...a Christening means to welcome one into the church and be given a name. She had her name but her 'welcoming into the church' would be Heaven. And so it was, a funeral home was chosen and Courtney's little body was taken to be prepared for viewing and we proceeded on with what one does when a baby dies. One of the physicians in the OB/Gyn group that I used commented that I should not go to the funeral home or funeral, under any circumstance. I remember looking at him with what must have been dagger-like eyes and thinking, "you try and stop me from saying goodbye to my child".

The visitation was very surreal. It all seemed very odd to me that people were visiting and making conversation. I sat in a chair beside Courtney's small casket kissed her cold forehead goodbye. The time came for me to be taken to the cemetery for the burial and grave side service and I was ushered into our car parked directly behind a pale yellow Cadillac. How unusual, that our baby's nursery was decorated in yellow. Through massive tears, I watched as my young teenage brother and brothers-in-law served as pall bearers and carried the little casket down the steps and put into the back seat of the hearse. The procession began the long drive and by this time pain medication was wearing off. I quite frankly could hardly sit still due to a quick-cut emergency episiotomy, that I later found out was the culprit of my physical pain. But that didn't even rival the pain I felt as I longed for my child. One well-meaning lady even came to me and commented on what a beautiful name we had chosen, "You should use that name for another child." It struck me as so odd that she should say that with two lovely young daughters of her own and certainly

not having the same name. Why would I give the name I had selected for this baby girl to another child??? I just wanted to disappear and not hear one more word about how Courtney was now an angel with the Lord.

Going back home was torture and I cried almost every waking minute. I prayed to dream of her upon falling asleep. In the hours I was awake, I would just sit in our living room most days with no shower or make up and sob and stare into space. It's been an interesting journey after burying my baby girl. It changed my life at a very young age. I process time differently from others. You see, I watched life come and go within a very brief period of time. So, I've viewed 'time' and the value of it in a different way from most people. I have wanted to experience or work at as many various things as I could. I have difficulty in being still or not doing something productive, even today. My life is different now. I went on to have a beautiful, talented and Godly daughter, Lyndsey Brooke on June 17th, 1978. Just one year and four days after giving birth to Courtney. Ironically, Lyndsey has shared with me many times that she feels that someone, a sister or sibling, is missing in her life. Courtney and Lyndsey's father and my marriage became more and more rocky over the next several years and we eventually divorced when Lyndsey was 18, after 23 years of marriage. Our marriage was never the same after experiencing the pain. It is very hard not to blame each other in some way and more difficult because each person is grieving alone and can't seem to help the other partner with their grief process. Never thinking I would marry again, I was eventually introduced to a wonderful man, Tim Cavender, who I've been happily married to for 21 years. He has cried with me and stood by the graveside of Courtney's and even knelt by her little heart shaped monument to clean away the grass clippings and dirt that had settled there on the pink marble. He has loved me and my living daughter, Lyndsey, with a heart as big as Texas.

It's been 42 years. Time does heal, as they say, but memories don't fade. And they shouldn't, you know. I never want to forget my deceased baby girl. One of the most profound things ever said to me was from my maternal grandmother Annie Childers, my "Mama Childers", when her 60+ year old son died of Lou Gherig's disease. I went to the funeral home and she just reached out and held on to me tightly and we wept together. She whispered to me, "you know this pain, don't you honey?" And, I did. It was a moment that she and I shared that despite the age of our children at their time of passing, a child is a child, no matter how long you have them in this world. One who goes through the passing of their baby is forever changed. Parents wonder what their child would have been like. No two children are alike, and although I love my daughter Lyndsey, with every fiber of my being, Courtney took a piece of my heart with her that day. My belief is that I will see her again in Heaven, but, until then my sweet and beautiful baby girl, Courtney Elizabeth, you are forever in my heart and always on my mind. I love you my angel.

