



Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Infant Loss Support

Volume 24, Issue 5

September/October 2019

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Grief...

**For those of us who understand,
no explanation is needed.
For those of us who do not,
no description is possible.**

-Fran Solomon, founder of healgrief.org



Resolving Family Issues

Sometimes we have the highest expectations for our family to support us in our grief. Yet sadly, we sometimes find our greatest disappointments from those expectations.

In this issue, we share our stories and advice on resolving these family issues. We are all here for you, to listen to your story and provide insight/advice if necessary through local support groups and an online support group.

In this issue...

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November/December Topic

Joy in Suffering

Especially During the Holidays

Deadline: September 30, 2019

January/February Topic

Helping Other Children Grieve

Deadline: November 30, 2019

Stories, poems, thoughts, and/or feelings regarding these topics are welcome. Submissions must be received by the deadline to be considered for publication in the magazine. Unfortunately, there is not enough room to include all submissions. Choices will be left to the discretion of the editors. Please send any submissions to our Magazine Editor, Jennifer Harrison, at jennifer@mend.org. Any submission printed in our magazine will also be posted to our website indefinitely. Because our magazines are posted online, please understand your name will be attached to your submission when searched on the Internet.

Letters to the Editor should be sent to jennifer@mend.org. All letters submitted to the editor are subject to be published in future issues, both in the print version and online, unless a letter's author expressly requests it not be published.

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Birthday Tributes: M.E.N.D. publishes heavenly birthday tributes in the corresponding magazine. Tributes must be submitted via the online form at www.mend.org.

<u>Heavenly Birthday</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
January/February	November 30
March/April	January 31
May/June	March 31
July/August	May 31
September/October	July 31
November/December	September 30



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YOUR GIFT MATTERS!

Our impact is greater when we give together. Donate on Sept. 19 from 6am-midnight at NorthTexasGivingDay.org

Support M.E.N.D. by donating through North Texas Giving Day, when your donation will help us earn extra contributions, no matter if you live in Texas or elsewhere! Watch facebook for more details!



Feature Article

Feature from our M.E.N.D. President and Founder, Rebekah Mitchell, Mommy to Jonathan and Baby Mitchell

As the Founder and Executive Director of M.E.N.D., over the years I have heard, read, and witnessed countless ways families deal with the death of their baby. Some parents choose to share their loss experience with the world, while others feel it is too personal to even talk about. It is not uncommon for a grieving grandmother to attend one of our support groups alongside her heartbroken, bereaved daughter, while someone else in the room may share how her mom told her it was time to move on and get over the loss. Regularly, frustrated parents seek advice from fellow M.E.N.D. parents on how to handle certain family interactions and issues during the grieving process, such as how do you tell your mother-in-law how hurtful it is when she keeps asking when she's going to get to be a grandmother?! Or when your dad exclaims he never, ever wants to see pictures of "that baby" again? And when your sister-in-law announces her pregnancy at your baby's funeral? That's the beauty of a support group - we get to share with each other our vents, as well as our ideas for resolutions to situations where there is a lack of support.

I am the main support group facilitator of our Dallas / Fort Worth chapter where M.E.N.D. is headquartered, and I attend a handful of our chapters' support groups across the country each year. Each time, I can walk into a room and know how the evening of sharing is going to go. From years of experience, I can pretty much predict what will be shared and what the responses of the attendees will be. Until a few years ago though, had I been asked if I thought I could make those same predictions if I were to attend a support group in another part of the world, I would have said no. My lack of experience caused me to think in such a way that those in other countries would have a very different view of pregnancy and infant loss, mainly due to varying cultures dictating family dynamics.

One day I received an email from a mom in Africa who was interested in starting a M.E.N.D.-type support group in her country. We communicated back and forth for several months, then providentially, she and her husband came to the United States for business. My leadership team and I had the opportunity to spend an afternoon

Families: Issues and Resolutions

and evening training them on directing a grief organization and how to lead a support group. As the sharing in the mock group unfolded, I was astonished to hear Angela in her Nigerian accent convey the exact emotions and feelings we listen to in our support groups here in the US. Coincidentally a few days later, I was invited to attend a support group hosted by our county hospital. It was run much like M.E.N.D., other than it was all in Spanish. I was not able to catch and comprehend every single word, but I recognized the body language and tears. I could decipher enough of what was being poured out from these Latino ladies to understand they were struggling with the same exact sorrowful emotions that are spoken in my English-speaking group just down the highway. Not long after that experience, I was needed to facilitate our online support group. Women from all parts of the country popped on that night seeking solace. And once again, I heard the common threads of emotions expressed.

That's when I realized M.E.N.D. is truly a family of its own. We are a unique tribe of people who get each other like no one else can. Nothing is too horrid, weird, or private to share. We know. If someone tells me about an issue within their biological family that I haven't dealt with, you can bet I can connect her with someone on my leadership team who has. The camaraderie in M.E.N.D. is matchless. A sisterhood of kindred spirits who have been through the same tragic trauma, and love each other so much because of it. We're family. We may have our own struggles and differences with each other, but at the end of the day, we realize it's not worth festering over the small stuff because blood is thicker than water, as they say. Truly we all have our branded color of purple running through our veins, making us a family incomparable to any other.

The camaraderie in M.E.N.D. is matchless. A sisterhood of kindred spirits who have been through the same tragic trauma, and love each other so much because of it.

Birthday Tributes



Happy 10th Birthday, Kaiya Dawn!

Happy 10th birthday, baby girl. Even 10 years later you are still part of my daily thoughts and your sister's conversations. We both miss you so much and feel your absence often. I cannot wait until we are all reunited. Until we meet again in heaven, from earth, we love you always.

Love,
Mom and Kaidyn

Kaiya Dawn Walker
October 23, 2009
Premature rupture of the membranes
Mommy: LaRhesa Johnson
Twin sister: Kaidyn Jamiel



Happy 6th Birthday, Keiran!

Happy 6th birthday to the boy who made us parents! We wish we could hold you and sing "Happy Birthday" to you, but your light was simply too bright to stay here with us. Someday we'll get to celebrate 1,000 splendid birthdays with you in heaven, but, until that day, we'll keep our eyes on the skies for your twinkle and shine. You are loved beyond measure, our little shining star!

Keiran David Cobler
October 25 - November 1, 2013
NEC
Also remembering
Fred and George Cobler
Miscarried March 3, 2017
Parents: Brian and Kristina Cobler
Sister: Karsyn



Happy 2nd Birthday, Roman!

Happy birthday, baby Roman. We miss you so much. We can't believe you are turning 2. It seems as if it was just yesterday we were blessed to see you. God answered our prayers and made us your parents. Thanks you for fighting for us to meet you. We will always remember you. I know you are enjoying your time in heaven.

We love you so much!
Your Mom, Dad and baby brother

Roman Lorenzo Delira
September 4-5, 2017
Incompetent cervix
Parents: Sarai and Angel Delira
Baby Brother: Mateo



Happy 3rd Birthday, Jude!

Happy 3rd birthday to our sweet Jude! I hope you are having the best party in heaven to celebrate. We miss you every day. I often imagine you running around with your brother and sister adding to our chaos. How I wish it was so! God had a bigger plan for you, though. You are a very special part of our family, and I know you are watching over each one of us. We love you so much and know we will get to be with you in heaven one day.

Love,
Mommy, Daddy, Joey and June

Jude William Henrich
August 19, 2016
Genetic disorder
Parents: Joe and Jane Henrich
Siblings: Joey and June



Happy 2nd Birthday, Yuliette!

