

# Different Kind of Parenting

A 'zine for Parents  
whose children have died

From Grief to  
Parenting:  
Language of a  
Journey

Dates  
Remembered

Safe Space for  
Sibs...

All This Stuff

Self-Care

Art Ideas

Being a Couple:  
Dealing with Grief

and more...

a publication from

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## Notes from the Editor

Spring. Can't believe another spring is here. Tulips bloomed, iris flowers on their way. Can it really be another season without my kid? Ugh. It's true. It is.

But I hope that in this issue, you'll find that as we face all that grief brings us, we can find ways to deal with that grief, to fully become the parents we are meant to be to our living and dead children both, to re-create a "new normal" that may look very different from the life we had pre-death, but that is every bit ours nonetheless.

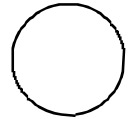
We tried this issue to address a bit of everything. Self-care, relating to each other in a couple, needs of siblings, using shifts in language to move us from "just grief" to "fully parenting" in our different kinds of ways. Hope that in all of this, there is some small bit of hope or creativity or encouragement that speaks to each of you.

As always, we hope you will be in touch with us in response to what you read here and/or to contribute your own writings and ideas for our next or other future issues. By sharing our experiences with each other, we defy grief's isolation! Please know that we very much want to hear your ideas and read your writings. When you send things to us, please email with "DIFFERENT KIND OF PARENTING SUBMISSION" in the subject line of your note. Since we get about 600 messages a day (mostly spam), that subject line helps us to pick the real notes out from the mass of emails.

Sending many supportive vibes to each of you as you move through Spring!

Remembering them,

Kara L.C. Jones  
editor@kotapress.com



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## ***From Grief to Parenting: Language of the Journey***

By Kara L.C. Jones

When our son died at birth in 1999, the grief clobbered us — just as it does to every family when a child dies. In the first weeks and months and year or two, we were every bit a bereaved mum and dad. Bereaved down to the very letters of the word. To the cells of our beings. And the work of being a bereaved family is hard work. Takes all your energy. Demands that the old life be dismantled and a new life rebuilt, pebble by pebble, to make cement, to make the bricks that then have to be stacked, brick by brick, till finally — sometimes years later — there is shelter again.

Part of that hard work, and part of life after the hard work, is about redefining ourselves and our lives outside the grief, beyond the grief, integrated with the grief. This does not mean “getting over it” or “finding closure” or any of those other bogus ideas that say the death of a child is “done” and “over” and now you “move on.” No. That does not happen ever, I don’t think. But this redefinition of ourselves and our lives is about being more than just grief alone. And finding language to talk about that has been difficult for me.

There seemed to be an “all or nothing” stance from everyone around me. Either I was forever a “bereaved mum” — in some ways victim to the grief, never being more than that. Or I was no longer a mum to my son, grief had nothing to do with my life anymore because I should be “over it” by now. Do you see? I was either ALL grief or NO grief. This kind of language did not fit my experience at all. And so I grappled with language, concepts, metaphors. Tried to find a way to give voice to the FULL experience.

And I came up with this: I am a Different Kind of Parent.

Whereas in the beginning, in the early days after my son’s death, I was — appropriately so — consumed in grief, doing the hard work of being a “bereaved” parent, later I became more than just “bereaved.” I came FULLY into my different kind of parenthood. I fully embodied my life as a mother to both living children and to my deceased son. My different kinds of parenting styles became more and more integrated. And after several years wrestling with how the complexities all fit together, I began to resent the “Either/Or” syndrome of language that surrounded this experience. I did not want to be victim who is forever just a “bereaved” parent. And I did not want to be forced into relinquishing my role as parent to my dead child by “finding closure” and being forever-more silent about my son to prove I was “better” now.

While it took me many years to be able to explain that in a way that really made sense — to me and to others — I had in the meantime started this little parenting magazine called “A Different Kind of Parenting.” Originally, my reason for starting this zine was simply that I felt the need to acknowledge bereaved parents. Many years ago, in the 1990’s I read an interview with Ariel Gore, Founder of the magazine Hip Mama, a publication created for single mothers. Ariel talked in that interview about how traditional parenting magazines did not address the issues she faced as a single parent. I realize now that she had been faced with a situation similar to mine: either be victim (oh poor single girl with child must need welfare) or be silent (not represented in traditional parenting magazines). But here was Ariel Gore: single mom, full time college student, intelligent, awesome writer, beautiful, competent, and more. Rather than be labeled “Either/Or,” Gore started a new zine called

## ***From Grief to Parenting...con't***

Hip Mama to show us all the FULL experience of parenthood she and other parents like her were living. That little zine turned into a full color magazine with national distribution eventually. Turned out there were many more parents like Gore out there!

