

Babies Remembered

Honoring and Remembering Babies Who Have Died

Volume II Issue 4 (# 8) Oct/Nov/Dec 2010

Couple Communication – Promoting Healthy Relationships After a Baby Dies

Many relationships are deeply stressed after a baby dies in miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant death. Couples can help their relationship grow or can allow it to deteriorate. It requires work and continual communication.

Each person copes in their own way. The natural process of grief is difficult to do alone and more complicated to do simultaneously with a loved one grieving beside you. Both parents had an investment in this baby. Both parents will fall back on their upbringing, experiences, and personality as they seek a safe haven in which to cope and grieve.

This issue explores some of those challenges and offers suggestions, advice, and stories of strategies, and tools for couples and their care givers.

Love brings Hope and Life

It begins with love
Wanting more, waiting for new life
Planning for a future forever changed with
Children.

Then lightening strikes
Followed by a deep, lonely
Darkness.

Who could be prepared
For this type of anguish?
So alone, yet trying to be
Together.

Love pulls us through
Each day as we struggle to
Survive.

Head down, heart down,
Stress and confusion
Lead to arguments, silence, and
Pain.

Glimpses of beauty
And love eventually bring
Hope.

Life and time
March on, while memories remain.
We are one; we will remember
Love reminds us to
Live—
Again.

Sherokee Ilse, 2008

Holiday Remembrances



A Christmas Card for Robbie

by Kathleen Paley Smith

It's the night before Christmas, we're all filled with joy,
Except when we think of you, little boy.
The stockings are hung by the chimney with care,
And in our hearts it's as if you were here.

My children are sleeping, in their bedrooms they lie,
But we're still filled with grief for our baby that died.
You see, this Christmas you would have been two,
But every Christmas I know we'll miss you.

As I wrap up the presents my thoughts are on you,
And what we'd have bought if you were here, too.
A car, a ball, a red fire truck?
Or maybe a rabbit's foot to bring you good luck.

The tree is all trimmed with bright colored balls,
And decorations hang on all of the walls.
It looks so pretty - - I wonder if you see
Your Christmas ball we've hung on the tree.

I made it for you before you were here,
Not knowing I'd hang it with eyes filled with tears.
Tomorrow is Christmas, I'll try not to be sad;
I'll count all my blessings and try to be glad,

You've not a part of our future - -
you were a part of our past
And someday I know we'll be together at last.



Sherokee Ilse: The author of **Empty Arms**, 17 books/pamphlets dealing with grief and loss, and the magazine 'Babies Remembered'. "I have been helping both parents and professionals in the field of stillbirth and infant loss, as well as promoting research on probable causes for stillbirth to save babies lives for over 28 years. I am a bereaved mother, a parent advocate, and a professional author and educator.

Feel free to contact me re: speaking engagements, my books, new CDs, the new CEU units for nurses, or other info. www.babiesremembered.org, info@babiesremembered.org or by phone 952-476-1303

Couple Communication After a Child Dies... If it is broken, does it need to be fixed?

A published article by Sherokee Ilse

"When you find a leaky drain, it begs to be fixed. Upon hearing that screeching metal on metal sound while driving your car, you know it is past time to fix the brakes. But when a child dies and you are unable to function due to a broken heart, is it appropriate to seek a fix from your partner?"

This question, "If it is broken, does it need to be fixed?" is a common dilemma couples face after the death of their child.

The entire article can be found in the (free) Summer 2010 issue of Grief Digest, Centering Corporation (www.centering.org)

"And of course, keep the doors of communication open. Be gentle and honest with each other. Believe you can, and if you have a strong faith, ask for God's help. You have the opportunity to enhance your relationship and build upon this test of strength, endurance, and love. Believe in each other."

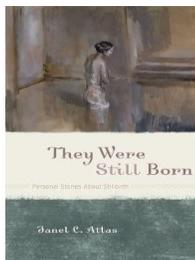
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**"Give sorrow words;
the grief that does not
speak
whispers the o'er-fraught
heart and bids it break."**

~William Shakespeare~



BRAND NEW BOOK

They Were Still Born, By Janel Atlas:

herokee and Tim Nelson were both invited to contribute a chapter to this new book (along with many other authors). It is a compilation of personal reflections on stillbirth.

Many sacred stories offer a variety of perspectives from those who have lived through this tragedy. The last section presents an unprecedented cause/prevention discussion. Available from Wintergreen Press and Amazon.

