

# Different Kind of Parenting

a zine for parents whose children have died

And more...

Poetry

Theory vs. Experience:  
tools for everyday use

Lexi's Legacy

Mothers Day & Fathers Day...

What Pema Chodron  
taught me...

# Finding Our Way...

Letter From the Editor  
by Kara L.C. Jones

So this quarter's issue comes to you a little late, I'll admit. But there is a reason -- well, several -- but one in particular that might interest readers. I have had a hard time figuring out what to say. It's that simple.

Not necessarily writer's block or creativity block. Lots of other things have come out of my head, heart, and fingertips by way of artmaking this quarter. But the words have simply not been forthcoming for me.

This is the quarter of Mothers Day and Fathers Day here in the U.S. which has previously been an angry or passionate or sacred time for me since our son died. But this year, similar to what I experienced on our son's 8th birth/death day this year, I felt somewhat ambivalent.

This is not to say I didn't move thru sadness, joy at those who remembered and did ceremony with me, wistful dreaming about my son, a few tears. But there have been no big huge revelations really. Nothing that just moved me from my inner core to outer being, so much so that I wanted to write about it.

And then that ambivalence, the almost flat-affect, made me stop and consider. Sort of red flagged me to make time to just sit in silence and see where I really am. What is really present for me?

Even the answers I got from this are hard to articulate. So many levels of response -- so many I'm too overwhelmed at times to write anything at all. But I'll try to share with you what I witnessed in my silence:

My son's death has left me with nerve endings that almost sit outside my skin. I can *FEEL* sorrow and the power of grief surging through others in ways I never thought possible.

Sometimes, being able to read that kind of thing is too hard for me to process. There is so much sorrow, I am just one person, and who the heck am I to know how to help anyone when some days I barely function for my own family?!

But then, beyond those gremlins of self doubt, there was something else. A question of the present moment. What can I do *\*right now\** in this very moment to honor my experiences, the hard and insightful road of grief, my son's very life and death? Because, seriously, all I have is *\*right now\** -- while I fully acknowledge a big, wide world of grief and joy and war and peace -- I can't wave a wand and influence anything out there. BUT I CAN seize my present moment and do whatever I want with it to honor the fact

that I'm still here,  
so now what?

Now, I choose  
peace. My own  
inner sanity of

peace. When I'm grumpy, I stop whatever I'm doing and eat or nap or meditate -- whatever my body is needing.

Now, I choose peace. Instead of jumping to defensiveness with my partner, my client, my kids, I stop, breathe, attempt to truly listen to them and just wait to respond till there is time for me to truly consider what I hear.

Now, I choose peace. When anger does come (because this is the real world!), I acknowledge it *and* try to silently practice this exercise: I close my eyes, picture the person making me angry, put my hands over my heart, and repeat, "I'm sorry. I love you. I'm so sorry. I love you. I'm sorry. I love you." Yeah, okay, I know it can sound like a bunch of new age hokey. But seriously, I do it as an experiment -- what can it hurt to try this instead of immediately imploding into a pile of angry ashes

So I do that and a couple things happen:

1) I actually begin to feel ease return to my body because my physical self is responding to the words. I begin to feel myself saying to myself, "Okay, Kara, I'm sorry you are so angry, and I love you anyway." FYI, my body likes that much better than the ways I used to beat it up with guilt and shame for feeling angry in the first place!

2) It sort of "re-humanizes" the person who had become the "object" of my anger. I can at least consider that the person is human and made a mistake. Or maybe they were hungry and homeless and that's why they stole money out of my wallet. Or maybe they are brutal in this world because no one ever was able to reach them to demonstrate how compassion benefits us all. Or maybe they have true malice and just can't stand me. Whatever the case, it make them human again.

Now, I choose peace. When the grief comes, I allow myself the time and space to cry. Move fully through it and onto the next moment instead of suppressing my heart.

Now, I choose peace. In this moment, I choose to be available to you, dear reader. To share all that was hidden behind my flat-affect. To reconnect to you, one human to another.

And it is my hope that we all can be so fortunate as to choose peace and self-care in the present moment. You are worthy of no less.