*Always, Mom*

# How to Answer, 'How Are You?' When Dealing With Grief

**By Grace Y. Lin, LMHC**

*Reprinted with permission from:*

*<https://www.myfarewelling.com/article/how-to-answer-how-are-you-when-dealing-with-grief>*

**Reminder:** You are a human being. So when you're experiencing grief after the loss of a loved one, a well-meaning "How are you?" can seem like the dumbest—or at least the most awkward—question you've ever heard. The truthful answer could be anything, but just coming up with that reply might stir up all kinds of feelings. You might find yourself in a mental flurry or fog. Some of the things you might wonder include:

- How can you possibly ask me that!?
- Do you really want to know?
- Even if you do, did you really think I'd spill my guts next to the copy machine?
- If I tell you, will you be able to handle it?
- If you handle it, am I going to like your response?
- Will I feel worse?
- Will you feel worse?
- Can someone please get me the hell out of here?

Then, after a grueling micro-second or three, with no real idea what you should say and no real plan to say what's really on your mind, you just blurt out:

"I'm fine."

When we're grieving, this question can seem insensitive and off-putting: "If that's all you can come up with, then you're either an unfeeling robot, or you simply don't care enough to deal with my feelings." Either way, the invalidation can be overwhelming and often encourages us to protect ourselves by pulling away from others. Better to be alone than to play the game of niceties with no real connection.

## ***Understanding the Question***

The key to navigating, "How are you?" is understanding that people often ask it because they don't have any flipping idea what else to say. It's filler talk for when you've gotta say something, but you've got nothing. Also, it's universal, so you'll probably hear it from everyone—co-workers you see once a week and close friends you've known for years.

So, how do you answer the "How are you" question when dealing with grief?

## ***Answers That May Work for You***

Before you respond, you need to know that it is not selfish to think about and protect your

own wellbeing. You don't have to give a thoughtful answer. In fact, if your goal is to exit the situation as quickly as possible, simple responses, such as "I'm fine," or "It's been difficult," may actually be effective. Adding "Thanks for asking" to any of those phrases provides a natural end to the conversation that won't invite deeper inquiry, and it conveniently offers a brief pause where you can take the opportunity to get the hell out of there. If that kind of exchange feels a bit too hollow for you in the moment, then you can choose to add a dollop of actual truth to your response: "I've been better," "I'm really struggling," or even a straight up "This truly sucks," could be just the thing.

### ***When a Friend Asks This Ridiculous Question While You're Grieving***

If the question is coming from someone you care about (and whose support you would welcome), give them a break. Despite how random it may seem, "How are you?" is often a synonym for "I'm uncomfortable with/weirded out by/terrified at the idea of talking about death." Especially in America, we are not encouraged or conditioned to talk about dying and death, and so when coming face to face with the subject, well, we got nothing. And that includes those who really love you.

At the thought of talking about dying, people freeze up. A hug may be replaced with a wave, eye contact disappears; and then, of course, those three little words: How are you. In total, the package may be interpreted as, "I don't want to be bothered by your grief," but in reality, there's an equal chance that the message is, "I have no idea how to help," or "I really don't want to upset you even more." That's why those who have grieved before often tend to say the right things. They've been there. They know how it feels. And they're not afraid because they've already come face to face with death.

While the thought of teaching someone how to engage with you may feel overwhelming and unfair given all that you're already shouldering, offering close friends and family the opportunity to learn HOW to engage in the face of death and dying—and more importantly what you need from them—may pay off in the long-run. They receive clarity, you get what you actually need, and it greatly reduces the risk of opening the gulf that is created when "I'm terrified of saying the wrong thing so I'll just say nothing" is met with "If you cared, you'd know what to say."

### ***Prepare Some Answers in Advance***

A little preparation can go a long way, so spending some time thinking about this in advance can be really helpful. Examples might include:

- I'm not doing so well today, but knowing you're there means a lot. Please feel free to keep asking.
- I'm not sure how I feel right now, but I would love some company in the next few days.
- This week has been really difficult, but please keep inviting me out. I may not accept for a while, but it helps to know that you're still thinking of me.

Offering this kind of clarity can be a gift—for your friends, for your family, and for yourself.

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# Hugs for Harrison

As January 29 approaches, we always begin to brainstorm how we are going to celebrate our baby boy's birthday, a birthday party without cake or candles or presents, a day that still, three years later, leaves us heartbroken at the deep loss we continue to feel without our Harrison.

We knew we wanted to celebrate his life with kindness, in particular with hugs, which we believe hold so much power.

So we decided to go back to where it started, to Northside Hospital, the place where we met and said "see you soon" to our baby boy, and to give big thank you hugs to the labor and delivery staff and H.E.A.R.T.strings staff, and let them know how grateful we are for their care that day and for every day since then.

