

# Personal Story

Marcie, wife of John



BUILDING A JUST SOCIETY

## about grief

I was devastated when John died. It was overwhelming. I can barely remember the first few months, it was so awful, and there was so much to do, I was just running on automatic pilot. We have three kids, they were so young then, I spent most of my time looking after them, trying to make sure they were OK. I was anxious, frantic and felt out of control. It was five years ago now. I sometimes don't know how we made it to this point, but we have.

I knew he'd been down. We're on a farm and the drought was hurting us, badly. We'd sit on the verandah and look up at the sky and despair because we needed the rain. I could see it was hitting him hard but we still had some good times and he loved the kids so much, so I thought we'd pull through. He was proud of the kids, but I think he felt a failure as a dad, that he couldn't look after them in the way he wanted and thought he should.

After he died, I'd lie awake at night and go over and over the last few days before he died and I'd be so angry with myself because I thought I should have seen it coming. If I'd loved him enough I would have seen it, I would have been able to stop it happening. I feel terrible thinking about how much pain he was in and thinking I should have been able help him.

We had an argument a couple of days before he died. It was about nothing, it was stupid. I guess we were both under stress and I think back to that and some of the things I said and wish I could take it all back. We loved each other. I still love him and now the argument seems so pointless and ridiculous. I feel bad about this sometimes but I remind myself that we did love each other, but we were under stress.

Sometimes I feel angry with him for not telling me how down he was and that he

was thinking about doing this. He was my best friend, he could have told me anything and we could have worked it out. Also when I'm having a bad day with the kids, I get angry with him for leaving me and the kids, leaving me with all the responsibility. I'm sometimes scared that we won't manage without him. And I get angry when I see the kids hurting. They don't always say but I can see how they miss him and this hurts me as well.

I do worry about the kids. We have 2 boys, Dave and JJ and Emma. I worry about how it will be for them growing up, we've made it so far but I worry.

Things weren't too good initially with his parents. We'd always got on well but when John died it was hard, I think they blamed me and thought I should have helped him. It's better now and they love to see the kids in school holidays.

It's lonely sometimes without him, but I found some help on a telephone counselling line and there's a couple of good web sites which I find comforting. Sometimes people say 'you'll find someone else' as if that will make things better, as if anyone can replace him and it will all be OK. It isn't OK that he's gone, it will never be OK. We are learning to be OK as a family again, but we'll always miss him.

### Counselling and Support Services

Support After Suicide (03) 9427 9899

Bereavement Counselling and Support Service (03) 9265 2111

The Compassionate Friends  
(03) 9888 4944

### Telephone counselling

Suicide Helpline 24 hours 1300 651 251

### Support After Suicide

PO Box 79  
Richmond VIC 3121

Phone: 9427 9899

Fax: 9427 7119

Email:  
aftersuicide@jss.org.au

Web:  
supportaftersuicide.org.au

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