Photo by Hawk Jones



# Mothers Day & Fathers Day

by Kara L.C. Jones

Knowing that the real history of Mothers Day came from Julia Ward Howe's bereaved heart in 1870 and her cry for peace so no more sons would die in that war -- and later from Anna Jarvis' work after her mother died -- I take some comfort. I mean at least it isn't *all* some crass, commercial bid to brow beat consumers into another spending frenzy. At least there is some real basis, real heart-work at the core and foundation of Mothers Day. Some sense of compassion.

But, wow, the big greeting card and flower companies sure don't do a whole lot to make these days anything other than consumer shopping fests! They don't offer real history, they don't make allowances for parents whose children have died -- I guess we don't count as Moms and Dads anymore as far as the corporate beast is concerned because our children are no longer here to spend money on us.

I know, I know. That's cynical and whiny. But come on! I realize that corporations are exempt from *PEOPLE* having to be responsible because corporations are entities and can pretty much get away with anything these days. But there must be actual people who have some response-ability in the offices of those corporations, right? There has to be more in the hearts of those people than just paper money, right?

Well, maybe not though. And given that I can't wave a magic wand and fix it or change it or even influence it really, I come back once again to my very own present moment. That's all I've got. So what can I do now, in this moment, for this Mothers Day and Fathers Day, in my own life?

I can refuse to shop on these days. Or if I am moved to shop for a loved one, then I can consciously choose to shop in a way that benefits a non-profit organization doing good works in the world.

I can make my own cards and art to give as gifts to the moms and dads I want to honor.

I can share with others the history of Moms Day. Do a Google search for "Julia Ward Howe Mothers Day" and read, read, read.

I can be sure to remember and honor ALL the moms and dads -- most definitely including those whose children have died.

I can even take it a step further by honoring those children who have died as a way of honoring their Moms and Dads. I can do a Kindness Project in honor and memory of those kids.

I can take the time to ask my partner what he wants to do for Dads day and then really listen to his answer.

Turn off the tv. Ignore those ads for the commercialized version of these "holidays." Create your own vision on these days and honor your parenthood fully!

## Lexi's Legacy: Helping Families Stay Safe!

Lexi's dad, Mike Scalzi, called me to share their story in the hopes of helping other families. I'm honored to share Lexi's Legacy here with you now, and hope you will click thru to read the articles below to find out more. After Lexi drowned in the family swimming pool, the Scalzi family decided to reach out to other families offering **free pool alarms and access to free CPR training**. They are doing amazing work in Lexi's honor. Contact them today to find out more about keeping your family on track for water safety!! For more information on Lexi's Legacy, contact Mike and Michelle Scalzi at (716) 633-0076 or e-mail Teresa Combs at [TeresaMCombs@yahoo.com](mailto:TeresaMCombs@yahoo.com).

See Buffalo Red Cross news article about Lexi's Legacy:  
<http://www.buffaloredcross.org/Home/News/Current/LexisLegacy>

Check out WGRZ's coverage of Lexi's Legacy:  
<http://www.wgrztv.com>

Many thanks to the Scalzi family for all their good works in Lexi's name!

## Support Good Works!

Fundraisers are one way good works can continue in this world. Check out the following "Save the Date" information from a few of our favorite organizations and mark your calendars!

[TheTearsFoundation.org](http://TheTearsFoundation.org), Twinkle Like the Stars Fundraiser, Friday, October 12, 2007, 6 pm till 10 pm, Marriott Courtyard Hotel, Tacoma. TEARS offers financial aid to bereaved families for baby funeral services.

[ASmallvictory.org](http://ASmallvictory.org), Hope Float's Fundraiser, August 12th, 2007 from 1-4PM, Dinner & Auction at Spitfire in Seattle. A Small Victory offers free gift baskets filled with outreach and memory items to bereaved families.

[MISSFoundation.org](http://MISSFoundation.org), July 30, 2007, Daniel's STAR 1st Annual Golf Outing, Staten Island, NY. MISS offers free bereavement support to families after the death of a child, as well as educational opportunities for caregivers working with those families.

# Memorials in Honor of...

## MEMORIALS

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

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 Hope Kathryn, November 16, 2006, Daughter of Kathryn  
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

For Finnley Sage Butler, born & died August 6, 2004, brother of Reese Lily, Son of Marika & Parker

For Renae Makani Stooks, Born November 2nd 2002, Died November 3rd, 2002, Daughter of Wendy & Derek

For Dakoda, December 8th, 2004, Son of Laura and Matt

For Janell Victory, stillborn July 25, 2004, Ethan and Liz Allen, For Maddy, Granddaughter of Nina

For Grace Susie, Stillborn June 1, 2003, Daughter of Sarah & Terry; Sister of Carver, Sophia, and Sawyer

For Bump, Skye, & Adel, Children of John & Carolyn

We miss you all so very much...

