

“ The very first time I attended I knew I had found a **safe place** to express my feelings without being **judged** or misunderstood by others who had not experienced a likewise **loss**.

– Gloria

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For more information about the Victims of Homicide Support Society or upcoming meetings:

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Victims
of Homicide
Families Coping with Death by Violence



loss coping survivors support
memories safe place grief
no judgement strength

What is Victims of Homicide?

Edmonton's Victims of Homicide Support Society is a self-help group designed to offer emotional support and information about surviving the loss of a loved one to murder.

Following their son Scott's murder in 1994, Joyce and Noel Farion founded Victims of Homicide Support Society. The group is patterned after Parents of Murdered Children in the United States.

“ In April of 1994 when our son was murdered, we found that only by **reaching out** to others would we be able to **survive**. At VOH meetings, we are always amongst people who truly **understand**.

– Joyce

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What Happens at a Meeting?

Most meetings begin with introductions and the sharing of stories by survivors, telling of their loss. Often there is a topic to guide discussion, such as the grief process, the criminal justice system, or favourite memories. Meetings usually revolve around members' own knowledge and experiences. Sometimes guest speakers are invited to present information.



When a Love One is Murdered

Facing the death of a loved one is never easy, but when murder occurs, pain, anger, and grief are compounded by the crushing realization that a precious life was taken intentionally.

Intrusions into a family's grief add to their trauma. Police, lawyers, and others need information, evidence and testimony; and the media often discuss the victim without consulting the family. In situations where the murder is unsolved, even greater pain and confusion can be experienced.

Strength After Violence

Victims of Homicide Support Society provides:

- Ongoing emotional support needed to help families and friends deal with the pain of a loss and to slowly rebuild their lives;
- A meeting place where bereaved persons can come together on a regular basis to share their grief and recovery;
- Information about the grief process and the criminal justice system, as they pertain to survivors of a homicide victim;
- A place to communicate with professionals about the problems survivors face; and
- Communications to increase society's awareness of the problems faced by the survivors of those killed by homicide.

Acceptance and support are important principles of group support. No one is there to judge your feelings or to persuade you to think differently. Members help each other by sharing their own experiences and insights and allowing others to do the same.

The Edmonton group holds monthly meetings at a central location and publishes a regular newsletter. An annual Candlelight memorial service is held and, occasionally, other social events.