With lunch and treats in tow, my little family including my husband, Bryan, our oldest daughter (Kate), our little rainbow (Hope), and our dear friend Joy Cannis, all headed to Labor and Delivery to provide lunch and big, squishy thank you hugs to as many as we could.

The love we felt in that little room filled us up to overflowing. It was a day where joy and grief collided, creating beauty out of ashes, and that's something that we believe is the reflection of the goodness and kindness of our Heavenly Father who has carried us each step of the way.

The amazing nurses and the ladies with H.E.A.R.T.strings are truly angels, selflessly giving so much each and every day. To honor them as we remembered our boy was the perfect way to celebrate his 3rd birthday, and we now look forward to this for many years to come!

Samantha Brinson

*[holdingharrison.wordpress.com](http://holdingharrison.wordpress.com)*



Photos by Joy Cannis Photography

# Parent-to-Parent

## *Stacey and Joe Yeager*

*(Stacey and Joe were the speakers at the 2019 Atlanta Walk to Remember. The following is their speech from the event. You can also view their story by the Fox5 Medical Team on our website under the About tab.)*

Good evening to the H.E.A.R.T.strings community. My name is Stacey Yeager and this is my husband Joe, and we are honored to be here tonight to share our message of remembrance and hope.

Before Joe begins, I'd like to read a short poem that has incredible meaning to me called  
**"I carry your heart with me" by e.e. cummings.**

*i carry your heart with me  
(i carry it in my heart)  
i am never without it  
(anywhere i go you go, my dear;  
and whatever is done by only me is your doing, my darling)*

*i fear no fate  
(for you are my fate, my sweet)  
i want no world (for beautiful you are my world, my true)  
and you are whatever a moon has always meant  
and whatever a sun will always sing is you*

*here is the deepest secret nobody knows  
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud  
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life;  
which grows higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)  
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart*

*i carry your heart  
(i carry it in my heart)*

Joe:

Our story begins 5 years ago, when Stacey unexpectedly went into preterm labor at just 20 weeks. We were eagerly preparing to be the parents of twin sons, Jackson and Aiden, and then all of a sudden, the dreams we had built for our family came crashing down. Our boys were born in the midst of a major snowstorm, and our friends and family could not be there with us. We were alone to bear the heavy weight of our sons' deaths before their lives had even begun. We did have 1 hour with them, which we spent marveling at Aiden's tiny hand clutching our pinky finger. Or at Jackson's features and how much he resembled the two of us. At first we thought of this hour as the most agonizing time of our lives, but now we feel incredibly lucky to have had that time with them.

It's a funny thing, to say that we feel lucky about anything associated with the deaths of our children. That's the gift that time and perspective have given us. We once felt surrounded by darkness and devoid of hope. But eventually, a few pixels of color and joy came into focus. We realized that life isn't meant to be dark and confined. We are all meant to shine through the darkness, if for no other reason than to serve as a lighthouse for others who may still be lost in the black night of grief. Finding this purpose has been a long road for us, and it didn't come easily. But we did find it, and so will you. You might not find the same purpose we did, but you will find meaning in your baby's life and discover a new significance to your own.

To those who have just lost your baby, we see you. We see the pain, the uncertainty, the baffling feeling of watching your world continuing on while your life is at a standstill. We see the pangs of unfounded guilt, the longing as you see your friends and family members welcome their own healthy babies into the world. We also see your strength and resiliency, even though you think you are at your weakest point in your life. You have an impossible strength, one brought forth from devastation and vulnerability. One that no one prepares for, and no one ever wants to call upon. But your strength is nonetheless something to be celebrated. It is awe-inspiring. It is your superpower. And your strength will return some color and joy to your life, which is an incredible way to honor your beloved baby and carry their memory forward with you.



# Ask the Expert Q&A

## How do I Handle Mother's/Father's day?

With the approach of these dates on the calendar, you may be feeling many emotions. Mother's Day and Father's Day can be very difficult to face. Often, even your closest family and friends may overlook you during these celebrations. In fact, there may be some who will think you are not accepting the loss of your baby if you want to celebrate Mother's Day or Father's Day in some way.