If you would like your child's name added here or on the Honor Garden pages of the KotaPress Loss Journal website, please just email us. Be sure the subject line of your email says, "PLEASE ADD MEMORIAL" so that it doesn't get lost in 600+ spam messages we get everyday! Send your note to Kara at [editor@kotapress.com](mailto:editor@kotapress.com) and feel free to try a second or third time if you don't hear from us within a couple of weeks!

Take time to do nothing. Seriously. Just sit there. Can't do that while inside with the distractions of phone, tv, computer? Go outside and sit on the porch. Or get to someplace outside where you can look out and see land or water or trees. Something other than other people and buildings. And then sit there. Just sit. Listen. Hear the bees buzzing. Look up and see the tree tops sway in the wind. Listen to the surf of the water going in and out. Brings tears to you? Fine. Cry for a bit. Makes you smile. Great. Giggle to yourself. It is all okay. You don't have to fix it, change it, nada. Just be there in the moment. Just try it!

## Grief

By Kathryn Johnson

Unruly beast  
Relentless, your torment  
Insatiable, your appetite  
For desperation and despair  
You feed off broken hearts  
Bewilder weakened minds  
With unrestrained force

Yet I won't let you consume  
My spirit  
Though you may try

Conjurer of tricks  
You turn the familiar  
Into the unknown  
Joy into fear, love into pain  
You change shape and form  
Bend time and space  
With maddening effect

Yet I won't let you steal  
My sanity  
Though you may try

Crafty and complex  
Overwhelming and fierce  
You threaten to crush me  
Yet I won't let you

Your power will diminish  
As I get stronger  
You will be overshadowed  
By memories of love  
Replaced by  
Courage and hope

## Write rite right...

*Exercise idea offered by Kara Jones*

To take the time out each day or week to write can easily become a rite or ritual that can help to set us right again. Okay, enough with the play on words. But think about the idea of it.

If you make an appointment with yourself to write, you ritualize your time. I mean take out your calendar book or family calendar on the wall or joint calendar on the computer and schedule time for yourself! And then keep your appointment with the tenacity and professionalism you show in keeping an appointment with a client or doctor or for a teacher or therapist consult.

At your appointment, take up a blank computer screen or a legal pad of purple paper or a new blank journal or an old diary you've never filled. And then write.

It doesn't have to be the great novel or a fabulous new poem. Just put pen to paper without editing yourself. Can't think of where to start? Try one of these:

- 1) Write a letter to your child who died.
- 2) Write questions you'd like to ask your child who died. Pause a moment and then write the answers you hear reflected in your head after asking that question. Don't edit, don't rationalize, just write.
- 3) Make a list of all the words that describe how you've changed since your child died. Doesn't have to be sentences. Just list words one after another.
- 4) Interview yourself. Seriously. Ask your self questions in writing and then answer them. When asking the questions think of a voice in your head that is not your own -- let some other, make believe voice in your head ask you questions. Now answer them!

## Everything Is Ready, But She's Not Here

By Kathryn Johnson

My niece looks around the room, taking in the crib and rocking chair, the toys and stuffed animals, the carefully folded blankets and fully stocked changing table.

She then looks at me.

"Everything is ready, but she's not here," she says matter-of-factly. My eyes well up with tears.

"She's here," I reply. "But we just can't see her."

In fact, she's everywhere, I think to myself. This is her room, and everything in it belongs to her.

Except she will never sleep in that crib, or be rocked in that chair, or cuddle and play with those animals and toys, or be wrapped in those blankets, or changed on that table. I'll never see her crawl across that floor, or read those books, or wear those little outfits hanging in her closet.

Everything is ready, but she's not here.

These poems  
are for Hope  
Kathryn

# Theory vs. Experience...

by Kara L.C. Jones

Hello!??

At this point in my young life, I've come to discover a few things about compassion, self development and how we can work together about the hard stuff to always come back realigned with the joyful stuff.

Now I know many of you may be hearing about things like The Secret, the Law of Attraction, and Abundance Theory. Some of you are hearing it for the first time. Others have been hearing about these things for years. For some, these things seem magical. For others, they seem impossible or at the very least, impractical.

