

# A Suicide Survivor's Béatitudes

LaRita Archibald

- BLESSED** are they that recognize suicide grief is compounded; that we grieve the death of a beloved person but first and foremost, we grieve the cause of the death.
- BLESSED** are they that give us permission to mourn the loss of one dearly loved, free of judgment, censure and shame.
- BLESSED** are spiritual guides who relieve our concerns for the repose of our loved one's soul with the truth that God is All-Knowing, All-Loving and All-Forgiving.
- BLESSED** are they that don't offer the meaningless cliché, "Time Heals", because, for a long while, the passing of time holds no meaning or value for us.
- BLESSED** are they that don't say, "I know just how you feel", but instead say, "I am here for you. I will not tire of your tears or your words of sorrow and regret."
- BLESSED** are they that have the patience and love to listen to our repetitive obsession with WHY? without offering useless answers or explanations.
- BLESSED** are they that reaffirm the worth of our deceased beloved by sharing memories of his/her goodness and times of fun, laughter and happiness.
- BLESSED** are the mental health care providers who explain to us that, very probably, our loved one died of a terminal illness called depression.
- BLESSED** are they that challenge our sense of omnipotence with the reminder that no one has enough power or control over another to cause them to end their life.
- BLESSED** are the first responders to our loved one's suicide who try to relieve our sense of guilt and responsibility by assuring us "This death is not your fault".
- BLESSED** are they that lend acceptance to the value of the relationship we shared with the one who died by allowing us to speak of them and 'what might have been'.
- BLESSED** are they that allow and encourage us to use our loved one's death in a manner that gives our loss and grief meaning and purpose.
- BLESSED** are they that do not expect us to find "closure", "grief resolution", "recovery" or to "be healed", understanding that these terms define 'grief work in progress' that will take the rest of our life.
- BLESSED** are community caregivers who direct us to suicide bereavement support groups where our anguish is understood, our loss validated and where we are encouraged by the example of others who have traveled this road before us.
- BLESSED** are 'seasoned' suicide survivors who role-model not only can we survive, but, in time, we can thrive...we can regain peace of mind, restored confidence, renewed productivity and a revived zest for living.
- BLESSED** are all who honor our loved ones by remembering how they lived rather than how they died.

©LRA/2000