Happy 2nd heavenly birthday to our beautiful princess! I wonder all the time how our lives would be if you were here with us. Now that your birthday is getting closer, I just wonder how you would be and what your birthday party would be like with you here. You came into our lives for just a little time, but you changed our lives forever. Mommy, Daddy and big brother love you so much, and we will always have you in our hearts until we hold you in our arms again.

Love always,
Mommy, Daddy and big brother

Yuliette Ayleen Bustamante
August 31, 2017
Cord accident
Parents: Yesenia and Angel Bustamante
Big brother: Abraham



Happy 1st Birthday, Amära!

Amära came into this world breathless but very loved. We had learned we lost her three weeks before her due date. No words could describe our pain and our grief toward our first baby. We miss her every day. I cherish the nine months I had with her, feeling her grow and giving her the best home I could. We honor her every day with mementos of her around us and hold her so close to our heart. We love you, baby Amära, and we know you were too beautiful for this earth.

Love,
Mama

Franciá Amära Moreno
September 7, 2018
Toxoplasmosis
Parents: Francisco Moreno and Brittany Rovatsos



Happy 12th Birthday, Brandon!

Happy heavenly 12th birthday, Brandon! Not one second goes by that you're not far from my heart or mind. My hope is that you are celebrating with all your heart and living life as the child I wish I still had. We love you so much! Until we meet again, sweet dreams, my sweet angel.

Mommy Jennifer and brother Ethan

Brandon Isaiah Alfaro
October 19, 2007 - February 7, 2009
Spinal muscular atrophy
Mommy: Jennifer Alfaro
Brother: Ethan

**Happy 5th Birthday, Andrew!**

We're sure you're having a wonderful celebration today in heaven. Five years old is a milestone birthday, and we can't help but try to imagine the big boy you've become. Since the day we told you "Goodbye," the weight of our grief is easier to carry, but the longing we feel is as strong as ever. We all wish for just one more moment on earth with you. Until our heavenly reunion, know that you will always have a special home in our hearts. Happy birthday, little man.

Love,

Mommy, Daddy, Leah, Hannah and Noah

Andrew Robert Bateman
October 7, 2014
Unknown cause
Parents: Tim and Laura Bateman
Siblings: Leah, Hannah and Noah

**Happy 10th Birthday, Sereana!**

How in heaven could these 10 years have passed?

All the while you're with Jesus hands clasped.

It's been a decade

and my heart still struggles to grasp

But, O what joy

when we're celebrating together at last!

Happy 10th birthday, our naphtali, my Sereana Joy! You go ahead, leaping and bounding to heaven's heights. Song of my mother and gift to my father, we love you, Sereana. Happy birthday! I love you so very much.

Love,
 Your Mom

Sereana Joy Ratulele
Stillborn September 9, 2009, at full-term
Unknown cause
Parents: Semi and Laura Ratulele
Sisters: Noela Esiteri and Talei Jewel

**Happy 2nd Birthday, Zachary!**

I remember the feeling of pure joy and love when I first held you in my arms. I never doubted you would be here to celebrate your 2nd birthday with us. I wish I could bake you a special cake and decorate it with all your favorite things. Instead we bittersweetly celebrate remembering our sweet baby boy and perfect baby brother. We miss and love you every day.

Zachary James Law
October 1-17, 2017
Adeno virus
Parents: Carrie and Irwin Law
Sisters: Scarlett and Lydia

**Happy 6th Birthday, Elijah!**

I can't believe how much time has passed. You would have started school this year. I keep imagining how you would be. Would you be excited? Nervous? Terrified? All three? I miss you so much, baby boy. We love you with our whole hearts, and we miss you every day. Your sister loves to share that she has a big brother in heaven. I hope you are smiling down on us. We love you now, forever, and always.

Mommy and Ellie

Elijah Zane Bastian
Stillborn October 3, 2013
Mommy: Lacey Bastian
Little sister: Ellie Bastian

**Happy 41st Birthday, Elizabeth!**

Hi, baby girl. Happy 41st birthday! I hope you have a blast there in heaven. We are wishing you were here with us so we can celebrate your special day. Mama loves you and misses you. Alexis, Issac, Samuel, Leah and Xavier wish their Aunty Elizabeth a happy birthday too! Arianna is there with you, so give her and Dad a big hug and kiss from us.

Elizabeth Nicole Garcia
Miscarried October 18, 1978
Parents: Paul and Jeannie Garcia
Siblings: Monica, Sylvia, Christina and Stephanie

**Happy 20th Birthday, Ashley!**

Happy 20th birthday, Ashley! We miss you every day. Love you, til we meet again...

Mama, Daddy, Laura, Logan and Katherine

Ashley Renee Dedear
October 29 - November 1, 1999
Extreme prematurity/placental abruption
Parents: Tim and Cindy Dedear
Siblings: Laura, Logan and Katherine



Life After Loss

Providing for Others

During the darkest times in our lives, we sometimes find needs met by others. Sometimes even complete strangers. These moments, these people, provide a comfort to help make the situation a little less painful, allowing us to focus on our grief and on the memories we have.

Some find help in their grieving process and/or in creating a legacy of their baby by providing others with the same comfort they received, whether it be a gift, something for their baby or even just a shoulder upon which to cry and a listening ear to someone else in grief.

Winter is one of these mamas. I was referred to her through another mama. I asked her to share her story with me, and the work she is doing for Colton's legacy. Colton not only lived a beautiful life, he is continuing his life through Colton's Cause, inspiring his family to do more for babies and families with similar stories. Here is their story.

Colton's Cause Written by Winter Reidle Mommy to Colton Jerome

On July 17, 2015, our son, Colton Jerome, was born into heaven, silent and perfect due to an umbilical cord issue. The first days dragged by so slowly; I had no clue what to do. One of the things I had to do, though, was plan a funeral and burial for my son. A local funeral home provided not only a plot at no cost, but the entire funeral service as well, both being extremely expensive.

If it hadn't been for pure generosity, we would not have been able to provide a proper service for our son. Generosity is also what helped us pay for his headstone, a very unexpected cost of more than \$500.

As we visited his grave during those first two years, I always noticed all the other infant and child graves without permanent markers. I finally said to my husband, "Surely something can be done to get stones for these angels." He told me to pray about it, so I did. The next morning I called the same funeral home that so generously provided the services for our Colton. In turn, he called the monument company who agreed to do small stones at cost: \$50 each. This is how Colton's Cause came to be.

We had someone to create the stones, but we had to figure out how to pay for them. I decided to try a Facebook fundraiser. Again, I prayed, asking God for a sign I was doing His will. "Just a \$1 donation, Lord, is all I need to know this is the path you want me to walk."

The very next morning, we had our first donation. Not \$1, but \$100!

Solely through donations, we have ordered 43 stones, but that has only been the beginning. We have since started memory box and angel gown programs for local hospitals. Our main goal is to spread awareness about infant loss, and help as many families as we can. I cannot take full credit for any of this, as none of it would be possible without God. I will keep Colton's memory alive as long as I live. To find the Colton's Cause Facebook page please search ColtonsCauseMO2018.



Are you doing something in memory of your baby to help others?
Please share! Send your story to jennifer@mend.org.