Let me use a little metaphor here to try and explain what I see happening:

Look at music theory. Concepts about music. Written words. Available to anyone with access to a library or the Internet. But reading music theory does not make you a good musician. You have to take the theory and plunk around noisily on the keyboard; practice having all your fingers do different things and yet work together; practice everyday; eventually you can read music or hear music and mimic it; and pretty soon you are good. And then one day, you feel something in the core of your being; music that is pushing its way out through the cells of your being; and you sit at the keyboard and watch as something brand new pours out of your finger tips and you *FEEL* the music.

You have bridged that gap between theory and core experience.

Okay now, going back to things like Abundance and Law of Attraction – in particular The Secret and some of the broad statement about cause and effect. I disconnect with these theories at the point where a caregiver or friend or family member looks into the face of a bereaved person or ill person and proceeds to say something like, “Well I know your child died, but you have to start thinking positive again” or “Well your dis-ease comes from within, so you have to heal yourself.” These broad statements simply impose another level of “woulda, coulda, shoulda” on the person.

That is like taking someone who has never seen a keyboard before and putting them out in front of a full house at Lincoln Center with piano and saying, “Think positive, you can do it!”

It is unfair, not to mention, if you are a caregiver, it is a dis-service in the biggest way. By caregiver, I mean doctor, nurse, hospice worker, but also therapist, coach, and outreach volunteer. If you do this to a person, you are not following the tenant of “Do no harm.” In fact, you are harming them further by adding a layer of guilt and shame to what they already are dealing with in their lives.

A mother comes to me after her child has drowned while she was inside switching the laundry from the washer to the dryer. She feels guilty that the child died on “her watch” and she feels shame at being a horrible person for letting it happen. These are not rational thoughts, but this is what she is experiencing – emotionally, forget rational!

For me to now say to her, “Well, you just have to start thinking different and focus on abundance” is to *not connect with her at all*. She will glaze over and get away from me as fast as possible. AND she'll then add to her already burdened process, a layer of guilt that she isn't good enough to do this abundance thing right and shame that she maybe isn't worthy of doing it right anyway. I have just done her an awful disservice.

Instead, there are so many other ways to possibly handle this kind of situation – and as a caregiver especially, it is my job to find out how!!

Now I do happen to believe that things like the Law of Attraction and the Power of Now and Abundance theory are real and work. But I have come to that belief thru my own practice with the theories. And there are tools in this realm that can work when we meet up with people who are in crisis, but we have to be willing to meet the person *where they are!*

One of the great tools that can do this is Byron Katie's The Work. If you haven't heard of it, look it up online or get the book from your library. You can buy the books thru their website, but also she is very generous with information on the website and you can learn all about The Work right there if you take the time to read.

Basically, The Work is about using a few questions and a “turnaround” to shift your perspective – to experience that shift emotionally within yourself – so

that the theory becomes reality. Remember that a Course in Miracles and in Marianne Williamson's book Return to Love about the Course, there is a great definition for miracle.

*A miracle is simply a shift in perspective.*

And Byron Katie's The Work is a great tool for making a simple but experiential shift in perspective! I find the first question of The Work to be the most powerful. It asks simply,

*Is it true?*

Now you might think, okay, big deal. But look at the bereaved mom from the example above. She has written down that she feels she's a horrible person. Now we ask her simply, "Is that true?" In talking her through it, we find she is a good mother, a loving partner, a talented artist, she and her other children often volunteer at the local food bank. This is not a horrible person. So we ask her again, "Is it true that you are a horrible person?" Something dawns in her face. No. It isn't true. And from there we go through the other steps of The Work with this mom coming to her *OWN* realizations, connecting theory with experience and emotion.

Through this *experience*, this mom begins to feel a shift in her perspective. From there, we can go on to work with other tools as she experiments and makes the commitment to practice trying out other things like The Law of Attraction or the Power of Intention. And each time the gritty stuff of grief comes up, the thoughts that say, "I'm horrible," we can go back to The Work and ask, "Is this true?"

It is amazing how people can make leaps and bounds in the evolution of their story. Amazing how their perspective of self can change. Amazing how much weight can come off the shoulders.

