



# About *grief*

A PUBLICATION OF HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE

FALL 2020

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## STAY IN TOUCH

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## OUR MISSION

*Hospice of the Western Reserve provides palliative and end-of-life care, caregiver support, and bereavement services throughout Northern Ohio.*

*In celebration of the individual worth of each life, we strive to relieve suffering, enhance comfort, promote quality of life, foster choice in end-of-life care, and support effective grieving.*



## *Grief* in the Time of Coronavirus

By Margaret D. Bossaller, MA, MSW, LSW

Grief is a common theme in this time of the coronavirus pandemic. The truth is, we are all grieving the loss of our normal routine, limited social contact, increased fear and anxiety, increased awareness of our mortality and a general sense of uncertainty about what the future holds. The impact of this widespread grief is more intense for individuals who are grieving a death during this time.

*Even when the losses one experiences feel overwhelming, there are ways to cope.*

**AVOID COMPARISONS.** We often try to minimize our pain by pointing out others who we see as having more difficult experiences. This behavior rarely makes us feel better; in contrast, it often brings a sense of shame or guilt about our struggles and difficult emotions. Instead, allow yourself to feel whatever emotions come to you without judgment or comparison. This practice will make it easier for you to pay attention to your own feelings and discover what you need to begin to heal.

**PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION.** We are often hard on ourselves when we struggle with difficult emotions. However, this practice does not help us cope. When you find that you are being self-critical, pause. Take a breath. Think about how you might respond to a dear friend or loved one struggling in

the same way. Then, say to yourself – out loud or silently – whatever it is that you would say to that friend. Try to imagine the compassion you would have for your friend in the same situation and send that compassion to yourself.

**UTILIZE RITUALS.** There are many ways to mark significant moments and emotions. One of the most common ways we do this is with large, public rituals like memorial services, funerals, graduations or weddings. As we practice social distancing, we are reminded that rituals don't have to be large public events. Perhaps you will choose to honor a loved one who has died by visiting a place that holds special memories you shared together. Or maybe you will work to benefit a cause that is important to the person you wish to remember.

**SEEK SOCIAL SUPPORT SAFELY.** Although we may not be able to connect with others in ways we have in the past, social support from a distance is still possible. Consider connecting with people you care about through technology, such as videoconferencing. Or return to an "old fashioned" way of communication and write them a letter. Maybe you can arrange to have an outdoor picnic with someone you care about while maintaining proper social distancing. Let others know that you would like to connect with them and see if you can work to come up with creative solutions together.

# About grief

a Publication from



## WESTERN RESERVE GRIEF SERVICES

FALL 2020

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Go green! If you would like your copy of About Grief emailed to you, please send your email address to Diane Snyder Cowan at [DSCowan@hospicewr.org](mailto:DSCowan@hospicewr.org)

## FROM THE EDITOR

*You will lose someone you can't live without, and your heart will be badly broken, and the bad news is that you never completely get over the loss of your beloved. But this is also the good news. They live forever in your broken heart that doesn't seal back up. And you come through. It's like having a broken leg that never heals perfectly – that still hurts when the weather gets cold, but you learn to dance with the limp.*

~ Anne Lamott



**W**ith the current pandemic, we have learned and are living an ever-changing new normal. We keep our social distance. We carefully wash our hands. We wear masks. And with the death of loved ones, with our grief, we live a new normal that morphs over time. Sometimes, we find ourselves wearing invisible masks. With every change we experience, our perspective and our normal changes. We adapt, we adjust and, hopefully, we grow.

We experience losses and transitions throughout life. From elementary school to middle school to high school, from adolescence to adulthood, from job to job and location to location, we say good-bye and hello time and time again. We forge new friendships, develop new skills and build new relationships. Sometimes, we choose to do this. Sometimes, it is forced upon us. Yet, we find ourselves resilient and we do move forward.

Exciting? *Yes!* Scary? *Absolutely!*

Do we experience sorrow and joy at the same time? *Definitely!*

*In the next few days, I will retire from Hospice of the Western Reserve.* For the past 19 years, I have had the honor of writing "From the Editor." I have learned so much from my team of bereavement coordinators, music and art therapists and so many others. I have immense gratitude for these lessons. I have been educated about grief, loss and sorrow and schooled in the importance of love, compassion and presence.