In Loving Memory

Thank YOU for your support

Abigail Grace Crump

July 1, 2003

Trisomy 18

Given by parents Gerald and Jaimie Crump
and little sisters Cami and Karli

Parker and Riley Davis

November 14, 2006

Premature

Given by parents Rob and Cheryl Davis
and siblings Annalise and Owen

Paislee Ann Frette

April 4-5, 2012

Wolf-Hirschhorn Syndrome

Parents: Brent and Courtney Frette

Little sister: Colbie

Given by Grandparents James and LuAnn Junkin

Serenity Harrison

Miscarried December 3, 2009

Given by parents Curtis and Jennifer Harrison
and siblings Levi, Ziva and Evie

Samuel Hintz

Stillborn October 30, 2008

Cord accident

Parents: Greg and Sara Hintz

Siblings: Louis, Caleb, Anna, Elijah,
Hope, Levi, Isaiah, Kaliyah and Oakley

Gifts given by Kathryn Lange
Crissy Seamster

Cambri Jade Jenkins

September 8, 2010

Baby Jenkins

July 8, 2013

Given by parents Jeff and April Jenkins
and siblings Clara, Chandler and Colt

Ellery Lauren Kapenga

Given by Karen Schwark

Indigo Kilbourn

Miscarried July 28, 2013, at 10 weeks

Red Kilbourn

Miscarried October 8, 2014, at 8 weeks

Parents: Chad and Karen Kilbourn

Siblings: Roxy, Gunner and Sloane

Given by Darla and Robert Williams

Magdalene Marie

Given by anonymous

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord accident

Baby Mitchell

Miscarried December 2001

Gifts given by

Parents Byron and Rebekah Mitchell

Grandmother Marnie Mitchell

Margot Lily Perry

Stillborn June 10, 2013

Cord accident

Gifts given by parents Brandon and Marisa Perry
and siblings Adeline, Bennett and Noelle
Grandparents Mary and Norman Lorentz

Mary Grace Presley

June 12-17, 2019

Parents: Jenny and Sam Presley

Gifts given by Judy Roesel

Bruce Balius

Linda Dragone

Cathey Hopkins

Laura Pachella

Mary Navo

Cherise Toler

Daphanie Woody

Traci Wickersham

Divya Parambi

Kristin Keller

Nadine Romero

Elena Marie Rusert

May 23, 2011

Premature

Parents: Tina and Michael Rusert

Brothers: Liam, Asher and Gavin

Given by cousin Sophia Orquiz

Lauren Schlater

Given by Eli Schlater

Mindy and Maggie Smith

Stillborn November 4, 1997

TSTS and Polyhydramnios

Given by parents Scott and Karla Smith

and siblings Travis and Julia

Alexander Matthew Solano

Given by Colleen McKenna Shaw

Thank you to those who recently held a Facebook fundraising campaign or donated to M.E.N.D. through one of these. We are so thankful for our family and friends who show love and support during activities like these or other areas such as sharing about M.E.N.D., assisting at events, or simply and most importantly, praying for us.

Adrian Joseph "AJ" Zuckerman

Stillborn March 30, 2007

Cord accident

Given by parents Al and Amber Zuckerman
and brothers Eli and Alex

Gifts of Support:

Christ Church Assembly of God, Fort Worth, TX
Second Baptist Church, Springfield, MO

Janis Kidder

Maricela Akshar

Edith and Daryle Wieland

Ashley Hazlewood

Margarita Anderson

Thank you to those who lovingly gave in support of our new chapter in Columbus, Ohio, led by Chapter Director LaTrina Bray, mommy to Kimani Renae, Jeremiah Earl and Laila Joyce.

Kimani Renae Bray

Jeremiah Earl Bray

Laila Joyce Bray

Gifts given by:

Parents Earl III and LaTrina Bray

Eugenia Miller

Michael Reese

Vermish Smith

Lynn Isaac

Julia and Robert Lichi

Rev Earl and Linda Bray, Jr.

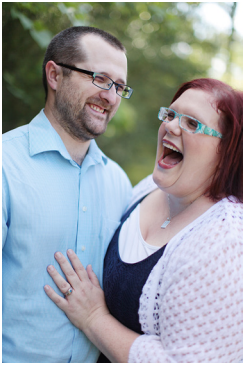
There is a unique
PAIN
that comes from
preparing a place in your
HEART
for a child that
NEVER COMES.

-David Platt

M.E.N.D. gratefully acknowledges these gifts of love given in memory of a baby, relative, friend or given by someone just wanting to help.

These donations help us to continue M.E.N.D.'s mission by providing this magazine and other services to bereaved parents free of charge. For more information on how you can support M.E.N.D., please see the "About M.E.N.D." section in the back of this magazine.

Be like my family: Bear each other's burdens



Written by Stormy Mitchell
Mommy to Avery, Gideon and Joy
M.E.N.D.—Greater Houston Area
Chapter Director

On May 17, 2011, our son was stillborn. I was 33 weeks and 4 days pregnant when he was delivered into this world. My husband, Todd, and I spent hours holding him, kissing him, and loving on him, knowing we would never get to hold him again. Many members of my family, a few of our friends, and our pastors were there for us. Those were the ones who were there, holding us when we wept deeply that our son, Gideon, had died. They stayed with us through our labor, when he was born and the hours after. They held him and met him and saw his beautiful face. We have pictures of many of Gideon's family holding him and our friends meeting him. Those were the most heartbreaking and agonizing moments, but by far the most precious minutes and hours of my life. I could sense the Lord was with us, holding us closely as we held our baby's body in our arms, while He was holding our son in heaven.

Our friends and my family were amazing in those days and in the days and months and years to come. My parents and siblings have remembered our son over the years and always count him. They talk about him often and support us always.

I could sense the Lord was with us, holding us closely as we held our baby's body in our arms, while He was holding our son in heaven.

His Parents

Did you notice I only mentioned my family and not my husband's mother and father? That is because they were not there. They never offered to come, they never even made an attempt to come to help be there for their son, who had just lost his own son. Thankfully, my family is one of those families that when you join by marriage, you are completely part of the family. My parents treat my husband as their very own son, and my siblings treat him like a brother, so my husband was not without support. But I know it would have been nice for him if his own

parents cared enough to come, to drive the 2-4 hours to be there with their own child. Neither one of his parents even asked if Todd needed them to come.

They did attend Gideon's funeral. While my parents and siblings helped us plan, made arrangements when we couldn't, called our family and friends, called the funeral home, and more, his parents simply showed up the day of the funeral, nothing else. We had acquaintances who did more for us than they did. His mother left the funeral before everyone else, saying she needed to get back to her dogs to care for them, never considering she needed to care for her own son. Never even seeming like she had any emotion toward her one and only grandchild dying. She just left. My family, our friends, and our extended family were still there after his funeral. I turned to my husband and asked "Where is your mom?" He simply said, "She already left." But his face told more as it fell even further than it was before. She left before my old work friends, before my husband's friends, before church acquaintances. She just left. At her own grandson's funeral. She was the first to leave. We later told her how we felt, and she never responded to us. She ignored our feelings. My husband stopped speaking to her after that.

My husband's father stayed after the funeral and wanted to have dinner with us. My parents, brother and sister-in-law, Todd and I, his father and step-mother went to dinner after our son's funeral. I didn't want to be there, but I felt like I had to go. I was miserable every moment. My father-in-law never asked how we were doing, never asked about Gideon. He just pretended like we hadn't just come from burying our child, his grandchild. At least he made some sort of effort to be supportive in his own way by staying through the service and dinner after. But that is where the majority of his support ended.

His Grandparents

My husband was raised mostly by his grandparents; he was closer to them than he ever was his mom and dad. They were in their 80s when our son died, and it was not the way of older people to talk about this kind of loss. However, my husband's grandmother asked to see pictures of Gideon. I emailed some to her. She said she looked at them and thanked me for sending them. She asked some questions about the way he looked (his skin was dark, and he had some skin slippage from being gone inside of me for about three days before he was delivered), and we talked about him. I appreciated the effort they both made. His

His grandfather... said that our living son was his 2nd cowboy because Gideon was his first. That really touched our hearts because it showed us he loved Gideon, too, and missed him.

he loved Gideon, too, and missed him.

