

Laura Slap-Shelton, Psy.D

Laura Slap-Shelton, Psy.D. was suddenly widowed at the age of 35 in 1991. She had a wonderful 13 month old daughter and four cats. Being a psychologist, she read all of the materials that her psychologist friends brought her and assumed that she had made it to at least stage 3 of grief during her first week of mourning. She quickly discovered, however, that she was still numb, and began the long and unexpected new journey that has shaped her life.

In 1991 not very much was known about young widows and the children of young widows. Finding some support groups and bonding with a widow in similar circumstances as well as reading books by widows became the beginning of her path of healing and discovery. This was furthered by interviewing other young widows for a book (yet to be written), and the realization that her horrible, shocking, painful and life altering loss which at first appeared to set her apart, in fact linked her inextricably to the beauty and depth of human experience.

In 2001 Dr. Slap-Shelton wanted to create a means of supporting others in their grief journeys and guiding them toward sharing what they had learned with others. In the process of researching ideas for her website and organization, GriefandRenewal.Com, she began to read about widows in India and Africa. She was fortunate to interview women such as Dr. Mohini V.Giri and Margaret Owens who were working to help the widows in developing countries whose lot was so much worse than her own. This experience further expanded Dr. Slap-Shelton's horizons leading her to link the status of widows with the status of women, and realize the ultimate importance of helping widows to find their voice and demand their rights.

At this point the work of GriefandRenewal.Com is twofold, involving providing ongoing support and information for the bereaved, and also educating others about widows around the world, raising awareness and funds to help widows in India and Africa.

Dr. Slap-Shelton continues her work as a psychologist. She remarried in 2000 and has two stepsons in addition to her daughter, who is about to go to college. She can be reached at Info@griefandrenewal.com as well as by telephone 207-229-4216 or 207-967-0677 or mail 3 Webhanet Place, Suite 2, Kennebunk, Maine 04043. Please visit her website: www.griefandrenewal.com.