So, what should you do? Follow your heart. Let people know what you want (or don't want). By sharing your feelings and wishes with others, you allow them an opportunity to provide you with the support and recognition that you deserve and that is meaningful to you. Create a couple of options for plans for the day, and go with the one that feels best. Maybe you will do something to remember your baby such as visit a special place or gravesite, write a letter to your baby, volunteer or donate in memory of him or her, or simply spend the day under a blanket watching movies. Honor where you are.

### *Affirmations for Mourning Parents*

- Mother's/Father's Day does include me whether I get a card or not.
- It is my decision whether or not to answer the phone or the door.
- It's okay for me to cry and it's okay if I don't.
- I can be free of guilt; it wasn't my fault. The situation was out of my control.
- I can find support. There are people who understand. I am not the only mother/father who has lost a baby.
- I will seek counseling if I think it will be helpful.
- I can forgive those who say insensitive things about my experience.
- I can use my sorrow to support others during their times of grief.
- I will be more sensitive to others. I have learned how important empathy is.
- I can help educate others about perinatal loss. Sharing my story will increase awareness.
- I am still my baby's mother/father.
- I will remember that motherhood/fatherhood is every day, and not sweat this one celebration.



“I think we dream so we don't have to be apart for so long. If we are in each other's dreams, we can be together all the time.”

- A.A. Milne



# H.E.A.R.T.strings Support Group Resources

Our support groups provide a place where grieving parents can find comfort and companionship among others who understand. Our groups are open to the community, and free of charge. For information and schedules, and for other support resources including a list of recommended therapists, please visit [northsidepnl.com/supportgatherings](https://www.northsidepnl.com/supportgatherings). You may also email us at [northsidepnl@gmail.com](mailto:northsidepnl@gmail.com) or call 404-851-8177.

## ***Caring & Coping***

This group is open to parents and grandparents who have lost a baby due to miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, stillbirth and newborn death. This group meets most months of the year. Check our website for dates.

## ***Butterfly M.O.M.s (Missing Our Multiples)***

A social and support group for parents who have experienced the loss of one or more multiples and who are coping with the joys and challenges of raising the surviving baby(s). This group meets periodically for Mom's nights out and play dates. Please contact us for more information about this group.

## ***Rainbow P.A.L.S. (Pregnancy After Loss Support)***

A social and support group especially for parents who are pregnant again after the loss of a baby, or are considering a subsequent pregnancy after loss. Our mission is to celebrate these new pregnancies while offering support for the anxiety, fear, and emotions that are present during pregnancy after loss. Please contact us for more information about this group.

## ***A Time to Heal***

A support group for parents who have made the painful decision to end a pregnancy due to maternal or fetal complications. Please contact us for more information on this group.

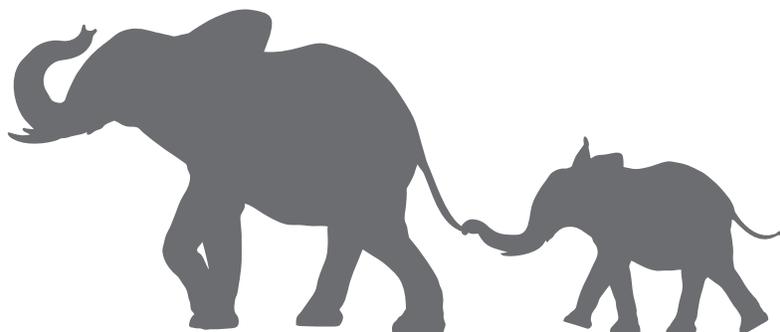
## ***H.E.A.R.T.strings Companions***

Matching parents with peer mentors when families need personal, one-on-one support. Call for more information, or go to our website and complete the interest form: <https://www.northsidepnl.com/companions-peer-to-peer-mentoring.html>

## **Support Groups for Siblings**

***Kate's Club*** - a non-profit organization that empowers children and teens after the death of a parent or sibling. Visit [katesclub.org](https://www.katesclub.org) for more information.

***The Link Counseling Center*** - a non-profit community-counseling center since 1971 that provides quality, affordable, confidential counseling, psychotherapy and support groups to all ages. Their program for children: The House Next Door, [thelink.org/children-teen-grief-support-groups](https://www.thelink.org/children-teen-grief-support-groups), local groups are available, call 770-730-5858 for more information.