My husband's grandparents have joined Gideon in heaven. When his grandmother died, his grandfather made sure to include our Gideon in the "Preceded in Death" part of the obituary. When his grandfather died, my husband's father did include Gideon in the obituary, so that was one nice thing he did to acknowledge his grandchild. Yet he hasn't again since.

Anniversary

Our Gideon was stillborn on our wedding anniversary. The day he was born was our 8th wedding anniversary. It makes that day bittersweet, to say the least. We always ask that people acknowledge his birthday on that day. It is more special to us that he be remembered than someone telling us "Happy Anniversary." All of our friends and family are aware of this day. On Facebook and Instagram, I always make a long post about his birthday being what we choose to focus on that day. Yet, even though my in-laws are aware of the day, May 17 is a day they each handle in their own way-for them, but not for us.

My mother-in-law never contacts us on his birthday. She blamed me for Gideon's death, stating I didn't eat enough during my pregnancy and that's why he was small for gestational age. He had IUGR from a velamentous cord insertion, which had nothing to do with my diet. Even though I explained what happened medically, she still blamed me. She pointed her finger at me for his death. That was despicable and disgusting.

My father-in-law has chosen to only acknowledge our anniversary on May 17, and to completely ignore Gideon's birthday. He will text my husband, or post on my Facebook to tell us "Happy Anniversary," but say nothing of Gideon.

They say nothing. Nothing about their own grandson. My father-in-law has told my husband it is too sad to recognize our son's birthday, and he wants to focus on only the happy part of that day. It is not his place to decide how we celebrate and remember on that day. He does not realize those two cannot be separate. May 17 is forever both our wedding day and Gideon's earthly and heavenly birthday.

grandfather, when we had our 2nd son, our first living child, called him his "little cowboy," and said that our living son was his 2nd cowboy because Gideon was his first. That really touched our hearts because it showed us

They ignore his birthday and in essence, they ignore him. That is not okay with me. It is not okay to treat my son as if he didn't exist, as if he doesn't matter.

It is a day to be celebrated, because on that day, May 17, 2003, when we got married, it was the day that was the beginning to the fateful and life changing day on May 17, 2011. When someone chooses to just tell us happy anniversary, they are spitting in the face of the love that his life created. By doing so, they are telling us he didn't matter at all. I cannot and will not accept that. He mattered when he was alive, and he still does even after he has died.

My husband's parents have never really supported him in any meaningful way, and they really didn't when our son died. We didn't really expect them to, but there is always that little bit of hope you hang on to. I never understood how someone who has had a grandson die, could just basically ignore it. But that is what they have chosen to do. From two people who claim to love children and constantly asked us about when we were having kids, they never seemed to care much when we lost our son, because it made them uncomfortable. However, it didn't matter how uncomfortable they were, they should have been there for their son when he was at his lowest point. Instead, my parents were that support to him. My parents supported us. My father-in-law gets very uncomfortable if we mention Gideon at all. He immediately changes the subject and refuses to even speak of him. He says nothing about him at all and will not speak of him. I feel as if my husband's parents see Gideon as some sort of bad thing that happened. They don't see him for who he was; he is seen as just some unfortunate circumstance. They don't truly count him as a grandchild. They don't really love him. They completely ignore that he existed.

And honestly, it makes me sad for them. They are the ones who miss out on all the blessings that have come from his life. They are the ones who are missing out on seeing how God still uses him in this world. They are the ones who will never experience this deep, life-changing, love. They are missing out. They miss out on watching God work through his

life on this earth. So, I feel sorry for them. If someone chooses to only focus on the

If they cannot see the joy and the good that Gideon has given us, they are missing out on a huge blessing by seeing him only in the terms of his death.

Continued from previous page

sadness of his death and not the blessing of his life, that is sad for them. If they cannot see the joy and the good that Gideon has given us, they are missing out on a huge blessing by seeing him only in the terms of his death. Those people should look at him and all the ways his life is beautiful. Because it is. Gideon's life and how God uses him is shockingly beautiful.

Expectations

While my husband's parents were lacking in the support and understanding, he has some other family who have been very kind to us - mostly in a distant way, but sweet and kind. And for as unsupportive as my husband's parents are, my parents, and my whole family, are equally supportive. We have very low expectations when it comes to my husband's parents. We expect them to do very little. We still expected them to be a little supportive in the days following Gideon's death, but they weren't. Therefore, we lowered our expectations even more, to zero. We expect them to do nothing to support us. This way, when they do nothing or do something like ignore his birthday, we aren't disappointed. Nowadays, we just expect them to do and say nothing.

We lean on those who we know who will love us and love our son in the way he deserves. We have found immense support in our friends, our church, in our M.E.N.D. family, and in my family. My family always remembers him. They never get uncomfortable when we mention him. They talk about him freely and openly. When we mention my pregnancy with him, they talk about it. My siblings talk about him and count him as my son. They talk about his red hair and what he looked like. They support us in the work we do for M.E.N.D. They give us emotional and practical support. They are there. My husband and I can depend on them. I know that they will always remember him. I have even told my family that when my husband and I die, I need them to change out Gideon's flowers at the cemetery. I know they will do that for us if they have to. I have very high expectations for them. They truly are the best. It is like night and day when comparing my family to my husband's parents.

I feel like God gives us people to support us, and sometimes it isn't our own family. Sometimes it is the in-laws, sometimes it is cousins, aunt and uncles, extended family, or friends. Sometimes it is church family. And sometimes it is our M.E.N.D. family. It may never be our own family to support us.

Some wisdom and advice for family members and even just friends:

- Kudos to you for reading this article and magazine. Just knowing you are trying to learn more about how to help us in our grief, is a big help.
- If you are uncomfortable, you need to get over that for the parents of the baby. If you are sad, they are immeasurably sadder. Please overcome your feelings to support them. Put your discomfort aside to help them in whatever way they need.
- In terms of support, small things are huge. Arrange to have meals sent to their house, send them a card in the mail, or send a gift card so they don't have to cook dinner. Send them a text on their baby's birthday. Donate in memory of their baby to a charity and let them know. Ask the parents what kind of support they need.
- When they talk about their baby, listen. Don't walk away. Ask them questions. Ask them "What did she look like?" or "What was it like when you felt him move the first time?" Ask about their pregnancy. Ask how they are feeling today. Remember their baby with them. You may feel like it is awkward, but you talking to them about their baby will bring peace and joy to them. Talk about their baby as you would a living baby.
- Don't ever say "At least..." and don't belittle their feelings or their baby's life. Don't use any of those sayings like "God needed another angel" or "He is in a better place." None of those sayings are helpful and are very hurtful. Honestly, do you think Jesus would look into the hurting eyes of parents who have just lost a baby and say, "He is in a better place"? No! I believe He would weep. He would hug these parents, and He would listen to their prayers and listen to their heartache. He would grieve with them. Do that for your family member.
- Tell them you love and miss their baby, too. It doesn't matter how many years have passed, you can do any of these things above and these will let the family know you are there to support them. And the most important thing is that you remember their baby with them.

We never want our babies to be forgotten, so knowing our families will remember with us brings so much peace to our hearts. Be this kind of family member. Be one they can depend on. Be a family member they can count on for support.

Be like my family.

"Carry each other's burdens,
and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."- Galatians 6:2

Building Bridges Across Shattered Hearts

Susan Adams, PhD, LPC, BC-NCC
 "Providing Guidance Through Life's Storms"
www.drsusanadams.com

Death carries so many levels of loss. Loss of joy; destroyed dreams; perhaps broken relationships. Recovering from this multi-level pain can be very difficult and couples may find their relationship pulling apart under the crushing devastation of the death of their loved one. It often is a daily struggle to find their way through the shroud of grief that drapes their world.

The question is "Now What?"