This isn't rocket science. It's not hard to learn about the theories and possible tools available to all of us. It just takes a commitment to practice using the tools *ourselves* – honestly and fully in our everyday lives. *And then also a commitment to meeting other people where they are when they come to us for support.*

So please don't just throw theories around. Check out all the possible tools, use them yourself thoroughly in your own life, and then meet other people where they are in the moment. Really commit to practice the tenant of "Do no harm" – no harm to yourself nor to others.

## Resources:

<http://www.thework.com>  
<http://www.comfortqueen.com>  
<http://www.ramdass.org>  
<http://healingnest.blogspot.com>  
<http://www.abraham-hicks.com>  
<http://www.eckhartolle.com>

## Freedom From Self Improvement

Besides doing no harm to others, sometimes it is just as important to do no harm to yourself! For this reason, I've so appreciated Jennifer Louden's book Comfort Queen because it is mostly about accepting yourself as you are right now, and going, step by step from there -- if you choose to take the step, consciously. There are no "have to's" in her work.

Most recently, she's founded "Freedom From Self Improvement" day and now week! You can read full about it at:

<http://www.freedomfromselfimprovement.com>

I, personally, appreciate the tenants of this "holiday" because they are so common sense! Here's an excerpt from their declaration:

Because there is no "secret."

Because it's time to challenge the belief that if we "could only" change ... then — and only then — we'd finally grasp ... "Happiness" or "Peace" or "Enlightenment."

Because we're exhausted from following the latest trend...

Because we're tired of "shoulding" ...

Because we know, deep down inside, that we already have everything we need right now, exactly as we are...

Amen, Awomen, Apeople! Finally someone who is willing to promote and offer insight and compassionate guidance to every individual based on exactly where they are in this moment! All I can say is this:

The Comfort Queen RULES!

# KotaPressTools

## *Mrs. Duck & The Woman*



(English Language)

"I was very moved by Mrs. Duck; what a wonderful gift for not only grieving parents, but for ANYONE who's mourning a loss."

-Rev. Joan M. McCabe

A story about the loss of a child and how to start over again after that loss. Through a dialogue between Mrs. Duck and The 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. Or you can now get:

La Senora Pato y La Mujer  
(Spanish Language version of  
Mrs. Duck & The Woman)

For either version, please see:  
[kotapress.com](http://kotapress.com)



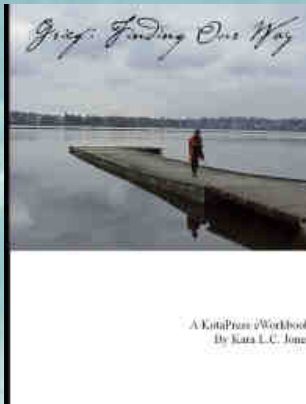
## Flash of Life (English Language)

" I loved your book. It is so very real to me...you said it better than I have heard it said...very, very powerful!"  
Joanne Cacciatore,  
MISS Founder

This second edition includes the full, original narrative plus 2002 Foreword, updated Resource guide for online & 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. Please see:  
[kotapress.com](http://kotapress.com)

## Grief: Finding Our Way

Difficult to know what pulls us back to life after grief shatters everything. The path from the moment of crisis back to some sort of transformed life will not look exactly the same for any of us. But the tools for creating our unique paths are available to all of us. We make the choice to pick up the tools, try them out, cherish what works, and let go of what does not. This does not mean we "get over it" or "find closure" or forget. It simply means that we find ways to use creativity to integrate grief experiences into our everyday lives. Learning to live again after death. This Lulu.com print or download version is a stand-alone KotaPress



workbook. It does not give you a registration spot for our online eCourse of the same name.

See [lulu.com/editor1035](http://lulu.com/editor1035)

## Meditation Photos, Book One



We hope this eye-popping, thought-provoking photo book will be just the inspiration you need and want for your meditation practice. Provided in full-color format, each page

contains full-color photo and one word prompt for you to consider with each session of meditation. Find your meditation groove with KotaPress! Please see:

[lulu.com/editor1035](http://lulu.com/editor1035)

# 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.

In the subject line of your your email, please type, "DIFFERENT KIND OF PARENTING SUBMISSION."

[editor@kotapress.com](mailto:editor@kotapress.com)  
<http://www.KotaPress.com>  
Phone: 206-251-6706

(If you get voice mail, please leave a message, and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.)