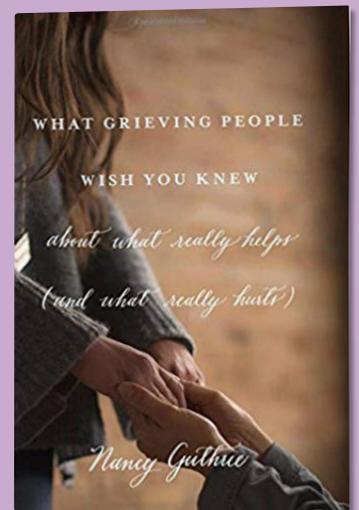


# Healing Hearts Book Club & Our Favorite Internet Resources

We want to hear from you...let us know what books or websites are helpful to you.  
This quarter's book selection is:

## ***What Grieving People Wish You Knew About What Really Helps (and What Really Hurts)***

When someone we love is grieving, we want to be there. But it's easy to feel paralyzed, worried that we might say or do the wrong thing. Nancy Guthrie has personal experience dealing with pain and knows what words of encouragement are helpful and what words are harmful. Drawing from her own life experiences—including the loss of two young children—Guthrie has written this helpful resource for Christians who want to be better friends to those who are suffering. Practical and down-to-earth, this book includes examples and helpful tips from real grieving people who have been helped (and hurt) by friends who meant well, equipping readers to come alongside and comfort loved ones who are hurting.



### Website Resources

***Chasing Rainbows Blog*** – [northsidepnl.blogspot.com](http://northsidepnl.blogspot.com) – Gentle support and connection to writers and resources in the perinatal loss community

***Northsidepnl.com*** – Website of the H.E.A.R.T.strings program

***Pregnancyafterloss.com*** – support for pregnancy after the loss of a baby

***Still Standing Magazine*** (<https://stillstandingmag.com/>) – For all who are grieving child loss and infertility

# Rainbows *on the* Horizon

This space is dedicated to the babies born after the heartache of loss, our Rainbows. 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 [northsidepn@gmail.com](mailto:northsidepn@gmail.com) or by calling 404-851-8177. Please send us your photos in the highest possible resolution.

*The Anderson Family*  
**Morgan Olivia Anderson**



# Thank You for Your Support!

There is a story behind every gift to H.E.A.R.T.strings. We are honored to remember these precious babies, and grateful for the generosity shown by you and your friends and families.

*Our funds are held by the Northside Hospital Foundation, and are tax deductible.*

## **H.E.A.R.T.strings Legacy Fund**

- **In memory of Natalie Grace Atkinson**  
Denise Atkinson  
Dr. & Mrs. John P. Atkinson
- **In memory of Arynn Brielle Banks**  
Thelbert & Lesley Snowden
- **In memory of Abby, Morgan, Lexi & Baby Boy Billeter**  
Liz & Kim Billeter
- **In memory of Michael Robert Bowers**  
Kim & Blake Bowers
- **From Amy and Trey Clayton**
- **In memory of Ophelia Kate Colby**  
Debby & Joe Bennett
- **In memory of Brody Cooper Emmert**  
Brian, Katherine, Arden & Sun Krieg  
Bennett Thrasher Foundation
- **In memory of Rayleigh Genovese**  
Jacob Street
- **In memory of Hallie Green**  
James & Shirley Chivers  
The Rolfingsmeyer's & the Oliver's  
Sandy Stewart  
Ted and Georgine Marshall
- **In memory of Noah Hugh Harris**  
Lena Ellison
- **In memory of Benjamin Raphael Hart**  
Cafria Hart
- **In memory of Molly Claire Hines**  
Garland Hines
- **In memory of Hannah Jayne Hoeflin**  
Michael & Sarah Hoeflin
- **In memory of Anna Sophia Holliger**  
Magdi Holliger
- **In memory of Matthew Daniel Kennedy**  
Christel Kennedy
- **In memory of Meghan Elizabeth Suzanne Kwon**  
David Postell
- **In memory of Michael Christopher Little**  
Steven Little
- **In memory of Charlotte Ada Low**  
Karen Low
- **In memory of Jackson McKeon**  
Tracey McKeon
- **In honor of Mark & Elle Montgomery**  
Seth Droe
- **In memory of Matthew McLaren Morrison**  
Kathleen Morrison (Mamaw and Papaw)  
Katie Spencer
- **In memory of Grady and all of the babies that we carry in our hearts**  
Keri & Chris Mullennix with their friends and family  
Lollie & Pop Wiggins  
Brian & Lauren Mullennix  
Kara Dryka  
Robert Wiggins
- **In memory of Joseph, Patrick and Frances Murphy**  
Shayne & Rachel Murphy
- **In memory of Liam Joseph Nulty**  
Mary E. Nulty
- **In memory of Theodore Charles Riddick**  
Debi Shendelman & Tom Riddick
- **In memory of Catherine Grace Schaffer**  
Amy Oldt
- **In memory of Hudson Smith**  
Dollene Quinn
- **In memory of Jack Lamar Smith**  
The Rolfingsmeyer's & the Oliver's  
James & Shirley Chivers  
Traci Chivers  
Sandy Stewart  
Ted and Georgine Marshall
- **In memory of Kaylee Adelaide Smith**  
Misty Smith
- **In memory of Kathryn Grace Soltis**  
Luvetta Jarmon
- **In memory of Rhys Wyatt Spengler**  
Kristine Spengler
- **In memory of Isabel Grace Thedford**  
John & Linda Lang
- **In memory of Rosemary Bowen Yeager**  
Carol Churchill
- **In memory of Eli Bennett Youngblood**  
Brooks & Abbey Youngblood