Knowing Gore's story influenced me. I was a parent whose needs and experiences were not represented in traditional parenting magazines. And I knew there were a LOT of other parents out there like me. So I started "A Different Kind of Parenting" as a way to give voice to my new life, hoping that others would find safe space here, too, and speak up about their role as bereaved parents and as a different kind of a parent beyond just that "bereavement." In the years since starting this zine, my aims and goals for it have changed, too. While I still very much want space here to give voice to the hard work of grief — because it IS hard and inescapable after the death of a child — I also want to give voice to the "new normal" that comes once the grief experiences are fully integrated with the balance of our lives.

In this space, I want to be a mum. Period. Just like any other parent on the planet will not have exactly the same parenting style for each of their living children, so do I have various parenting styles for each of our children. Our living son and daughter are different people who need different kinds of support from us. So, too, does our deceased son need a different kind of parent. Our relationships to each child are unique. While tangible support to our daughter might mean arranging transportation so she and our grandchildren can get back and forth to doctor appointments, the tangible support given to our deceased son might mean arranging transportation for several families to attend a memorial ceremony out of state so we all can honor our dead children there.

Now I do realize that some people will call me "crazy" and say that attending a ceremony is not about the child who died, but rather about my own needs. And I can understand how someone from the outside would be unable to grasp what I'm saying. But the bottom line to all of parenting is forming and maintaining healthy relationships with our children. We do this by loving them. We do this thru doing tangible things sometimes. We do this by being emotionally and physically available to them. And I firmly believe that we can do these things for ALL our children. I do believe that our children remain a part of our lives regardless of death — ours or theirs. There is a relationship to be nurtured with both our living children and our deceased children. We have the balance of our lives in which we define and re-define what it means to be a parent to our children. And those definitions change daily with ALL our children. Our living children will grow and change and become more independent. With our deceased children, we will at first deal with the concrete things like funeral, memorial, burial; then the hard work of grief; then the maintenance and expression of their legacy as we live out the rest of our lives.

I believe all of this is healthy. Not "crazy."

It is a subtle shift maybe. The move from the language of grief to the language of parenting. But it is POWERFUL! It moves us from being forever victim of grief to the empowerment of a different kind of parenting. It helps us to fully acknowledge how grief has forced its way in and caused us to redefine our lives. It helps us have language above and beyond grief so that a balanced integration can happen for each of us — a life where tears are as likely to surface as is laughter. A life where joy is felt as readily as is sadness. A life where parenting

## ***From Grief to Parenting...con't***

our living children can happen in the same moment as parenting our dead children. A life where we are fully accepting of our role as "parent" even if we have no other living children. THAT is integration.

And it has been my experience that this integration cannot happen if we are stuck only with the language of grief and not allowed to also use the language of parenting. As part of my work in this world, part of carrying out my son's legacy, I also feel responsible for creating space where this can happen. Maybe I did not completely understand it when I first started this zine, but part of my goal here is to model how we can do BOTH the hard work of grief as needed in the beginning of the journey — AND do the construction necessary to re-build our shelter.

It isn't easy to re-build. But together we can take it one pebble at a time. Mix the cement, make the bricks, and begin to re-create our "new normal" — the place where it is safe and healthy to fully express ourselves as parents. Though I do wish we were meeting under other circumstances — but since we cannot change what has happened — I am honored to escort you on this path, where everything, from the hard work of grief to the full expression of parenthood, WILL BE ACKNOWLEDGED!

You are not alone, and I hope you will feel safe finding shelter here.

***Postscript:*** Please join us in Arizona at the 2005 MISS Foundation Passages Conference where Hawk and Kara Jones will facilitate a workshop on "A Different Kind of Parenting" on Friday, May 27, from 2 to 5pm. In this workshop we will look at how when we choose to keep a pregnancy, we are set on a path of parenthood. When our children die, we are still their parents. Rather than looking at a life of "grief" that we are suppose to "get over", why not shift our perspective just a little? We bereaved parents are on the journey of a "Different Kind of Parenting". Society, caregivers, family, friends, other parents, can help us help ourselves by acknowledging our parenthood to our dead children. If our only children are dead, then we need ways to make our parenthood tangible. If we have other living children, then we need ways to blend our "different kind of parenting" for our dead children with our parenting styles we use with and for our living children. We'll explore the uses of expressive arts (poetry, theater, photography), volunteering, the Kindness Project and more. We can use these tools to facilitate our "Different Kind of Parenting" -- and caregivers, family, and friends can help us, and even use these tools themselves, as we put a full expression of love and parenthood out into the world after the deaths of our children. Join us as we explore, write, and share in this safe-space workshop!

