Living Through Suicide Loss with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder
By Lisa Morgan M.Ed.
Reviewed by Ginny Sparrow, Chairman Book Review Committee

What an educational pleasure it was to read this new book by survivor Lisa Morgan. Lisa lost her husband by suicide, while raising two young boys. Written just 11 months after her loss, this memoir is what a memoir should be: singular in its topic. Memoirs don’t need to be rolling life stories of melancholies and triumphs, but are best suited by identifying a specific audience and supplying a story that can be helpful. And this book is just that.

Lisa begins with the phone call that came while making dinner. People on the spectrum do not enjoy talking on the phone, as they then have limited social cues to work with. So from the very start, Lisa was unclear what was happening. Her story travels through the first year of handling the things someone on the spectrum truly despises; wrapping up the details of a husband’s life entails much social contact. The phone calls, the feuds, the research involved in everything from getting the lawn cut (friendly neighbors helped out there) and finances can overwhelm even a “neurotypical” person, but for Lisa everything was harder, everything took longer, and everything tested her resolve.

When reading this book, I at first thought it would be a good recommendation for anyone who has a loved one on the spectrum, regardless of any loss, as it’s a perfect example situation of the challenges in life a person on the spectrum faces. Lisa perfectly lists the “what would be helpful” points at the end of each chapter. But as I read, I also realized this a great memoir for any survivor of suicide. I identified with many of her struggles. Perhaps in our grief, we all become a little on the spectrum, we all feel assaulted by life, and we all become over sensitive by our own senses. Yet another thing us survivors have in common.

Read. You won’t regret it.