## Reagan Marie Teddy Bear Fund

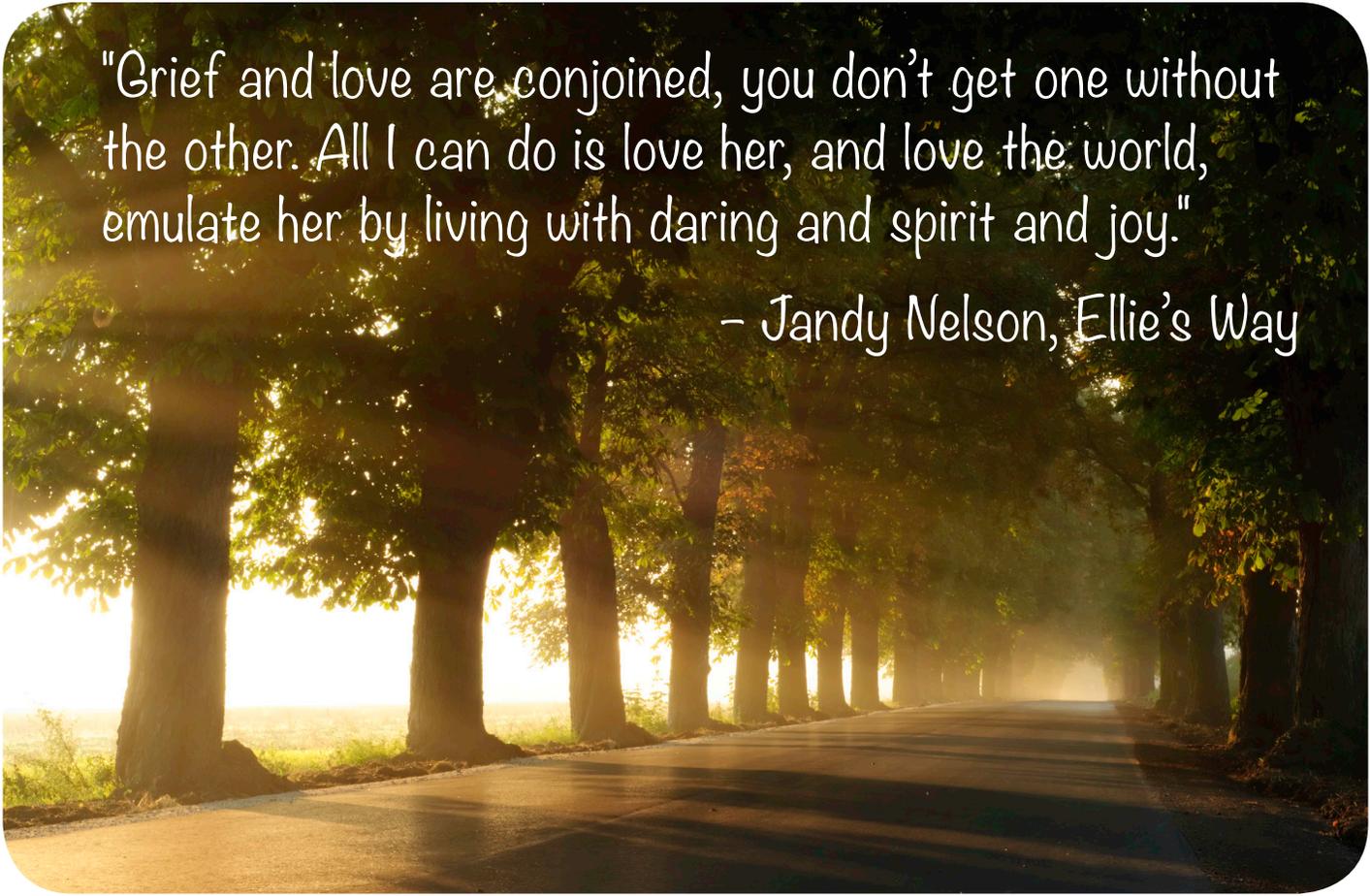
- In memory of Brody Cooper Emmert  
Ashley Addison
- In memory of Meghan Elizabeth Suzanne Kwon  
David Postell
- In memory of Matthew McLaren Morrison  
Holly Morrison
- In memory of Hudson Warren Smith  
Dollene Quinn