For more information, please see: [www.missfoundation.org/conference/index.php](http://www.missfoundation.org/conference/index.php)

## ***Dates Remembered***

by Kara L.C. Jones

In the early days, just after our son died, I felt as if grief had wiped my brain clean and destroyed all the cells that used to be able to retain information. So things like birthdays and such, things I used to remember off the top of my head, now needed to be tattooed onto my forehead if I were going to remember them!

So I began using the electronic calendar on my personal computer, shared calendars on the internet, and my paper & pen daytimer to track things. On the electronic calendars, I'd enter the dates with reminders that beeped or buzzed me a week or so before the event so that I'd have time to send a card or gift.

Later, when friends and family began to ignore or forget our son's birth & death day, March 11th, I would get mad and wallow in resentment, playing victim to anger. Then I decided to do something instead. I began to enter his birth/death day into calendars for them. If someone had a paper calendar with them, I'd ask them to write in his day and watch while they did it. Or if it was a shared electronic calendar, I'd enter the day with a reminder that went out to everyone. Or I'd simply say, "Hey just like you make the effort to remember the birthdays of our living kids, please remember our son's day, too, okay?"

And when I would write things noting important dates, like family newsletters, I'd always comment and note our son's day. And I began to do things like send out cards around his day. You know for living children, we send out invitations to birthday parties, right? So around his day, I'd send out little cards that said things like, "I'm inviting you to stay home, light a candle, do something mindful. In honor of Dakota's birth and death day, please just remember him. If you are moved to do something for him, please make a donation to your favorite charity."

Simple as that to move from being the victim of my seething anger to feeling empowered by saying what was important to me.

Now that's not to say that everyone just went along with it because I voiced it. Many people thought I was "nuts" and refused to even hear what I was saying. Some tried to ignore my requests, never acknowledging that I had spoken or that they had received my card or note. And in those cases, the anger came back again. And I definitely did a lot of hard work to get through the barrage of those secondary feelings of anger.

Ultimately, I made another choice. To let go of that anger, too. I'd like to say I was all enlightened and felt huge forgiveness and went on honoring those people in my life even though they felt the right to ignore me. I wish I could say that I fully embraced my husband's belief that "no one is disposable, especially family" and found a way to keep expressing love toward folks like this. But the most I could do was let go of the anger and let go of the relationships. I didn't try to do any harm in revenge, I tried as gracefully as possible to bow out, but I definitely let go. The anger, the relationship with the person, the efforts to keep trying to bridge communication.

That was the most I could do. And it was hard. Another loss. On top of the worst loss we'd already been through in our lives. But in the end, that was how I chose to manage the dates remembered — and the dates forgotten.

## ***Safe Space for Sibs...***

**By Kara L.C. Jones**

Older surviving children or younger subsequently born children will have their own challenges and discoveries about grief and how they relate to the child who died. It can be a very helpful tool to create a safe space where siblings can physically go when feeling sad, wanting to talk, wanting to remember, or wanting to be silent. This might be a space in the house where there is a photo of the child who died, along with space for toys and other items to be added for sharing or switched out as the siblings grow and change and wish to share new things in that space. This might be a special tree planted outside that everyone knows is a memorial tree. This may become a space where siblings can play and go to talk out loud to the child who died. It is important for siblings to know it is safe to go to the space. Safe to talk or cry there. Safe to tell you they want to just be quiet and left alone while being there. Whatever they need at the moment.

This kind of physical space can be tremendously helpful for tangibly showing us as parents how much relationships are fostered, grow, and change over time. We can physically see when and how our living children are relating to the child who died, physically see how our living children are developing and changing in relation to grief and love of family.

It's a relatively simple thing to do. Create sacred, safe space for all members of your family! We all experience grief in our own ways, and expression is so important for siblings.

