

Hello from a fellow widowed person,



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My name is Michele, and my husband Phillip was killed in an accident five years after we were married. At the time, I didn't know any other widowed people; I felt lost, alone and adrift. As the days, weeks, and months after Phil's death passed my questions about widowed life increased and I regularly doubted my ability to manage the new life into which I'd been thrust. My quest for answers about 'how to be a widowed person' ultimately led me to seek out others who shared the life-altering experience of outliving the person with whom they planned to spend their life.

The first time I connected with another widowed person after Phil's death an unexpected glimpse of hope for my future appeared. I will never forget the immediate sense of relief I felt while sitting in front of someone else that was widowed or the freedom to express myself that existed as we shared our stories. Though I was fortunate to be surrounded by loving friends and family when Phil died, not one of them knew what it was like to climb into 'our' bed, alone. As much as the people in my life tried to understand my sadness, they couldn't. Most of me was glad that my family and friends didn't know my despair, but another part of me ached to be understood.

Meeting other widowed people changed my life by providing the assurance that my foggy brain and terrible sadness was normal while also confirming that building a new life of meaning, which honored my past, was truly possible. I founded Soaring Spirits because I wanted to be sure other widowed people got the chance to experience the same relief I did in the form of an inclusive, secular, life-affirming community that would be available to any person who experienced the death of the person with whom they were planning their life.

Soaring Spirits International was built upon the belief that access to a supportive peer community would provide the understanding, comfort and hope needed for a widowed person to begin the process of rebuilding their life. At Soaring Spirits we provide innovative, hopeful, research-based tools, programs and resources designed specifically for widowed men and women. We employ a broad definition of the word 'widowed' and serve a hugely diverse community with compassion and a sense of hope for the future.

Widowed people are our priority. Enclosed in this folder you will find information about the programs and resources we offer. In Soaring Spirits you've found a community willing to walk with you through all the days ahead. Please reach out to us, we are here to help.

Yours in hope,

Michele Neff Hernandez
Founder and Executive Director