So many decisions to make when the couple, or extended family, lacks the energy to make simple choices. The thought of finding resolutions among these choices they face can be overwhelming. An exploration of some of these decisions will briefly be explored because of this article's limitations.

First, what do you do with all the baby's clothes? What about the toys and decorations in the baby's room? None of these choices are right or wrong. It just depends on the couple. Some want to give everything away because it is too painful to see them. Some want to pack them away. (Suggestion: If you pack them away, purchase a plastic tub available at stores like Target, Walmart, or multiple others. Once you pack the clothes away, snap the lid in place where the things are readily available if you want to take them out from time to time.)

If you give toys and furniture away, try making something else out of the room (e.g., sewing room, hobby room, media room, etc.). However, do not be in a hurry to make decisions or feel pressured by others to pursue solutions that seem right to them. If something does not "feel right" for you, simply re-arrange the room for a bit and do not do anything. However, some couples find it more difficult to dispose of or pack things away the more time passes. Therefore, it is recommended not to let too much time pass before you begin to make some small decisions.

Second, recognize that no one really understands your journey - even if their child has died. Why? Because this is your journey - not theirs! **Do not let anyone put their "template" on your grief journey.** When others offer a comment like, "When our baby died, we did....". Simply thank them for sharing their experience; however, insist that you have not reached a decision yet. Then politely walk away.

Third, it is a fact that there are differences in males and females when it comes to grieving. Usually one member of the couple is a "fixer." When faced with a problem or challenge, the fixer may want to fix the other. However, the pain cannot be fixed or erased. Hearts are broken and no amount of super glue can help the other return to the original pain free normal that existed before the death.

The other member of the couple may struggle to simply find the strength to get up every morning, put one foot in front of the other, and find enough working brain cells to carry out daily activities. This half of the couple may be used to being able to lean on the fixer partner and see them as the strong one in the relationship. However, isolation and despair may reveal that there is no strong one to lean on; there is no easy fix.

Solutions - Simple, but Effective

- 1) Find a quiet time to share your grief together with no expectations. Just focus on the togetherness of what you have both lost.
- 2) Do not seek to find the "why." Even if there is a medical reason for the death, the "why" will not erase the pain or hole in your heart.
- 3) Find a way to verbalize feelings to each other. Recognize this may be difficult for each of you. Be sensitive to this risky sharing and accept the differences that each experience.
- 4) Do not forget that immediate or extended family may be impacted as well. Include them in the grieving process, but do not let them "take over." Although they may mean well, remember the two of you are grieving - not broken!
- 5) If you find you cannot engage in life and living (e.g., going back to work, able to return to daily chores, etc.), you may want to seek professional counseling as a couple or individually. A professional trained in grief work can often help you find a roadmap through your grief journey.



Familias: Problemas y Resoluciones

*Artículo de Presidente y Fundadora,
Rebekah Mitchell,
Mamá de Jonathan Daniel y bebé Mitchell*

Como Fundador y Directora Ejecutiva de M.E.N.D., a lo largo de los años he escuchado, leído y presenciado innumerables maneras en como las familias soportan la muerte de su bebé. Algunos padres eligen compartir su experiencia de su pérdida con el mundo, mientras que otros sienten que es incluso demasiado personal. No es raro que una abuela afligida atienda uno de nuestros grupos de apoyo a lado a su hija desconsolada y afligida, mientras que otra persona en el grupo puede compartir de cómo su madre le dijo que era hora de seguir adelante y superar la pérdida. Regularmente, los padres frustrados buscan consejo de otros padres de M.E.N.D. sobre cómo manejar ciertas interacciones y problemas entre la familia durante el proceso de lamentar por ejemplo ¿cómo le dices a tu suegra lo hiriente que es cuando sigue preguntando cuándo va a llegar a ser abuela?! ¡O cuando tu padre exclama que nunca, nunca quiere volver a ver fotos de “ese bebé”! ¿Y cuando tu cuñada anuncia su embarazo en el funeral de tu bebé? Esa es la belleza de un grupo de apoyo - llegamos a compartir entre nosotros nuestros respiraderos, así como nuestras ideas para las resoluciones a situaciones donde hay falta de apoyo.

Soy la facilitadora principal del grupo de apoyo de nuestro capítulo de Dallas / Fort Worth donde M.E.N.D. tiene su sede, y asisto a un puñado de grupos de apoyo de nuestro capítulo en todo el país cada año. Cada vez, puedo entrar en esa habitación y saber cómo va a ir la noche de compartir. Por años de experiencia, puedo predecir más o menos lo que se compartirá y cuáles serán las respuestas de los asistentes. Hasta hace unos años, sin embargo, si me hubieran preguntado si pensaba que podría hacer esas mismas predicciones si asistía a un grupo de apoyo en otra parte del mundo, habría dicho que no. Mi ingenuidad me hizo pensar de tal manera que los de otros países tendrían una visión muy diferente del embarazo y la pérdida de infantiles, principalmente debido a las diferentes culturas que dictan dinámicas familiares.

Un día recibí un correo electrónico de una madre en Africa que estaba interesada en iniciar un M.E.N.D.-tipo grupo de apoyo en su país.

Nos comunicamos de ida y vuelta durante varios meses, y luego providencialmente, ella y su esposo vinieron a los Estados Unidos por razones de sus negocios. El equipo de liderazgo y yo tuvimos la oportunidad de pasar una tarde y una noche entrenándolos para dirigir una organización de aflicción y cómo dirigir un grupo de apoyo. A medida que se desarrollaba el compartir en el grupo simulado, me sorprendió escuchar a Angela con su acento nigeriano transmitir las emociones y sentimientos iguales a los que escuchamos en nuestros grupos de apoyo aquí en los EE.UU.. Casualmente, unos días más tarde, me invitaron a asistir a un grupo de apoyo organizado por nuestro hospital del condado. Se ejecutó como M.E.N.D., aparte de que todo era en español. Yo no estaba capaz de capturar y comprender cada palabra, pero yo reconocí el lenguaje corporal, las lágrimas, y podría descifrar suficiente de lo que se estaba derramando de estas señoras Latinas a entender que estaban luchando con las mismas emociones dolorosas exactas que se hablan en mi grupo Inglés-justo al final de la carretera. No mucho después de esa experiencia, fue necesario facilitar nuestro grupo de apoyo sobre el internet. Las mujeres de todas las partes del país apareció en esa noche en busca de consuelo. Y una vez más, escuché los hilos comunes de las emociones expresadas. Fue entonces cuando me di cuenta de que M.E.N.D. es realmente una familia propia. Somos una tribu única de personas que se entienden como nadie más puede. Nada es demasiado horrible, raro o privado para compartir. Lo sabemos. Si alguien me habla de un problema dentro de su familia biológica con el que no he tratado, puedes apostar a que alguien existe en mi equipo de liderazgo con quien puedo conectarla. La camaradería en M.E.N.D. es inigualable. Una hermandad de espíritus afines que han pasado por el mismo trauma trágico, y se aman tanto por ello. Somos familia. Podemos tener nuestras propias luchas y diferencias entre nosotros, pero al final del día nos damos cuenta de que no vale la pena festerere sobre las cosas pequeñas porque la sangre es más gruesa que el agua, como dicen, y realmente

Continued on page 16.

Kvetching Order: How Support Should Flow

Written by Jennifer Harrison

Mommy to Serenity

M.E.N.D.—*Magazine Editor*

Grief. So messy and so difficult. So beautiful and sometimes so ugly. Many times we don't even know what to do with ourselves. We don't even know how to handle ourselves. Sometimes we feel like we are just numb, zombies to the world, trying to survive. Other times we are constantly sad, constantly crying, constantly angry, constantly feeling like we have no control over our emotions. There are times we are angry, mad at God, mad at ourselves, mad at others, mad at the world. And there are times we are at peace, where when we think on our baby, we think of the beauty of our baby, the memories we hold dear in our hearts, and the hope in heaven of seeing them again.