## ***All this stuff...***

**By Kara L.C. Jones**

When I was pregnant with my son, we were so prepared to bring him home. Blanket, cloth diapers, clothes were bought. Not just by us, but also by friends and family. My mom went shopping over the course of several months and near the end of my pregnancy, she sent me this huge box of clothes from sizes newborn to 1 year. It was so exciting.

When my son died at birth, we came home to all this stuff. At first it was all put away and stored at a friend's house. Then it was stored back at our house. And then we ended up homeless for awhile there, and in the desperation of losing shelter, I gave most of it away. Another loss on top of a myriad of other losses.

I think what made me the most sad was that I actually had plans for all that stuff. Yes, of course, when our baby was still alive, I planned to actually have him wear the clothes. But even after he died, I had planned to keep the clothes and eventually to make a huge quilt from them. When I was a kid, I had had this patchwork quilt made from the softest material, stuffed so that it was thick, fluffy, and warm. I wanted to make that kind of thing out of my son's clothes, blankets, and cloth diapers.

As things happened, I was not able to do that. It's okay now. Have come to terms with it and it really is okay now. I know that kids who really needed clothes went on to wear them. That feels right, too.

But just thought to pass the quilt idea on to all of you. Maybe you have "all this stuff" too — and still have the space and time to make something of it...

## **Self-Care**

from Kara L.C. Jones

So this issue's self-care idea is really one I'm stealing from my Life Coach, Joan McCabe. In the last few months, I've struggled with having so many things on my to-do list. It wasn't that I wanted to stop doing things. It wasn't even that the things on my list were icky. Mostly it was all stuff I wanted to do — either because it was work to make the ends meet and get the rent paid or because it was something I simply love doing. But there was a LOT of it all going on at the same time.

So I would trudge thru my list, scratching off one thing after another, retyping the list at the end of the week to incorporate new items or to add notes about things that weren't yet complete or whatever. And at the beginning of the next week, I'd trudge thru the list, top to bottom, do the item, immediately move on to the next thing.

When talking with Joan about this, I told her I was just exhausted. I felt no joy in any of it. And it was beginning to feel very much like I worked for this mean boss-task-master. She smiled. She pointed out that I am an artist at heart, and it might be helpful to return to the most playful version of my artist self when dealing with the to-do list.

She suggested that just like when I was a kid, I close my eyes, randomly point, open my eyes and then do the item my finger was closest to — instead of doing the top to bottom, all in order, kind of thing that feels like “work”!! Then she suggested that after I finish each item, I find a cool sticker or gold star and put it up somewhere! Just like when we were kids, on the refrigerator was a to-do list from mom, and when you finished an item, you got a gold star next to it! Fill in all the gold stars for the week, and you got a prize! Same concept.

I have to tell you that I'm LOVING this method! Grief can be hard on us. Doing simple things like making phone calls can be very difficult! It feels so great to acknowledge to myself that I am putting in real effort and work by making that phone call. Making the way I do things fun, being mindful of having done them by rewarding myself with a gold star — and even getting the prize at the end of the week! When I fill in the gold stars, I then treat myself to a really cool artist date!! A trip to the museum. An afternoon at the beach taking photos. An evening of silly movies. I love having self-care validated like this!

## **Art Ideas**

from Kara L.C. Jones

Who says the baby book has to “be finished” anyway? When our baby died, I hated the idea that his baby book would be finished. So to this day, I continue working on it. It has become more of a memory album rather than traditional baby book. I do have the early pages, like his photos, foot prints, and such. But I also have pages that need to be done now — 6 years later! These pages are for cards we get each year on his birth/death day or a page about the publication of one of his poems or maybe adding a photo of the most recently born grandchild along with a note to my son, “Uncle” Dakota, so he gets introduced properly to his nieces and nephews.

The art process of your child's books doesn't have to end. Just as your role as their parent continues, grows, and changes, so too can their memory books. Keep making art!



## ***Being a Couple: Dealing with Grief***

By Kara L.C. Jones

Grief is overwhelming. It dismantles our lives, forces us to become new people, demands all our attention. All of that creates significant challenges for couples after the death of a child. I know, because my husband and I faced those challenges after our son died.

Grief messed with our perceptions of distance. When our son first died, the world collapsed down to be no one except me and my husband. There was no one else on the face of this planet who could get near us, understand us, help us. We were it, the only one for the other. But after that kind of mashing together of our molecules, well, then just my husband going to the mailbox felt as if he were traveling to Mars! Let alone his return to work 9 to 5 each day with a long commute on either end! The long haul we had to climb back to each other every night had to be done consciously and consistently. Once we voiced the odd perceptions of distance to each other, it wasn't as difficult to make the trek back.

