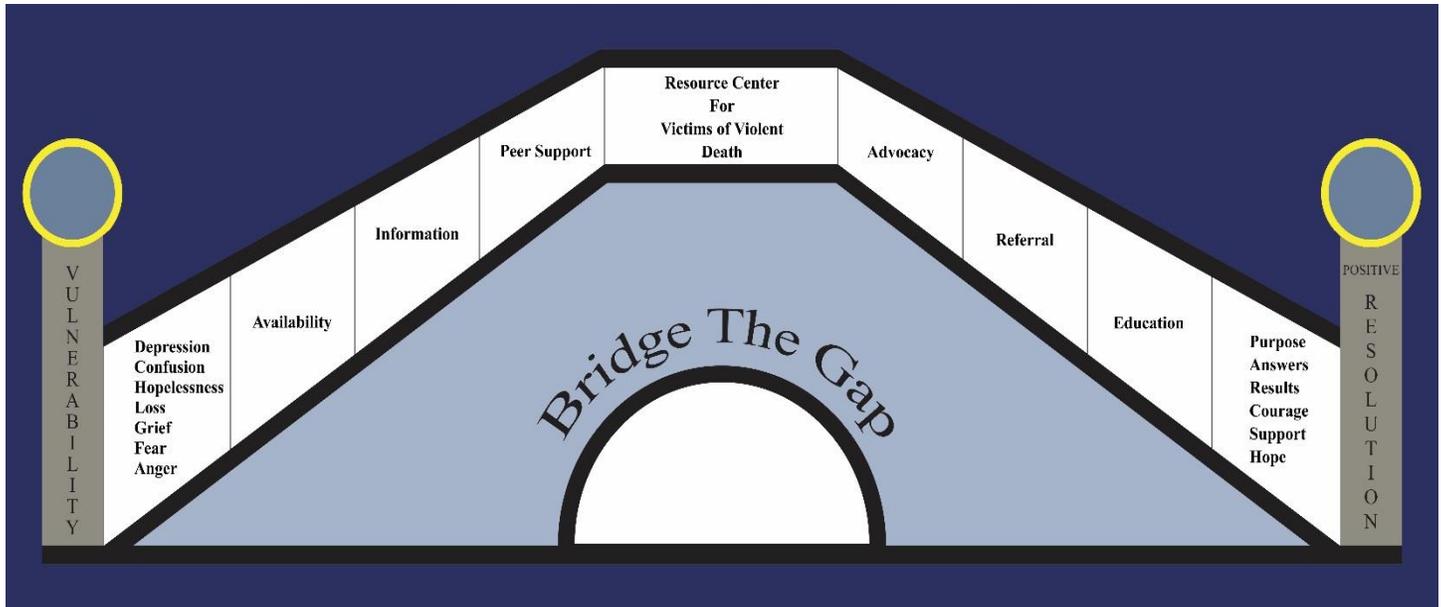


*October 2018 note from Joan Shirley, as one victim to another and the Certified Victim Advocate for the Resource Center for Victims of Violent Death*

*This year we have been exploring the “BRIDGE,” our logo for the Resource Center for Victims of Violent Death. Our mission is to “bridge the gaps” in availability of information and services that can impede and discourage victims/families trying to manage in the aftermath of a violent death.*



*“Bridge Over Troubled Water”*

*When you're weary, feeling small  
When tears are in your eyes, I'll dry them all  
I'm on your side, oh, when times get rough  
And friends just can't be found  
Like a bridge over troubled water  
I will lay me down...*

*Like a bridge over troubled water...” Simon and Garfunkel 1970*



*Like our agency’s bridge and the Simon and Garfunkel text and pictures above; pictures tell us a lot without a great deal of conversation. They say that a picture is worth a thousand words. This statement means that complex ideas (like grief, homicide or attempted homicide or undetermined deaths) can be conveyed with just a single still image or that an image of a subject conveys its meaning or essence more effectively than a description does. I receive so many images on my Facebook page with powerful messages that I feel relate to our plights as survivors, so, I wanted to share some with you in this newsletter. I hope that some of them speak to you as well. Just as each life taken, our sufferings, our grief patterns, and lives are different, so are our understandings of things given to us; please know that we cannot sum up any of this senseless journey with a few pictures, words, or knowledge. We can only try.*

