

## AFTERMATH! WHEN A SPOUSE DIES BY SUICIDE

By Mary Jane Meehan

It's been almost one and a half years – as I look back, the first year was a confusion of disbelief; “Why am I here – where I don't want to be?!!” The whole world had changed because of my husband's suicide. There were many weeks of not caring because of this awful, terrible thing that had happened, not only to me but to our children. Then little by little, the realization started to appear that this was the way it was and was going to be.

On top of my misery I discovered that in order to meet my financial expenses as a widow, it was necessary for me to work at least part-time! I had brought up two families, and at age 64 I just couldn't – and still can't understand *why* there wasn't sufficient insurance or protection.

I have been working for a local department store, enjoying what I do because I am needed. However, I cannot see any real change in my immediate future and don't expect any unless I do something about it; but what???

In this second year the reality of my situation has set in. I sometimes feel it is never going to be any different – the deep hurt is here and will be here. It seems that when I am feeling “good,” inevitably the word “suicide” will be spoken on T.V. or radio and that word brings tears to my eyes. I can't help it, and I get mad all over again. I don't like getting angry so I try to think of something lovely – like my beautiful grandchildren, the color of the sky, the trees turning color because it is autumn, the tiny animals hopping about, and remembering God is letting me see these beautiful things. I am so grateful, but being human I am sad and lonely and will always hope that perhaps the dear Lord will see fit to let me live my remaining years in peace and with loved ones, so that I don't have to be alone.

I am finding that to accept what has happened is a big step in the right direction. It is hard to do. The next step is to accept life as it is and is going to be. I find that praying helps me tremendously. Family and friends are there when you need them, but it is the hourly, daily, terrible loneliness that is the hardest to bear. My working four days a week is good for me I know...but it's opening that door to my apartment and finding nothing has changed and I am alone, that bothers me the most.

Take heart! Our need to go to the “Bereaved Meetings” is good for the soul. We can talk about our needs and share our misery. It makes me feel good when I can help someone. We will all make it – because we are survivors. I'm stubborn and Irish and I absolutely refuse to let this suicide ruin the rest of my life. It could if I let it but I WON'T.

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