Grief messed with our sense of role playing. I had had a c-section, so right after our son's death, my husband really had to play care-giver. Since I was heavily medicated, I needed help to get dressed, to go to the bathroom, to sneeze! And I was in no shape whatsoever to make decisions and sign paperwork, so it all fell to my husband. But many weeks later, when I was in better shape physically, and my husband was facing sheer exhaustion, we kept playing the roles grief had first assigned us: Husband, care-giver; Wife, in need. At some point, we realized — with the help of others who had been through this before us — that we had to consciously and consistently check in with each other and switch roles from time to time. My husband now needed some taking care of — he needed time to be brain dead, to be in bed, to have me make him some soup. I needed to get back to doing things. Still nothing major, but just something or else I was going to go berserk with the nothingness of my days. Switching roles helped us to be more physically and emotionally present for each other. None of it was easy. But grief never makes it easy.

And, of course, every couple will be different. No one situation is exactly like another. Some couples will find that talking with other couples at support group is helpful, a way of seeing this “new normal” modeled for them. Others will want to have the support of couples counseling to work more individually. Others may want to follow that up with individual counseling for each person, including surviving siblings in the family. Some couples may find all the help and support they need from the elders in their community or church. I have even met families where the newly bereaved parents are learning to face grief from the example of their parents! Sometimes bereaved grandparents, sadly, have also previously been bereaved parents themselves. They often model for us an amazing way of facing all the curve balls grief can throw at us.

In whatever ways couples seek support or don't seek support, in whatever ways they continue to communicate with each other or don't, in whatever ways they grow together or apart after grief, none of it is easy. And none of that work is avoidable either, I don't think. I encourage you to do the very best you can in any given moment. Seek reflection and ideas from others. Try different ways of communicating and role playing and supporting each other. And if in some other later moment, you find that your “best” is different now, then don't be afraid to say to your partner, “Hey, back then, I did the best I could at the time. Now, I think my best is different and I'd like to try something else.” And then try it.

And know that, whatever happens, you are not alone. There are other people out there who have faced what you are facing now — grief. Give yourself credit for all the work you are doing. Don't let grief discount that!

## **Memorials**

For all who were lost on December 26, 2004 in the tsunami disasters...  
For all who are lost in any natural disaster or man-made war...

For Dakota Jones, born & died March 11, 1999 at 4:47 p.m.  
For Joel Albert Grayson, August 27 - October 8, 1999, Son of Nancy & Peter Grayson  
For Charles Christopher Irby, born & died November 6, 1999, Son of Katie  
For Nora Elizabeth, born & died June 3, 2001, Daughter of Christine & Bear  
For Andrew Joseph, born & died October 22, 2001 and his sister Ally, miscarried on  
March 15, 2002, Children of Mike & Angie  
For Adam, born & died March 13, 2000, Son of Nisa & Eric  
For Peanut and for Allen Robert, January 19 - February 4, 2002, Children of Laura & James  
For Baby Bean and for Amanda Joy, born & died March 2, 2000, Children of Steph & Chuck  
For Lily, born & died April 16, 2003, Daughter of Melanie & Rob  
For Adin, born & died April 10, 2002, Son of Josie  
For Cheyenne, born & died July 27, 1994, Daughter of Joanne  
For Blake, September 12, 1998 - February 18, 2000, Son of Katie  
For Tyler, born & died January 11, 1996, Son of Kim & Theo  
For Madison Elaine, March 13 - March 15, 2002, Daughter of Krista & Brian  
For Olivia, born & died July 27, 2003, Daughter of Amaila & Joe  
For MIRacle, born & died, July 23, 2003, Daughter of Kahlilia  
For Samantha Paige, born & died July 23, 1999, Daughter of Poppy  
For Cadin, born & died November 6, 2004, Son of Melissa  
For Kylie Noelle Southworth, born 8-21-2000, died 1-18-2004, Daughter of Dana  
For Isaac Craig George, born 12-19-02, died 12-21-02, Son of Janet & Eric

We miss you all so very much...