Sanctuary is in your own heart



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Drawing by Kara L.C. Jones, [MotherHenna.com](http://MotherHenna.com)  
Excerpted from [1,000 Faces of Mother Henna](#) project

Allow yourself to find whatever you need within your own heart. When you need help and support, allow your heart to be brave enough to ask for exactly what you need from others. If the first person you ask doesn't help you, ask another. You deserve to keep asking until you find the right person to help. Allow yourself time each day to sink into silence and listen to your own heart beat. Stay with yourself long enough to see who is really there. If he or she makes you cry, then cry. If he or she makes you scared, ask why and allow yourself to be safe enough to overcome fear. Really take stock of the present moment. Are you fed? Are you clothed? Do you have shelter? If so, you are basically okay. Feel that okay-ness. If you don't have these things, reach out into your community and seek assistance. Allow yourself to accept the generosity of that community. Sit on the ground. Feel your body supporting you as you sit. Feel the solid ground beneath you, holding you. Let your body rest on that ground. Let it totally hold you. Feel safety in being held this way. Even when you walk away from this exercise, feel the ground supporting you as you walk. Let yourself feel held and supported that way every single day.

# Mission

## 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.

## On the path for 2007...

Had a wonderful opportunity in April to meet with a group in our area called "Compassionate Caregivers" where local people from hospitals, clinics, funeral homes, government and outreach agencies all gather monthly. We were asked to present some information about what KotaPress has to offer bereaved families and their caregivers.

As I put together the handout materials, I was surprised myself by the amount of information we've generated over the years. We've got the full archive of this zine online now. All the topics of articles in the Loss Journal. The Mrs. Duck eBook expanded version. Our grief workbook and the eClass that go with it. Free packets of books and brochures and Kindness Cards offered via our work with the MISS Foundation.

The caregivers attending this presentation were so supportive and grateful to learn about these materials. They asked for information about bulk buy discounts on getting quantity copies of our materials. They wanted to know how best to connect families in their care

*You will always be a parent.  
Nothing, not even death can  
change that.*

*-Nanna Memoo  
Dakota's Grandma*

**Kō ta'**  
press

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with all we had to offer. They offered to take our materials to their offices and conferences for other caregivers to share the information.

I was moved by their responsiveness and willingness to brain storm on our behalf about how to get materials in the hands of families in need. For this, I thank each of them!

Because they were interested in the information about quantity purchase discounts, I have put together a wholesale/quantity discount price list of our books and brochures. If any of you are interested, please contact me for the PDF format of this information. We are hoping that by being able to offer this option, more and more people will find they have access to these materials.

This group of folks also got me motivated into thinking about ways to spread the word and keep the word out there about these bereavement materials. I'd be most interested in hearing from all of you about how you discovered this zine, about what brings other grief resource materials to top of mind for you, about what resources you return to again and again -- and why you like what you utilize.

By gathering information like this, I think we can find more and better ways to keep materials available and affordable (and free whenever possible) to anyone who needs and wants to use them. If you feel like sharing this information, please email me with your comments at [editor@kotapress.com](mailto:editor@kotapress.com)

Our last bit of news for this quarter is that we are again looking for a new living and working space on our little island. The land we are currently on will be sold soon, so a new nest is required. It is my hope that we'll find something that might give us the space to offer more in the way of workshops, retreats, and private sessions. We hope in the Fall to offer another KotaPress/WA State MISS retreat and training. And we continue to offer memorial henna, grief consults, and Distance Reiki sessions in our work at [HennaHealing.com](http://HennaHealing.com). Via Distance Reiki Sessions, I am now able to work with clients anywhere in the world, so please be in touch if you have interest or questions about this service.

We'll let you know more about the move to a new space as things unfold here! More next quarter...

# Updates

# What Pema Chodron Taught Me

By Kara L.C. Jones

Recently at our library, I found the dvd series of Bill Moyers on Faith & Reason where he interviews various spiritual leaders, authors, teachers. The first one I picked out was his session with Pema Chodron.

Having been a Reiki student for several years now, I've heard Pema's name many times, scanned across articles about her work, maybe even picked up a book or two she wrote and read the back cover. But I never really connected with anything she put out in these various written formats.

Her session with Bill Moyers on dvd was different though. From the moment they began capturing her on film, her smiling \*present\* face, I was caught. I watched the dvd several times before returning it. Later discovered the interview and transcript online at:

[http://www.pbs.org/moyers/faithandreason/portraits\\_chodron.html](http://www.pbs.org/moyers/faithandreason/portraits_chodron.html)

So I read and re-read the transcript a few times. For some reason, this particular session with Pema has really affected me. So I thought I'd share a little of what I feel she's taught me from just this one interview.

