



Suicide and Crisis Center of North Texas

January, 2012

Survivor Spotlight

My Big Brother

Michael L. Goldstein was born on October 9, 1968. He was adopted by our parents and brought home two days later. He was the only child until he decided he wanted a little sister. He approached our parents and asked for a baby sister. About six months later he got his wish when they adopted me.

Michael doted on me from day one. When people came to see me he would send people with the sniffles out of the house and around to a window. From the window outside they could look at me all they wanted.

Michael's birthday was six months after mine. So, for his eighth birthday he took his money and bought me a special dress. I remember growing up and Mike doing my hair, playing games and dolls with me, and using me for cheerleading practice.

Michael was everyone's friend. At W.T. White High School, he played different sports, was in a spirit club and was one of four male cheerleaders. He enjoyed cheering because of the female cheerleaders and the athleticism. In 1987 Mike graduated from High School. He then went off to Texas Tech. While at Texas Tech, Mike came home for Valentine's Day and brought with him a Keeshond puppy named Bailey. She was and still is the best Valentine's Day gift I have ever gotten! After a year of partying and going to class, Mike decided to come home. For me it was great

because my big brother was home.

As time went on, Michael moved to Denton, Texas. There he met his wife Leatha. They built a life together, had Hana and then Josh. Mike adored his family. Hana and Josh were the apple of Michael's eye. Mike lost his job and had a difficult time finding a new one. He became a stay at home dad. He said the time he spent with the kids was very special for him.

Like many people, Mike and Leatha had problems in their marriage. In February of 2009, Mike was supposed to move out of the home. However, on January 17th, 2009, Leatha told Mike he needed to move out that day. They didn't want the kids to see Mike leaving so Leatha took the kids out while he moved out.

Mike made a list of the things that needed to be done. He got into his truck and started the engine with the garage door down. Michael Lawrence Goldstein drifted into eternal sleep that day.

Little did I know I would be forever changed on January 17th, 2009! As I come upon the 3rd anniversary of his suicide, I have found myself reflecting on all that has happened since his death. The way I have changed, the things I have done and have learned to love. I once read a book that said you find gifts when you have lost someone to suicide. However, hard as it may be to wrap your head around that statement, for me it has been true.

After Mike committed suicide I was miserable in many different aspects of my life. At work I was mad at the company for making me come back to work. So after some time I left my unhappy job and went to work for a funeral home. For me working there was a gift. I was helping people with their grief by caring for the loved one who passed away. It also, helped me by allowing me to work through my grief. I met a lot of co-workers who lost someone to suicide. Had Michael not chosen suicide, I don't think I would ever have worked at a funeral home. I was so happy helping people there. I loved my job! I find that is one of the many gifts Mike has left for me. Mike's death has brought me to the Out Of the Darkness Walks, the support I have found in my Next Step group, the group I was in, in Orlando, FL. It has taught me to be kind to myself, do fun things, see the world, embrace life, laugh, remember the fun he and I had even though I miss him a ton.

Thank you for letting me share our story. I hope that every day you stop and take a moment for yourself. Tell yourself it is OK to laugh, cry, be angry, happy or just be.

Remember that your loved one's final act was not what made them who they were to you. I still cry because I miss my big brother so much! However, those days have become few. Now I find I like to laugh at fun things we did together. So every anniversary of his death or birthday I like to make a plan and do things I think he might have liked to do. This anniversary I am going to a Stars hockey game!

Andrea Goldstein 1/15/12

Do you have a story
to share? Help
us to help others.
Send your story to:
jenyceg@sccenterORG

NEXT STEP

Sharing stories - telling them, and hearing them - can be a source of strength and healing as you discover that you are not alone in your grief. We are here to help you move forward - to support you as you take that next step in your lives, positively and productively, in the aftermath of your loved one's suicide.

For those who have those already gone through our SOS program, Next Step Meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of the month, from 7-9 p.m. at the Suicide and Crisis Center.



WHAT ATTENDEES ARE SAYING ABOUT NEXT STEP

"Next Step is a safe place where I can still go and talk about my loved one, and no one judges me or rolls their eyes, thinking, 'here she goes again.' I feel accepted and loved there.

Sometimes it's the only opportunity I have any more to talk about my son, as it seems everyone else I know has moved on and no longer wants to listen to me talk about him."

"Next Step has helped me transition from my weekly SOS group to the real world and answered the question of 'what do I do now?' I felt lost when my group ended, and Next Step filled that void."

"I was hesitant to attend Next Step at first, afraid it would be 'just like my SOS group.' What I found was a new group of survivors willing to welcome me and help me. I've made some new friends. Some survivors are further along and they are showing me that life does go on and I can be happy again."

**When an emotional injury takes place,
the body begins a process as natural as the healing of
a physical wound.**

Let the process happen.

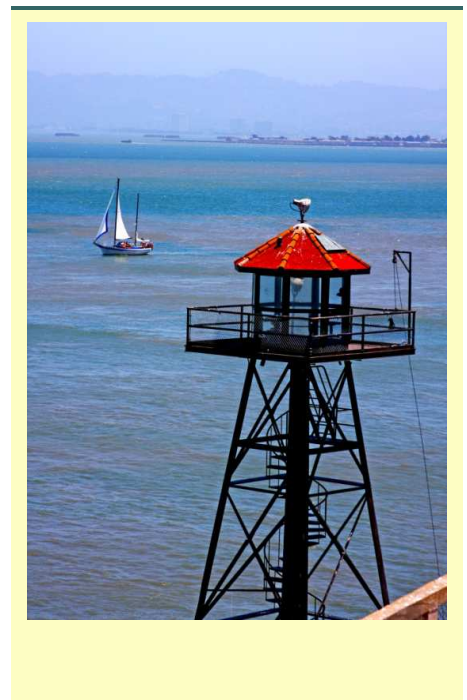
Trust the process. Surrender to it.

Trust that nature will do the healing;

**Know that the pain will pass, and, when it passes, you
will be stronger, happier, more sensitive and aware.**

MISSION STATEMENT:

Helping those in crisis, especially suicidal crisis, find hope for the future.



BOOK CORNER

The following books have been mentioned by other survivors as some of the most helpful and comforting in the months following their loved one's suicide. If you have other titles to suggest, please send ideas to: jencyceg@scenter.org

No Time To Say Goodbye (by Carol Fink)

My Son... My Son: A Guide to Healing after Death, Loss or Suicide (by Jan Bolton)

Why People Die By Suicide (A scientific study by Thomas Joiner)

How To Survive The Loss of A Love (by Harold H. Bloomfield, M.D., Melba Colgrove, M.D. & Peter McWilliams)



Common Myths about Suicide

Newsletters will include one misconception about suicide with a corresponding fact dispelling the notion.

MYTH: Suicide is hereditary

There is no “suicide gene.” However, if you come from a family where someone has killed himself, you are at greater risk of suicide than the average person. The reason isn't clear, but part of it may be due to the example set by the relative, and part of it due to inherited factors such as depression and temperament.

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered; Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies; Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight; Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous; Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough; Give the world the best you've got anyway.

You will see, in the final analysis it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.

- Mother Theresa