*If you would like the name and birth/death dates of your child added here, please email editor@kotapress.com and put "DIFFERENT KIND OF PARENTING MEMORIAL LISTING" in the subject line of your note. Thank you.*

## **Submission Guidelines**

If you know of a grief resource for parents, a quote that inspires you on those dark, painful nights, or have a one page article about grief & healing, or a short poem you've written in memory of your child, write to us. We'd like to hear from you. Send your work via email— cut and paste directly into the email, please. No attachments will be opened. Include a few lines of a bio along with your submission, too. And in the subject line of your email, please type, "DIFFERENT KIND OF PARENTING SUBMISSION."

**Email:** editor@kotapress.com

**URL:** www.KotaPress.com

**Phone:** 206-251-6706 (Please leave a voice mail and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.)

## KotaPress Books and Services

Title & Description	Price per copy	Quantity wanted	Price x Quantity = Total per item
<p><b>Mrs. Duck &amp; The Woman</b> (English Language)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"I was very moved by Mrs. Duck; what a wonderful gift for not only grieving parents, but for ANYONE who's mourning a loss."</i> -Rev. Joan M. McCabe</p> <p>A story about the loss of a child and how to start over again after that loss. Through a dialogue between Mrs. Duck and Mrs. Woman, we find the beginning clues of how to start healing the grief. For anyone who has suffered a loss and is learning to live life after the death of a child.</p>	\$5		
<p><b>La Senora Pato y La Mujer</b> (Spanish Language)</p>	\$5		
<p><b>Flash of Life</b> (English Language)</p> <p>This second edition includes the full, original narrative plus 2002 Foreword, updated Resource guide for online &amp; offline bereavement support, and information about The Mrs. Duck Project and Friends of Mrs. Duck. The narrative is one family's experience of pregnancy and still-birth showing how the death of a child affects a woman, a marriage, a family, and a community.</p>	\$15		
<p><b>Father Son Holy Ghost</b> (English Language)</p> <p>This follow up collection to Flash Of Life was a year in the making, and tracks the authors path as she heals from the death of her first born son. These writings take a critical look at familial relationships before and after the death, and share some solid step toward healing. It's a story of survival, and if you found Flash Of Life compelling or important in your life, this collection, too, is a must-read!</p>	\$10		
<p><b>1 Yr PRINT Subscription Different Kind of Parenting</b> (4 issues)</p> <p>When you are the parent of a child who has died, traditional parenting magazines cease to be helpful. All the publications you might voraciously read while pregnant end up meaning nothing in the face of miscarriage, stillbirth, neonatal death, SIDS, or fatal childhood diseases. For this reason, we at KotaPress now offer you an alternative print resource in the form of a 'zine specifically written for parents enduring the death of a child.</p>	\$8		
<p><b>EMAIL PDF Subscription to Different Kind of Parenting</b> (4 issues/yr)</p> <p>The same print zine described above, available free in PDF format via email. Just send email to editor@kotapress.com with "DIFF KIND OF PARENT" in the subject line of your note. You'll immediately get the most recent issues and be put on the email list for future issues.</p>	FREE		
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## **KotaPress Mission Statement**

This press was started as a safe haven where we could publish our grief and healing artworks. Since its inception, KotaPress has extended this safe haven to other bereaved parents, artists, and poets around the world. We aim to continue offering a home for artworks created by artists who are on a healing path regardless of the tragedy that put them on the path in the first place.

## **Mrs. Duck Project Update**

Our Mrs. Duck & The Woman book has been in print since 1999. Over 1,000 print copies have reached the hands of bereaved parents, and the ebook version has been viewed thousands of times on our website. In 2004, the Mrs. Duck book was released in the Spanish language version available from KotaPress and will be offered on the KotaPress table at the 2005 MISS Conference in Arizona.

Our animation version and documentary for caregivers and parents is still in the works. Funding, as always, is a challenge when it concerns matters of grief. It isn't a topic sponsors and foundations get "excited" about — in fact, many would rather not hear about it at all, so it's been a hard pitch for the project. But we refuse to give up.

We are still hoping to get raw documentary footage captured at the 2006 MISS Conference and have discussed possibilities with an indie filmmaker who will be in attendance next year. And options for the animation may include farming out the work to a team of animators who could support the vision and mission of this project. The plan for distribution continues to be offering the finished product thru the MISS Foundation to local chapters and to the REACH trainees as that program proliferates nationally and internationally.

Many thanks to all of you who have held the vision. May the journey continue to unfold!

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**You will always be a parent.  
Nothing, not even death can change that.  
-Nanna Memoo  
Dakota's Grandma**

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