*Pat, Aussy, Keith and Joan*

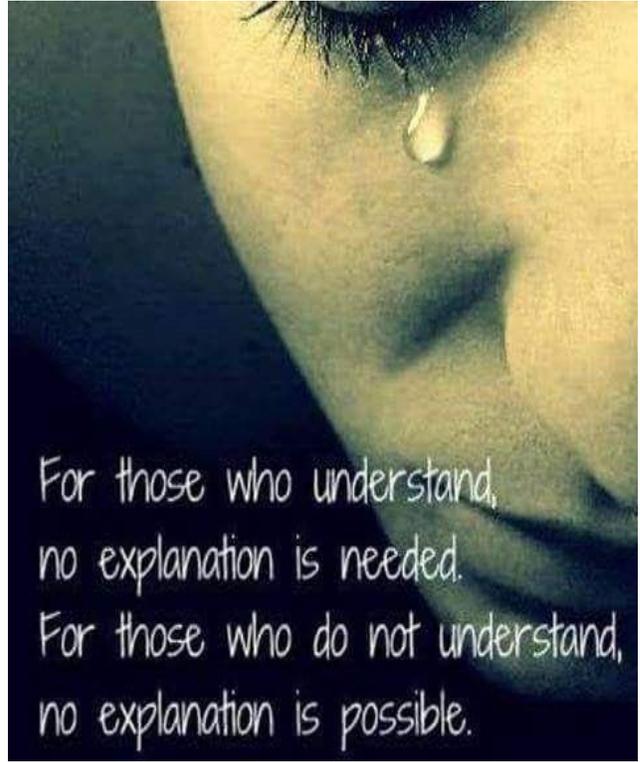
**(Please visit our website [BridgesForVictimsOfViolentDeath.org](http://BridgesForVictimsOfViolentDeath.org) to see the pictures in color)**

*It all began with a violent, senseless, devastating moment I cannot understand....*

It is kind of shocking when your world falls to pieces and everything and everyone around you carries on with life. How can the birds continue to sing? How can people carry on loving life? It is like you have become frozen in time and are now watching life like a movie. As the weeks and months roll by, life becomes more real again, but you will never forget that point in time where life stood still.

Zoe Clark-Coates

- sayinggoodbye.org



For those who understand,  
no explanation is needed.  
For those who do not understand,  
no explanation is possible.

Being a  
mess is  
exhausting.

