

Julius's Story

Twenty-six days after I turned eleven, my father died. It was completely unexpected and shocking. We received a phone call at about 6:30 on a Tuesday. I could tell something was wrong as my mother spoke into the telephone. After she hung up, she told me that dad was really hurt and she had to go to New York. We called my friend's house so my brothers and I could stay there, and my mom left. The next day she picked us up with our grandparents and told us that our father was dead. He had jumped out of a window on the 6th floor of his apartment building, and was rushed to the hospital where he died. I had no idea that my father was depressed and apparently suicidal, nor did I have any knowledge of his alcoholism. My father was only at home on the weekends, and my family always used to really look forward to his coming home. Now that is gone and never will be again...

My name is Julius. For three years following my father's death, I attended a family support group called The Cove Center for Grieving Children. We meet twice a month with other kids and families who had experienced the death of a parent or sibling. I hated going to the program and was closed and angry. During the meetings, I would be disruptive, I wouldn't talk about my feelings in the kids' groups and I would mess up the family activities. I was a deliberate pain in the ass. Even so, the facilitators were always kind no matter how rudely I treated them. By the time I left The Cove at 13, I began to open up and talk about what I was experiencing. I don't think I ever talked about my dad's death outside of The Cove, or met anyone else who did. The Cove was the only place I actually was comfortable talking about it.

When my dad died I thought where am I going now? How will I get up in the morning? It was like my future was erased. Every projection I had about the future—graduating from college, getting married—I always pictured my father as part of that. Now it seemed all gone. My whole world fell apart, everything was pointless and without meaning. The grieving process is a long and arduous journey through your mind and emotions, and the Cove serves as a facility to support you during these times.

When I was a freshman I came back to The Cove as a volunteer facilitator. I remembered how wonderful those volunteers had been to me even when I was awful. I completed the facilitator training and have been a volunteer for over a year at The Cove where my healing began five years ago. My dream now is to start a High School Cove. I want there to be a place where kids can talk with other kids about their experiences and not keep everything inside. I want there to be a place where kids can understand that there are a lot of other kids who are grieving and that it's ok to feel whatever you are feeling and that it will get better.



*Providing Hope and Healing
for Grieving Children*

For children like Julius and their families who experience the grief and heartache of coping with the death of a significant person in their lives, The Cove provides a safe haven of understanding, hope, and support.

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