Please join us for the 19th Annual Arizona Survivors of Suicide Conference
“Hope and Healing”

Conference Speaker: Michelle L. Rusk

Michelle L. Rusk, born Michelle Linn, and formerly known as Michelle Linn-Gust, is an American author and speaker on coping with grief following suicide, especially that of siblings. She is a Past President of the American Association of Suicidology and she has written several books about the experiences of families following the suicide of a member, given workshops to the bereaved and the clinicians who work with them on dealing with their grief, and spoken widely on the topic. She also has offered workshops in the Southwest for the Navajo and Pueblo peoples of the reservations, who have suffered high rates of suicide among young people. From 2012 to 2015 she wrote the Good Causes column for the Naperville Sun newspaper and today is working to inspire hope and healing in people who have suffered loss.

Saturday, May 4, 2019
8:00am – 3:00pm
Black Canyon Conference Center
9440 North 25th Avenue, Phoenix

Registration Fees: $25/Survivor of Suicide Rate
$50/Professional Rate
(registration includes breakfast and lunch buffet)

Please register online /download conference brochure at: www.empactssos.org
THE HEART WON’T FORGET
By Doris Sodaro

“In memory of my husband, Gerald Sodaro, a brave and courageous man, who fought a long and hard battle, until he could fight no more.”

The heart won’t forget
Neither the love nor the pain
It always keeps track
Of that which matters
Nothing can ever erase
The ones we have loved
It’s written inside
With an indelible seal
And can’t be wiped out
Now and forever
Within each pulse and each beat. It brings them along

They’re always a part
Wherever life takes us
They walk at our side
Our love shall remain
Unto ages of ages
Two souls intertwined
Now and forever
Belonging to each other
Until time stands still.

“May God comfort and heal all those who have lost a loved one in such a tragic way. It is an unfathomable, crushing blow to bear that words can’t describe, a cataclysmic event that casts long shadows, which only another survivor of suicide can truly understand. My heart goes out to all of you in your sorrow and pain. Namaste, Doris Sodaro”

Source: The Obelisk, Loving Outreach to Survivors of Suicide, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago

The Dark Place that Beckons  by Sue Andersen

There is a dark place that beckons, but I have learned how to avoid it.
I’ve been thinking a lot these past couple of weeks about light and dark in my life.
How the light is “outshining” the dark. But early in my journey, especially the first couple of years, I lived in that dark place a lot. I was caught up in a seemingly never-ending cycle of dark, negative thoughts.
The summer of 2014, I recall for months the thought “my son is dead” played nonstop in my head. I couldn’t let go of it for a long time. Beginning three months after my son died, I started taking yoga classes. Meditation, breath work, mindfulness training, yoga training and good support have all contributed to my focus on “light” and not dark.
New and old friends; family members continue to light up my life. And when I begin to move towards that dark place, when negative thoughts start to take over, I breathe, tell my son I love him, and look for light.
He is my light too, helping me find my path. Never in a million years would I have thought I could be at this place now. It’s been over three and a half years since Ian took his life.
Allow yourself to work through your grief, to find a way out of that dark place that beckons, for you, too, will find light.

Reprinted from the February 2016 edition of The Obelisk. This post first appeared on the Alliance of Hope for Suicide Survivors forum.
The Survivors of Suicide Program at EMPACT-SPC will be adding a new support group, starting in March, for Spanish-speaking individuals bereaved by suicide. Patricia Iniguez, MSW, will be facilitating this support group. She has been an employee of EMPACT-SPC’s Prevention Department since 2015 and has been active in the department’s suicide prevention as well as postvention programs, impacted by suicide loss herself. Patricia has worked in the behavioral health field for the past nine years and has experience as a parenting skills educator.

For more information about this group, please contact Sandra McNally at Sandra.McNally@lafrontera-empact.org

Grupo SOS en Español
1st Martes de cada mes (Tuesday of each month)
3:00pm – 4:00pm
EMPACT-SPC—Tempe Office
618 S. Madison Drive, Tempe, 85281
(Please visit www.empactsos.org to download a group flyer, translated in Spanish).
**The Cord**  Author Unknown

We are connected,
My child and I.
By an invisible cord
not seen by the eye.
It’s not like the cord
that connects us ‘til birth.
This cord can’t be seen
by any on Earth.
This cord does its work
right from the start.
It binds us together
attached to my heart.
I know that it’s there
though no one can see.
The invisible cord from
my child to me.
The strength of this cord
is hard to describe.
It can’t be destroyed;
it can’t be denied.
It’s stronger than any cord
Man could create.
It withstands the test,
can hold any weight.
And though you are gone,
though you’re not here with me,
the cord is still there
but no one can see.
It pulls at my heart.
I am bruised ... I am sore,
but this cord is my lifeline
as never before.
I am thankful that God
connects us this way:
A mother and child....
death can’t take it away!

Reprinted from *Hope Line, Hope for the Bereaved*.
Syracuse, NY, August 2002.

**SOS Memorial Quilts**

We are close to completing the 8th Quilt.
If you are interested in
having your loved one appear on this
next quilt, please email the following
information to:
Sandra.McNally@LaFrontera-Empact.org

- A picture or pictures of your loved one
  that you want to use on the quilt.
- Full name of your loved one.
- Dates of your loved one’s birth and
date.
- A message you would
  like included – it can be
  anything but needs to fit
  on an 8” x 8” square
  with the picture (s).
For more information, contact:

**Sandra McNally, Prevention Manager**
**EMPACT-SPC**
618 S. Madison Drive
Tempe, AZ 85281
Phone: 480-784-1514, ext. 1219
E-mail: Sandra.McNally@LaFrontera-EMPACT.org

*Your Partner for a Safe, Strong, and Healthy Community.*

---

**Resources:**

**Crisis/Suicide Hotlines:**
- La Frontera Arizona/EMPACT-SPC: 480-784-1500
- National Lifeline Network: 800-273-TALK
- Mercy Care Crisis Hotline: 800-631-1314

**Internet Resources:**
- American Association of Suicidology: www.suicidology.org
- American Foundation of Suicide Prevention: www.afsp.org

---

**“Creating a Legacy”**

**Planned Giving for EMPACT-SPC's Survivors of Suicide Program**

“Creating a Legacy” for EMPACT-SPC’s Survivors of Suicide Program is a beautiful opportunity to remember a loved one, and to contribute to the healing of others in our community who have been impacted by a tragic loss to suicide. It is a way to contribute to an agency and program whose mission is to help others in their healing journey.

Nonprofit agencies such as EMPACT-SPC need financial assistance in order to continue their critical work in the community. By making a planned gift, you can make a difference in the lives of others by helping to ensure that EMPACT-SPC is able to continue supporting our Survivors of Suicide program for years to come. The process of Creating a Legacy can be as easy as naming EMPACT-SPC’s Survivors of Suicide program in your will, or as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or retirement plan proceeds.

If you would like to become a part of EMPACT-SPC’s Survivors of Suicide "Creating a Legacy" program, or if you have any questions, please contact Sandra McNally, Survivors of Suicide Program Manager, at (480) 784-1514, ext. 1219 or at Sandra.McNally@lafrontera-empact.org

You also may write to us at EMPACT-SPC:
c/o Sandra McNally, 618 S. Madison Dr., Tempe, AZ 85281

We will be happy to provide you information about options for planned giving.