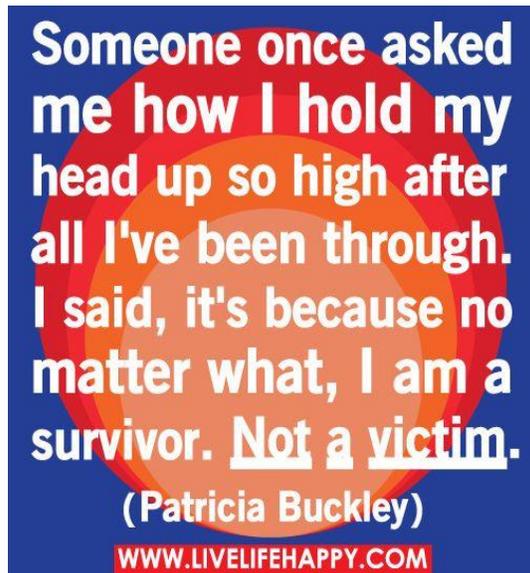
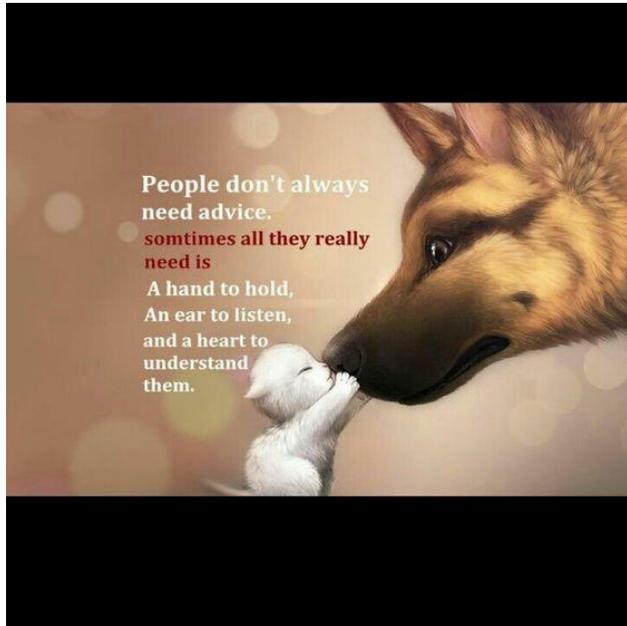
Grief is like the ocean;  
it comes in waves,  
ebbing and flowing.  
Sometimes the water is  
calm, and sometimes it  
is overwhelming. All we  
can do is learn to swim.

Vicki Harrison

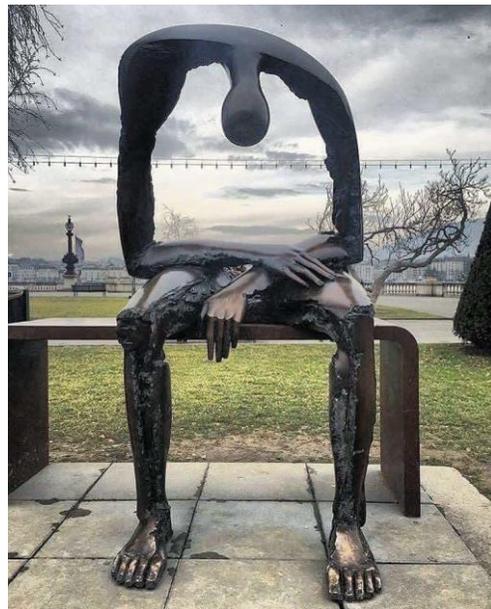
facebook.com/iamandrewriting



*Then, we learn to grieve, learn to survive, and learn to understand what seems impossible....*



The weight of grief.  
This amazing artist (Celeste Roberge) found a way to convey the physical feeling of grief.



*We find our way through the darkness and find a new life...*

Native American Prayer  
for the Grieving

I give you this one  
thought to keep -  
I am with you still - I  
do not sleep.  
I am a thousand winds  
that blow,  
I am the diamond glints  
on snow,  
I am the sunlight on  
ripened grain,  
I am the gentle autumn  
rain.  
When you awaken in the  
morning's hush,  
I am the swift, uplifting  
rush  
of quiet birds in circled  
flight.  
I am the soft stars that  
shine at night.  
Do not think of me as  
gone -  
I am with you still -  
in each new dawn  
- unknown

"You will lose someone  
you can't live  
without, and your heart  
will be badly broken, and  
the bad news is that you  
never completely get over  
the loss of your beloved.  
But this is also the good  
news. They live forever  
in your broken heart that  
doesn't seal back up. And  
you come through. It's  
like having a broken leg  
that never heals  
perfectly—that still hurts  
when the weather gets  
cold, but you learn to  
dance with the limp."

- Anne Lamott

- Healing Hugs

*Someone I love has gone away and life is not the same. The greatest gift that you can give is just to speak their name. I need to hear the stories and the tales of days gone past. I need for you to understand these memories must last. We cannot make more memories since they're no longer here. So when you speak of them to me, it's music to my ear.*

**I have learned to live again, but some days...the memories still knock the wind out of me... Joan Shirley 19 years and counting**