

Different Voices, Blended Hearts: Suicide Attempt & Loss Survivors Gather at One Table for Wellness Workshops.

Innovative Peer2Peer wellness workshops for suicide attempt & loss survivors further along the recovery & healing path

TAUNTON, MA, UNITED STATES, May 20, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Steve and Kerry Palm lost their 14-year old daughter, Kacie, to suicide in 2014. In the 8th grade, Joseph Marques was being bullied in middle school. He experienced severe anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation. Their paths to recover and heal from trauma began from very different places. On Saturday, May 22nd, they will deliver another 90-minute emotional wellness workshop via a livestream roundtable to demonstrate the benefits of doing this together – demolishing the silos and blending their hearts.



Impacted Family & Friends “Blended Hearts” Wellness Workshops

Steve Palm, Tracey Medeiros, Joseph Marques,
Annemarie Matulis

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“...if isolating silos can be demolished, people can connect, and each person can improve the quality of their own life, this can then lead to a powerful force working together to save lives.” ”

Vanessa McGann, PhD

Two men, a college student, and a UPS driver. An unlikely paring? Not really. Not if you fully grasp the purpose of the Impacted Family & Friends workshops. Both men are activists and advocates for suicide education and believe that suicide prevention is everyone’s business. Two years into his grief journey, Palm founded the Kacie Palm Project for Youth Suicide Prevention and joined efforts of the Bristol County (MA) Regional Coalition for Suicide Prevention. In his junior year at high school, Marques turned an essay exercise into a workbook/memoir, “Depression, A Memoir, Guide and Journal,

<https://www.amazon.com/Depression-Memoir-Journal-Joseph-Marques/dp/1726373223>.”

Marques and his family have become regulars at the Regional Coalition’s annual Light the Way walk for suicide education as has the Palm family.

At the 2020 virtual conference of the American Association of Suicidology, Dr. Vanessa McGann, at the time the Chair of the AAS Loss Survivors Division, and Annemarie Matulis, Chair of the AAS Impacted Family & Friends Division, addressed bringing together attempt and loss survivors further along the healing path in their Thought Leader session, Crossroad to Recovery: Different Voices, Blended Hearts saying that, "The premise is simple: if barriers can be removed, isolating silos can be demolished, people can connect, and each person can improve the quality of their own life, this can then lead to a powerful force working together to save lives."

During the May 22nd workshop, Palm and Marques will once again, do just that – remove the barriers as they share their own lived experiences within the context of a specific exercise. Topics range from dreams matter, to anger and control, to staying out of the sandbox, to the fear driven behavior, to forgiveness and soul care and more. The switch from in-person

to virtual was not only seamless, but it also increased the number of people who could participate. Both men are part of larger and growing national team of facilitators preparing to bring the R & R and other A Voice at the Table, Inc's Impacted Family & Friends workshop formats across the country under the leadership of co-creators, Annemarie Matulis and Tracey Medeiros. These livestream sessions have been increased to twelve a month for March, April, May and June.

The purpose of the peer to peer, trauma-informed, resilience-based format of the Re-Energize & Re-Connect Wellness Workshop series is to offer a safe haven for suicide attempt survivors and suicide loss survivors further along the healing path to come together and re-energize and re-charge their internal psychological, emotional and spiritual "batteries" and then re-connect with living life fully, to celebrate life, recovery and wellness. These psych-educational workshops were developed by Annemarie Matulis and Tracey Medeiros in late 2013 to be used as a companion to



Wellness Workshop Table



Steve Palm and Tracey Medeiros

a documentary Matulis was completing titled, A Voice at the Table (2014) <https://vimeo.com/92330799> .

Developed in Taunton MA, the R & R's have been delivered in person across the country and Northern Ireland and did not miss a beat transitioning to virtually throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The exercises outlined in these workshops may not be “the” answer to the quality-of-life wellness challenge for this huge population, but they offer a starting point to begin to tear down the walls fear has built and develop new soul-care skills that can bring

some inner peace within while walking through a difficult emotional challenge. It is important to always keep in mind that the R&R is not counseling or therapy. It is a peer-to-peer format that is described in the original grant funding as “new and innovative.” It is also important to maintain a comfortable and casual atmosphere throughout the series. There will be moments when the sharing exchange may be serious or sad. There will be just as many times where laughter will rule.

Kathy Nemkovich is a loss survivor from Fall River MA who often partnered with Steve Palm and Tracey Medeiros, a suicide attempt survivor and co-author of the R & R, in community conversations and state conference workshops. She shared her thoughts about these wellness workshops this way:

“My hope is that we can bring loss survivors and attempt survivors together for several reasons. (1) To help in the healing process for both sides, enlightening each other, helping each other to fill in some of the blanks, bring support to each other, and enhance our healing; (2) Use the knowledge gained in support program education and training; (3) Use the knowledge gained to develop education and training around suicide prevention and awareness – starting as early as kindergarten.”

WHO: Anyone emotionally impacted by a suicidal experiences of a loved one or their own

WHAT: A 90-minute interactive wellness workshop

WHEN: Saturday. May 22nd, Noontime EDT/9:00 am PT

WHERE: YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNSwv7kZdXI>



Candle light display for those lost to suicide

For the Media: Responsible reporting on suicide, including stories of hope and resilience, can prevent more suicides. Please visit the Suicide Reporting Recommendations for more information. For additional information, please visit SuicideReportingToolkit.com.

About A Voice at the Table: A Voice at the Table was founded in 2014 as a companion to the documentary, A Voice at the Table, a call to action to bring the lived experience voices of suicide attempt survivors to all tables within suicide prevention, intervention and postvention. As a grassroots movement, it has since expanded and become the national "home base" forum for the family & friends emotionally impacted & traumatized by the suicidal experiences of loved ones. A movement: a group of people working together to advance their shared ideas. A forum: a place, meeting or medium where ideas and views on a particular concern can be exchanged, in this case, nationally and internationally. For more information: director@avoiceatthetable.org

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A Voice at the Table

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