## Atlanta Walk to Remember Fund

Clifford Baseler  
Allison Cohen  
Jerry & Glenda Hendrix  
Brooks & Abbey Youngblood

## Gifts-In-Kind

- Knit blankets and hats from Chris Baumann
- Preemie clothing from Mystique Burke in memory of Jetori
- Crocheted blankets and hats and wooden elephant keepsakes from Elaine Sexton in memory of Gary Lee Smith
- Memory boxes and votive candles from Debbie Dennigmann in memory of Cameron August Dennigmann
- Handmade blankets and hats from Connie Pruco
- Preemie clothes from Julie and Brian Stifel in memory of Emma Eiliyah Stifel
- Crocheted blankets and hats from Katrina Crosby
- Blankets in memory of Wyatt Howard and in honor of Randy, Lindsay and Reagan Howard from Leigh Barnhardt



"Grief and love are conjoined, you don't get one without the other. All I can do is love her, and love the world, emulate her by living with daring and spirit and joy."

– Jandy Nelson, *Ellie's Way*

# Your generosity makes a tremendous difference in our mission!

## Our Partners

Big Canoe – Friends of the Auxiliary  
Frances Jackson – Big Canoe  
Canton Funeral Home & Cemetery at Macedonia Memorial Park  
Carter's  
Colton's Comfort  
Joy Cannis Photography  
Love's Foundation  
Northside Hospital Atlanta Auxiliary  
Northside Hospital Cherokee Auxiliary  
Northside Hospital Forsyth Auxiliary  
Reynolds + Lane Bows for Little Babes

If you would like to make a donation to the H.E.A.R.T.strings Perinatal Bereavement Program, please go to our website at [northsidepnl.com](http://northsidepnl.com) and click on the "donations" tab or call us at 404-851-8177. No donation is too large or too small. We are asked often to give guidance on items needed by the office.

### New: We have an Amazon Wish List!

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3Q51AUIQOEY3H?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3Q51AUIQOEY3H?ref_=wl_share)

### Memory Boxes

H.E.A.R.T.strings uses a simply decorated memory box for our families. If you would like to donate decorated memory boxes, a photo of our box is below. We use a standard white photo box, and the elephants can be found at Michaels, item number 10436438.

If you would like to add contents, we would love you to fill these boxes with anything that has helped you along your journey or something you think may help someone else.

### Other items we are always in need of:

- Hand and foot mold kits
- Kleenex boxes or small, "pocket" sized Kleenex packs
- Preemie sized clothing for boys and girls
- Knitted or crocheted blankets in all sizes



Thank  
You!

You can also support H.E.A.R.T.strings by linking your Kroger Plus card to our office. Please follow the link to get started:

[kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow](http://kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow)

  
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HOSPITAL**  
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