"I didn't understand how he could never bring up our baby's name or how he was feeling. I don't think he cares. He doesn't even think about Claire anymore....or me." a mom

"If I cry and she cries, all we will have is a sea of tears. I don't want to burden her with more pain. I want to help her find happiness again. I just wish she would smile more and be the person before this all happened. I hurt, I miss our baby, but I can't talk about it all the time. Am I a bad person for that? Besides, talking about my feelings is not something I ever was comfortable with. How do I change now and why would I?" a dad

This symbolizes some of the struggles couples have when words are not shared openly and when assumptions are made because one partner is not openly expressing. Work to better understand each other's coping styles and personality. Allow each other to grieve (whether privately or publicly) in your own ways. Talk about it enough so you understand where you are each coming from. Then find the support you need from friends, if you are one to share more openly.

Babies Remembered Inservices

Empty Arms, Shattered Dreams: Giving care to families after miscarriage, stillbirth, and Infant death

February 18, 2011, Annual Sanford Health Conference, Fargo, ND

6 CEUs for nurses, doctors, and other professionals.

Sherokee Ilse, speaker (info@babiesremembered.org)

Empty Arms and Shattered Dreams

March 23 & 24th, Asheville, NC (Mission Hospital)

An all day seminar for professionals, an evening community support workshop, and an evening Giving Care, Taking Care session for professionals.

For more information or to register contact:

Patricia.Stillwell@msj.org

Babies Remembered Associate Sue Steen will be speaking at a midwifery workshop in Barcelona, Spain in January.

If you wish to know more contact us at

info@babiesremembered.org

NEW DVD

Clinics, Doc's Offices, Hospitals

I Hardly Knew You...What Happens Next?

This 19 minute *First of a Kind* DVD will help staff and parents slow down the 'Race from Getting the News to Being Induced.' A crisis occurs when a fatal diagnosis is given...then the crisis is compounded by a rush to 'get it over with.'

Sadly, this means families have no, or very little, preparation time and they can only operate out of shock and fear.

Over and over it is becoming clear, that the families who spend some time at home – hours to a few days, have time to let the news sink in, make the calls, pack their bags, and contemplate the many life-altering decisions in a more calm environment. This can only occur if they are given reading materials and others to talk with who can offer gentle guidance and the perspective of longer term, rather than short-term decisions based on fear of the unknown.

Author, educator, and bereaved parent, Sherokee Ilse is joined by Paul and Eileen who have no regrets about their hospital experience because they had the gift of time and a 'Birth Planner' to assist them in knowing what was ahead and helping them pre-plan.

The Packet includes both a staff and parent DVD along with practical handouts for both. \$100 – includes 5 parent downloads.

Order on the web - www.BabiesRemembered.org

Or call for more information 952-476-1303

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Shattered Dreams:

How Family and Friends Can Help

11 minute Video

This sensitive video featuring Sherokee Ilse, helps family and friends understand what bereaved parents are going through. It offers practical suggestions on what to say and how to help after miscarriage, stillbirth, neonatal and SIDS deaths.

\$9.95 to download or \$25.00 for DVD plus s/h.

www.HelpWhenABabyDies.com



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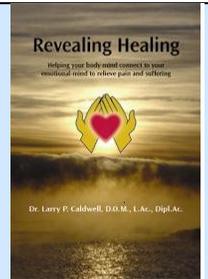
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Dr. Caldwell by phone: (952) 930-3633 Hopkins, MN or
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Author of 'Revealing Healing'
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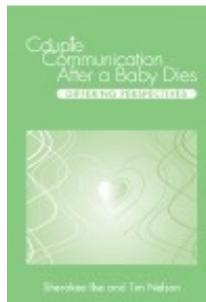
BOOKS, BOOKLETS, and RESOURCES on Couple Communication

Couple Communication After a \$12.95

Baby Dies

Sherokee Ilse & Tim Nelson

This new book offers a unique approach to a difficult but important subject. Ilse and Nelson teamed up to offer not only their individual perspectives as a woman and man following the deaths of their children, but also to share how they and their spouses met the challenges couples face. Good background information is offered on topics such as brain differences, personality, and childhood influences, myths, and more. Other couples weigh in and thought provoking questions are added to the back for personal use or for book discussion, support groups, or during counseling sessions.



Strong and Tender

\$3.50

A book especially for fathers.

By Pat Schwiebert, RN

A collection of insights, helpful hints, and tender thoughts to give the father strength during the dark times of grief following his baby's death. For too long, fathers have been the forgotten grievers. By giving him this special book, you tell him you also recognize his loss.



Available at: WintergreenPress.com

More books and websites continued on page 5

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