Unfortunately in our grief, there can be struggles. Because we are not grieving alone. We have our significant other, grieving together or separately, sometimes no longer even part of our lives. We have extended family, who are sometimes wonderful in remembering our babies and helping us grieve, and other times causing more pain than we want to handle during this trying time.

We also have another layer of our friends and family, church families, and sometimes even work families, depending on how close you are. And just outside of this are those who may be parts of these groups like church and work and even family members, but may be held at a distance, maybe by choice, or maybe just not knowing them that well.



Outside of that, are the strangers we meet. We have all been there. Someone asks, "How many kids do you have?" We somehow break out the courage to share about our little one in heaven. We may be looked at awkwardly, get to hear their story, loved on, or who knows what else.

The key in all this, though, is that the grieving parents are at the center of these layers. Sometimes we look at it as both parents in the middle, sometimes one is stepping in the middle while the other steps out to the next layer. I might be in the middle if it's Mother's Day, or just a day out of the blue where a sucker punch hits me. The same could be said for my husband. And sometimes we might both be in there, suffering together, such as dealing with family issues.

To support us in our grief, we need to be able to "Dump Out" whatever we need to the other layers. It might be just a shoulder to cry on to our spouse. That person might go to the next layer, maybe an in-law, and tell them that times are rough (no details should be needed), and that person might bring over a dish of food. They might go to the next layer and ask

for prayers from a church Small Group.

In this scenario, word is being spread that someone is hurting, but lots of people are not coming back to those at the center. While I might be needing "Dump Out," they are pushing "Comfort In" to me, in order to help me get through the difficult time.

The key is to allow the grieving person to let it out, to work through their grief, without allowing other factors or drama to flow back to them. We've all had them - the one person who comes to you, acting like they are going to provide support, only to make the entire situation worse, causing the person to feel worse than before it all started.

Our "Dump Out" will vary, depending on where we are at in our grief and what our need is. Some just need to dump out the chaos we battle in our minds. Some need to find a way to help someone else, a purpose, as part of the grief process, which is where we have many families ask how they can help in M.E.N.D., or maybe just taking a dish to someone else in need. Whatever we need to "Dump Out" needs to be about focusing on your need, so we can continue in our grief process.

Evaluate your role in grief. Are you the traumatized person? Focus on healing yourself; focus on how to best grieve for you. Are you in a supporting layer? Support the person. Comfort them. Love them. Even if it's from a distance.

M.E.N.D. CHAPTER UPDATES

Greater Houston Area

M.E.N.D.—Greater Houston Area is preparing for our Walk to Remember on October 12, 2019. Make sure to register to attend this beautiful event at www.mend.org. We also received amazing responses from the hospitals where we delivered the Bears for Babies bears. The nurses and staff are extremely grateful they can put these bears into the arms of mommies. We have even been contacted by some of the moms who received the bears from



M.E.N.D. and they were beyond thankful to have something to hold after they said goodbye to their baby. You can still sponsor a bear or bears, just email me at stormym@mend.org. As always, we are praying for each and every one of you.

Stormy

NW Washington

We are excited to announce we have a NEW permanent meeting location. We will continue to meet on the 2nd Monday of each month, 6:30-8:30 PM, at The Oak Table Cafe' - 3290 NW Mt. Vintage Way in Silverdale. The restaurant is closed to the public during this time and has graciously allowed us the use of their dining room. We have enjoyed the atmosphere there for our last 2 meetings, and look forward to many more. We are so grateful to them for allowing us the use of this space each month.



We are preparing for our 2nd annual online auction in October. Items are being donated from local and national businesses. If you have items to donate, please contact Cara Saba at cara@mend.org.

Stacy

MidMichigan

M.E.N.D.—MidMichigan had the opportunity to spread the word about our chapter at the Auburn Cornfest in July. We handed out over 500 hand fans and magnets! We've got an awesome Saginaw Spirit Fundraiser coming up on October 26th that we'll have more details on next month. Special thanks to our assistants Becky & Brian and member Kady for the fundraising and chapter support the last couple months.



Karen

Chicagoland

M.E.N.D.—Chicagoland knows how difficult different seasons can be... back to school, fall, and the start of the holiday season around the corner. We continue to come alongside those in the Chicagoland area as they work through these times and grieve the loss of their precious babies. You don't have to grieve alone.



Sara

Southwest Missouri

In July some of us gathered together at Firehouse Pottery and enjoyed a time of fellowship and making memories. I was also able to make two presentations advocating for our chapter.



We are looking forward to hosting several events in the near future. Our Butterfly Release will be held on September 7, at 10:00 AM at Eastlawn Cemetery. We will also host, alongside Cox L&D nurses and On Angels' Wings, the Wave of Light event at Holy Trinity Catholic Church on October 15, at 7:00 PM. Our Christmas Candlelight Ceremony will be held on December 10, at 7:00 PM at Second Baptist Church. Please contact me for any questions regarding these events at kathryn@mend.org

Kathryn

Columbus, Ohio

To God be the Glory! We did meet our primary chapter fundraising goal...THANK YOU! We are still taking donations for our care packages and other ministry needs. Thank you to all who sent recent donations. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Also, the venue has been confirmed! Most importantly, I am seeking an assistant to help with chapter endeavors and routine tasks. I humbly, yet joyfully, invite you to join me in serving in this leadership role. Likewise, I am reaching out to anyone who desires to volunteer and is willing to use their talents and time to help with upcoming projects. Please feel free to reach out and contact me directly at latrina@mend.org. I am looking forward to meeting you...soon! Know I am praying for each of you! God bless you.



LaTrina

Denver

M.E.N.D.–Denver leadership is looking forward to participating in the Preemie Parent Alliance Conference this fall as we learn more about parents' experiences in the NICU and how we can better serve them. We also will be at the Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep Remembrance Walk on September 28. We hope to share more about the support we have to offer to the community at both of these events.



Kimberly

San Antonio, Texas

We are thrilled have finally opened M.E.N.D.-San Antonio. We held our first support group August 26, and we hope to help many families suffering the loss of their sweet baby(ies) by giving them a safe space to talk openly. We will start working on a candlelight Christmas ceremony and start assessing the needs of our wonderful city!



Katie

Lynchburg, Virginia

I am happy to say we are one step closer to opening the chapter. We are now raising money to reach our goal. I am grateful for all our donations and praying for us to get the rest. If you would like to make a donation, you can send me an email at melissa@mend.org. We will have our monthly support group at 150 Linden Ave in Lynchburg.

I am looking for two more assistants in the Lynchburg area as well. If you are a year out from your loss and would like to serve, please email me. I will get you all the information you need. I am grateful to serve our area!



Melissa



Palm Beach, Florida

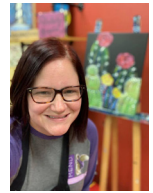
M.E.N.D.–Palm Beach, Florida continues to connect with hurting families in our area.