The first thing to strike me was that she was sharing ancient Buddhist teaching, and yet I've just recently come across these very same ideas in Byron Katie's "The Work". I was awed by how ageless these teachings are. Pema talked about the difference between the fact of what happens and our thinking about what happens. In particular, she talked about suffering. Specifically, she mentioned the death of a loved one and resultant grief.

I was fascinated to hear Pema distinguish between pain and suffering. Pain being the fact of death, of bad things happening to good people, just the thing that happens. Suffering being how we react to the pain, how we think about what happened.

She seemed to say that there just is no way that we can stop the pain. Death is a reality. It happens. Grief comes with it. This is normal, not pathological.

But in our society, rather than let each of us fully acknowledge that pain, fully feel the cause and effect of what has happened, fully be present to what the pain brings -- instead we often find family, friends, even caregivers, trying to rush people thru the pain, they want to fix it, they want us to be back like we were before the pain came, they cannot be present with us.

And so then suffering begins. It becomes not so much about the fact of what happened anymore, but the struggle to suppress the experience so we can go back to work or keep peace in the family during the next holiday. We begin to wear masks, we get hooked into suffering.

This isn't "their" fault. This isn't "our" fault. It is a habit of society of "good manners" and "fear of death". But we do have a responsibility to make a different choice. Let me say that again: we have the response-ability OR ability to respond by making a different choice.

When a death happens, we can choose to be fully present to ourselves and others affected. This means dropping the filters of fear or polite society to fully engage our sight, hearing, feeling, taste, smell, and intuition in the moment. To let

the emotions come. Though they may seem like too much, they will come and go just like clouds come and go. Ride it out. Be present with it now, instead of trying to suppress it and dragging it out into suffering over a long period of time.

This doesn't mean that 10 years from now when your baby should have been celebrating his or her 10th birthday party, that you won't feel sadness and miss him or her. It just means that by 10 years out from the date of death, you will be able to fully feel that sadness, move through it, and then fully feel the next emotion that comes up. You won't be suffering in isolation, but able to feel what you feel and then go on to do something like a good work in honor of your child.

Maybe it is a game of semantics to some people -- like I'm just playing with words to justify this or that. But really and truly, listening to Pema Chodron talk about this, I felt a sense of "YES!" calling out from inside me. I felt like she was saying that peace is possible. While pain might still happen, while we might not be able to stop the fact of pain in the world, we can still choose peace. We can still create inner peace for ourselves and grant peaceful experiences to those who come to us for support and compassionate care. We need not create more pain and violence by refusing to allow grief or by telling others how they "woulda, coulda, shoulda" responded to pain. We simply be present. Peacefully. That is profound in its simplicity. And I am grateful to have learned it.

You can find out more about Pema Chodron's work at:

<http://www.pemachodron.org>  
<http://pemachodrontapes.org>

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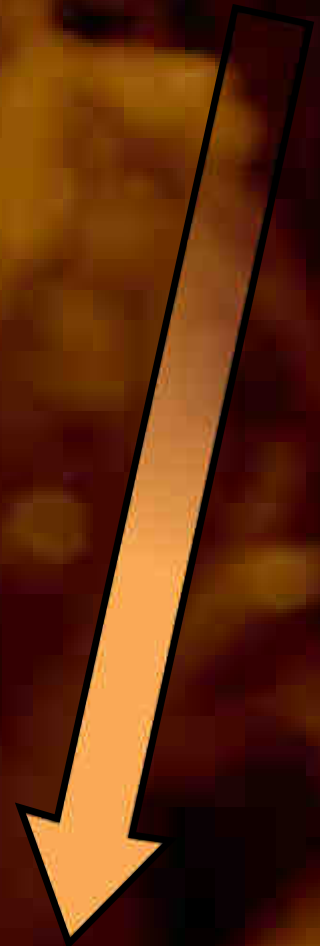
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**This has been  
a KotaPress Production!**

### Different Kind of Parenting

When you are the parent of a child who has died, traditional parenting magazines cease to be helpful. All the publications you might 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 offer you an alternative 'zine specifically written for parents enduring the death of a child.



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