



Survivor Day Changes Lives

(NAPSA)—Eric Marcus was 12 years old when his father, a World War II Navy veteran, took his life. “Everyone pretended he died of pneumonia,” Marcus recalled, “but like a lot of kids who live through this kind of thing, I figured it out in real time—of course, I didn’t say a word.”

Thirty-eight years later, Marcus’s sister-in-law died by suicide. “I decided I couldn’t do it alone this time,” he said. That’s how he found himself at an International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day event



Eric Marcus with his brother Lewis and their father shortly before his death in 1970.

two weeks after her death. “It was a revelation. For the first time in my life, I was in a room full of people just like me, who knew what I was going through without me having to explain anything.”

International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day, which has been held on the Saturday before Thanksgiving since 1999, will be marked this year on November 22 in 250 locations in the U.S. and around the world. The locally sponsored events, which are supported by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), include keynote speakers, small group discussions, and a screening of AFSP’s new documentary, *The Journey*. The film chronicles the stories of a diverse group of suicide loss survivors and how each survivor is weathering the loss of a loved one.

“It’s funny—well, not funny—but so often in my life, I’ve felt as if I was the only person in the world who had experienced this kind of loss,” Marcus said. “At Survivor Day, I discovered I was part of a community that extends from my hometown to every corner of the earth. I’m sorry that anyone else has had to live through this kind of trauma, but it’s really nice to know that I’m not alone.”

www.survivorday.org.