Lisa

Jessica

Bryan/College Station, Texas

M.E.N.D.–Bryan/College Station just had our annual Painting with a Purpose fundraising event. We want to thank Painting with a Twist in College Station, Texas for hosting us once again. We are looking forward to our Walk of Remembrance on October 5 that will conclude with a beautiful butterfly release. For more information about our events or support groups please email jennie@mend.org



Jennie

Tulsa, Oklahoma

It is with a heavy heart when I say that I am stepping down as Chapter Director, as my family is moving out of town. I am eternally grateful for the friendships and relationships I have built with you all over the past nine years. I will never forget the support we received after our daughter, Brooke Sophia, was stillborn March 11, 2010. M.E.N.D. was instrumental in our healing journey, and it still continues to enrich our lives today. It has been a blessing to do God's work through this ministry, and I have enjoyed my time as Chapter Director. One of my assistants is in the process of applying for the Chapter Director position and will be looking for additional assistants. In closing, I would like to thank all of my assistants over the years, Sara Hintz, Marcie Nienhuis, Kathryn Johnson, Angi McLees, Kristina Cobler, and Cat Markham. Additionally, I would like to thank Rebekah Mitchell, M.E.N.D. Board of Directors, and the M.E.N.D. Advisory Board for everything they have done for this organization. I will miss you all.



"Family" continued from page 15

If you are involved with M.E.N.D. only through this magazine, I encourage you to go a little deeper with us. Allow this group of Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death to be a part of your healing by offering you a listening ear, an understanding heart, and the peace and hope we have through the Lord. If you don't live near one of our support chapters, check out our monthly online support group that meets at 9:00 PM CST every third Thursday, or consider joining one of our many Facebook groups where you can privately connect with numerous moms who are traveling this grief journey, too. And don't leave the dads out...we have a Men of M.E.N.D. Facebook group just for them, and we're about to launch an online support group for the daddies too. You, as the parent of a baby who died too soon, don't have to grieve alone. There's a beautiful family right here to aid you as you navigate each issue that you are enduring following the loss of your little one, and we consider it an honor to walk alongside you during this sacred season.

"As iron sharpens iron, so does one person sharpen another." Proverbs 27:17

Rainbow/Subsequent Babies

Lightning Babies by Liz Mannegren

A rainbow baby is a term used to describe a child born after miscarriage, stillbirth or infant loss.

These babies are stunning bits of promise after a storm, a collision of both sun and rain alike. Resounding with hope and promise, they appear after a monsoon of grief. As life breaks forth within, these little ones bring with them shimmering swaths of delight. They live up to their name, these beautiful, rainbow children of ours.

Lightning Babies

Because if the ones after loss are RAINBOWS, then the ones we lost must be the LIGHTNING.



Article and graphic retrieved from mommymannegren.com on August 19, 2019.

But they weren't the first ones to light up the sky.

Because if the babies born after loss are rainbows, then the ones we lost must be lightning.

They touched down for a brief moment – too brief. And yet, their presence turned night into light, a flash of extraordinary brilliance.

Their little lives may have been surrounded by storm: by midnight trips to the ER, ultrasounds without heartbeats, and the pain of early goodbyes. But they were more than that. They were beloved bits of beauty.

When the storm rages and the electricity surges, plunging you into darkness; when the wind shakes the house and the walls rattle with rain – you remember the lightning. In the midst of the deluge, you seek it out. The sight of that sizzling, streak of light, that breathtaking blaze of power, makes the storm worth it.

Touched by lightning, you are indelibly marked forever.

"Familias" continued from page 12.

todos tenemos nuestro color de marca de púrpura corriendo por nuestras venas, haciéndonos una familia incomparable a cualquier otro.

Si usted está involucrado con M.E.N.D. sólo a través de esta revista, le animo a ir un poco más profundo con nosotros. Permita que este grupo de mamás endureciendo muerte neonatal sea parte de su sanación ofreciéndoles un oído que escucha, un corazón comprensivo y la paz y la esperanza que tenemos por medio del Señor. Si no vive cerca de uno de nuestros capítulos de soporte, visite nuestro grupo de soporte mensual via el internet que se reúne a las 9:00 PM CST cada tercer jueves, o considere unirse a uno de nuestros muchos grupos de Facebook donde puede conectarse en privado con numerosas madres que viajan este camino de dolor también. Y no hay que dejar a los papás fuera....tenemos un Grupo de Facebook de M.E.N.D. sólo para hombres, y estamos a punto de lanzar un grupo de apoyo sobre el internet para los papás también. Usted como padre de un bebé que murió demasiado temprano no tiene que llorar solo. Hay una hermosa familia aquí para ayudarlo mientras navega cada tema que está soportando después de la pérdida de su pequeño, y consideramos que es un honor caminar junto a usted durante esta temporada sagrada.

"A medida que el hierro agudiza el hierro, también una persona afila a otra." Proverbios 27:17

Life After Loss

The Beauty in Seeing Their Name

We often do not get to see their names on birthday cards and preschool rosters. We miss writing it on backpacks, school assignments and permission slips. But we find other ways to remember our babies, in seeing their beautiful names.

Catherine Grace, baby to Charles and Kara Wilkerson, began a beautiful life seven years ago in August. Her two days here on this earth, now leave a lifetime of waiting to be reunited with her for her family. While hard to understand loss, we are thankful for Kara and her willing heart to help other hurting families by being part of M.E.N.D.

The Wilkersons recently traveled to a beach, and wrote Catherine Grace's beautiful name in the sand. In this picture we see God's majesty in the sand and surf, in the beauty of His creation, and in the beauty of Catherine Grace. Sadly, shortly after they celebrated Catherine's birthday, Kara and her family said goodbye after just barely saying hello to Baby #3. Kara wrote regarding her recent loss, "I'm constantly in awe of how God has shown himself through Catherine's life and death, and right now it's so very hard to see His work through the darkness. I've personally seen what God can do, and we stand in faith that He will carry us through."



There will be more beauty to behold, even though things seem so dark and dreary at the beginning of grief. Sometimes the fog rolls in, masking the beach so much the sea cannot be seen. But we know it's there. We can hear it, sometimes gently lapping on the shore, sometimes crashing wildly. Just as we do in our grief, weeping quietly or bawling endlessly.

Sometimes God is the fog, just as He filled the Temple Solomon built, wrapping around us, enveloping us. Sometimes God is the sunrise, finally revealed when the fog lifts, providing warmth and a shimmering glow to His creation.

No matter what, there is beauty in it, especially the beauty of coming together, all mamas, daddies and siblings, surrounding each other, loving each other, comforting each other as part of M.E.N.D.

Kara, thank you for sharing with us the beauty of Catherine and Baby #3, and know we are here for you on this journey of life, until we are all reunited with our babies.

Book Review

Joy in Suffering

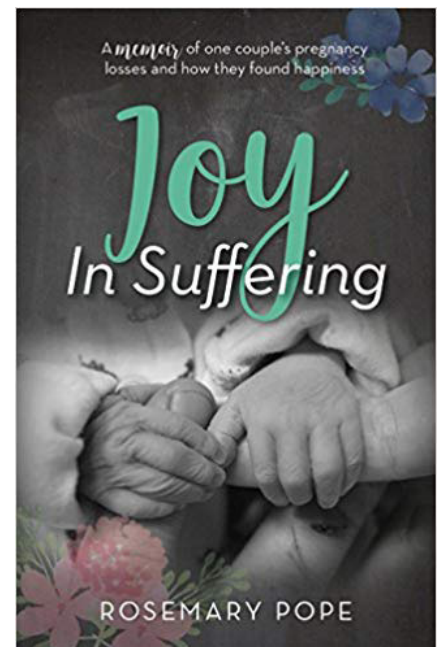
Written by Rosemary Pope

I really loved reading *Joy in Suffering*, if that can be said of an infant loss book. Rosemary and Bobby Pope have four babies in heaven, and three little ones they are raising deep in the heart of Texas. Rosemary openly shares her pursuit of parenthood, beginning with their stillborn son and the neonatal death of their baby girl. Throughout her journey, she and Bobby never lost their faith and trust in the Lord to fulfill their dreams of becoming parents to a child they could raise.

M.E.N.D. - Dallas / Fort Worth is pleased to announce that Rosemary Pope is the keynote speaker for the 2019 Walk to Remember, which will be held on Saturday, October 5 at the Garden of Hope in Irving, Texas. If you are planning to attend the Walk, stop by Rosemary's table to meet her and purchase *Joy in Suffering*.

This book is available through Amazon. Make sure to select M.E.N.D. as your charity of choice through Amazon Smile so M.E.N.D. will benefit through your everyday shopping!

Reviewed by
Rebekah Mitchell,
Mommy to Jonathan Daniel and Baby Mitchell
M.E.N.D. President/Founder



About M.E.N.D.

M.E.N.D. is a Christian nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to reach out to those who have lost a child to miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death and offer a way to share experiences and information through monthly support groups, this magazine, and our website at www.mend.org. For inquiries, subscription requests, deletions, and submissions to the magazine, contact us at:

M.E.N.D.
P.O. Box 631566
Irving, TX 75063
Phone and Fax: (972) 506-9000
(Please call before faxing)
E-Mail: rebekah@mend.org
jennifer@mend.org
www.mend.org

Donations make the printing and distribution of this magazine possible. Your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated and should be sent to the address listed above. If your gift is made in memory of a baby, please include that baby's name (if named), date of birth and/or date of death, the parents' names, and the name of the benefactor. You may also include the cause of death (if known).

M.E.N.D. is a member of
First Candle/SIDS Alliance
International Stillbirth Alliance
Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance



international
stillbirth alliance



• Helping Babies Survive & Thrive •

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and Stormy Mitchell

Legacy Giving

Losing a child has changed each of our lives forever. We appreciate all financial support of the services our organization gives to bereaved parents—no matter the size of the contribution. However, some of you may have the capacity and desire to give a lifelong gift to M.E.N.D.

If you are interested in creating a legacy gift or endowment in honor of your baby, M.E.N.D. would be happy to assist you in gathering the necessary information to remember our organization in your will or trust. For more information about legacy giving, please contact Rebekah Mitchell at rebekah@mend.org.

M.E.N.D.

Chapter Information

M.E.N.D.–NW Washington

Meets the 2nd Monday at 6:30 PM
The Oak Table Cafe'
3290 NW Mt. Vintage Way
Silverdale, Washington 98383
Director: Stacy McGhee
stacym@mend.org, (360) 662-6161

M.E.N.D.–SW Missouri

Meets the 1st Thursday at 7:00 PM
Project H.O.P.E.
1419 S. Enterprise Ave
Springfield, Missouri 65804
Director: Kathryn Gold
kathryn@mend.org, (417) 770-0600

M.E.N.D.–Bryan/College Station

Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:30 PM
Hawthorne Suites
1010 University Drive East
College Station, Texas 77840
Director: Jennie Drude
jennie@mend.org, (402) 704-6363

M.E.N.D.–Tulsa, Oklahoma

Meets the 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 PM
Canyon Crossing
1651 E Old North Rd.
Sand Springs, Oklahoma 74063
Director: Lisa Daily
lisa@mend.org, (918) 694-4325 (HEAL)

M.E.N.D.–Lynchburg, Virginia

Coming Soon!
Director: Melissa Scifres
melissa@mend.org

M.E.N.D.–Chicagoland, Illinois

Meets the 1st Tuesday at 7:00 PM
St Peter Lutheran Church
202 E Schaumburg Road
Schaumburg, Illinois 60194
Director: Sara Hintz
saraann@mend.org, (630) 267-9134

M.E.N.D.–Palm Beach, Florida

Meets the 2nd Thursday at 7:00 PM
Embark Lake Worth
3927 Hadjes Dr
Lake Worth, FL 33467
(close to Turnpike and Lake Worth Rd)
Director: Jessica Gaddie
Jessica@mend.org, (561) 843-3509

M.E.N.D.–MidMichigan

Meets the 1st Tuesday, at 7:00 PM
Ashman Plaza
713 Ashman Street
Midland, Michigan 48640
Director: Karen Kilbourn
karen@mend.org, (989) 577-5755

M.E.N.D.–Denver

Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 PM
Journey Church
9009 Clydesdale Rd.
Castle Rock, Colorado 80108
Director: Kimberly Adams
kimberly@mend.org, (720) 593-0166

M.E.N.D.–Online Support Group

Held the 3rd Thursday at 9:00 PM (CST)
to join, contact
Director: Victoria Alcorn
victoria@mend.org (469) 412-2786

M.E.N.D.–San Antonio, Texas

Coming Soon!
Director: Katie McClelland
katie@mend.org

M.E.N.D.–Greater Houston Area

Greater Houston Area Main Chapter:

Meets the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 PM
Lone Star College,
3200 College Park Dr, Room A228,
The Woodlands, Texas 77384
Greater Houston Area Director:

Stormy Mitchell
stormym@mend.org, (405) 529-6363

Satellites in Greater Houston Chapter:

Katy, Texas:

Meets the 2nd Thursday at 7:00 PM
Katy Community Fellowship
24102 Kingsland Blvd
Katy, Texas 77494

Katy Director:

Kessi Wilhite, kessi@mend.org

Kingwood Area, Texas:

Meets the 2nd Thursday at 6:30 PM
6450 Kings Parkway
Kingwood, Texas 77346
At Rosemont Assisted Living,
2nd Floor Community Room

Kingwood Director:

Nikisha Perry, nikisha@mend.org

Subsequent pregnancy group

Meets every other month
on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 PM,
led by Stormy Mitchell
(stormym@mend.org)

Daddies group

Meets quarterly
on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 PM,
led by Greg Miller
(stefaniem@mend.org)

M.E.N.D. Support Groups in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex

Mommies AND Daddies are both welcome at all M.E.N.D. support groups. Unless otherwise noted, all support groups are held at: Wells Fargo Bank (building with black windows), 800 W. Airport Freeway Irving, TX 75062 (Located off 183, between MacArthur and O'Connor). Support groups will be held at the bank board room, located on the first floor. For more information, call (972) 506-9000.

M.E.N.D. chapter support groups are held the 2nd Thursday of every month from 7:30 - 9:00 PM

Daddies group meets the 2nd Thursday of March, June, Sept. and Dec., from 7:30 - 9:00 PM

Moms and dads meet together for introductions before dividing into two groups for discussion.

Parenting Groups:

Subsequent pregnancy group
meets the 4th Tuesday
from 7:30 - 9:00 PM

Led by Marisa Perry: marisa@mend.org
For families who are considering
becoming pregnant or are currently
pregnant after a loss.

Parenting After Loss group
(parents only)

meets the 1st Thursday at 7:30 PM
at Panera Bread
1900 Preston Rd.
Plano, Texas 75093
Contact:

Laura Bateman at laura@mend.org or
Tina Rusert at Tina@mend.org.

Parenting After Loss groups are for families
raising living children after a loss.

Parenting After Loss Playgroup
(children welcome)

Currently it meets in Irving at the play
area inside Irving Bible Church, but will
eventually meet in various locations
For more details, contact:

Corley Rinaldi at Corley@mend.org.

M.E.N.D. Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death
PO Box 631566, Irving, TX 75063
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Upcoming M.E.N.D. Events

Dallas/Fort Worth

23rd Annual Walk to Remember
Saturday, October 5, 2019
1:00 PM - 3:30 PM
Calvary Church
mend.org/dfw-wtr

Greater Houston

14th Annual Walk to Remember
Saturday, October 12, 2019
1:00 PM - 3:30 PM
Bammel Church of Christ
mend.org/houston-wtr

Bryan/College Station

Walk of Remembrance
Saturday, October 5, 2019
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM
Barbara Bush Rose Garden at the
George H. W. Bush Library
mend.org/events/bcs2019



Wave of Light

October 15th
More details
to come on
Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/MENDInfantLoss>