Moreover, I have enormous appreciation for all that I have learned from you, the bereaved. I have witnessed your growth through grief and how it takes on different forms. It is truly remarkable to behold. I have watched you work through hard times amidst the tsunami of grief reactions and become more you. Some of you have changed careers, advocated for different reforms, completed art exhibits or books or changed laws. Many of you have developed continuing bonds with your deceased loved one. Seeing how you hold them in your heart as you continue living your life has been such a gift and has lifted me up numerous times.

*Thank you all!*

Am I excited, scared, joyful and sad? *You betcha!* But I am certain that I will find wonder and contentment in my next new normal.

I am confident that WRGS will continue to offer the same consolation and support as they forge ahead under the direction and leadership of Karen Hatfield, who has worked alongside me for the past 16 years.

*Be well. I leave you with comfort, hope and healing.*


Diane Snyder Cowan, MA, MT-BC, CHPCA  
216.486.6312 ♦ [dscowan@hospicewr.org](mailto:dscowan@hospicewr.org)

# In the Meantime...


By  
**JoDee Coulter, MT-BC, CT**

Since the beginning of social distancing and stay-at-home orders – two concepts we never imagined being part of our daily vocabulary – life has changed dramatically for everyone. But for those who are grieving, the changes have been overwhelming. If you experienced a death before the coronavirus pandemic, you are now facing the challenge of not having access to the supports that were once available to you. If you have lost a loved one in the midst of this pandemic, you are missing the rituals and activities that might have kept you grounded and supported in such a difficult time. Not being able to hold a funeral or celebration of life for your loved one causes feelings of anxiety, frustration, sadness and isolation in a world of unfinished business.

Because there is no definitive end date to grief, the landscapes of our lives are forever altered no matter the circumstances. When we're not able to begin the grief process as our customs and beliefs have taught us, how can we honor loved ones in the meantime?



Plan a virtual memorial with those closest to you. You can do this via Zoom or other social media platforms.




Create a memorial garden where you can sit and fondly remember.



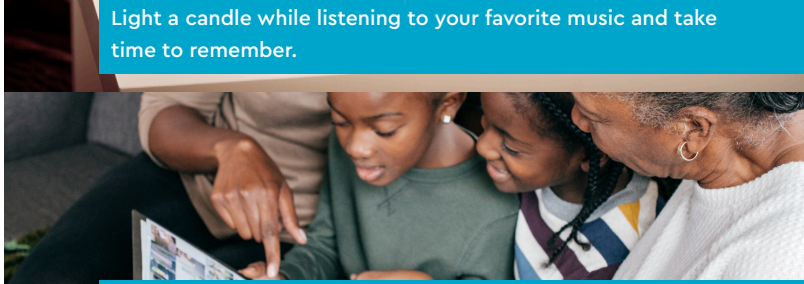
Write daily to your loved one in a journal.



Create a legacy book with stories of your time together.



Light a candle while listening to your favorite music and take time to remember.



Look through photos and create a book or board that you can use in the future at a celebration of life.



DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE



AMES FAMILY HOSPICE HOUSE



HMC HOSPICE OF MEDINA COUNTY

THE VISTA WALK AND TRIBUTE WALKS

## Remember Your Loved One

THE GARDENS AT AMES FAMILY HOSPICE HOUSE, DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE AND HMC HOSPICE OF MEDINA COUNTY offer beautiful outdoor spaces for meditation and reflection. When you dedicate an outdoor tribute to your loved one with a paver or stone bench, you are helping us create an atmosphere of care and healing. Contact us at **855.475.0245** or visit [hospicewr.org/tribute](https://hospicewr.org/tribute) to learn more.

# Support Groups

FALL 2020

Fall 2020

## Community Support Groups and Activities

Please note that at the time of this printing, all in-person groups have been postponed or cancelled. Please contact us for more information at **216.486.6838**. If you are interested in a virtual group email us at **thebereavementcenter@hospicewr.org**.

Virtual grief support groups can provide valuable support during the pandemic. Sometimes, more than one attempt may be necessary to find the group that best meets your needs. Please do not be discouraged; it's okay to experiment.

Regardless of your loss or coping style, remember that you are not alone, and you need not grieve alone.

### Grief support groups provide:

- A safe place to express emotions
- A place to "tell your story"
- Education about grief and loss
- Normalization and validation of your grief experience
- Opportunities to learn new roles, ways to problem-solve and cope with situations
- New friendships
- A chance to laugh

## Bereavement Support Groups

Unless otherwise noted, our support groups are open to anyone who has had a loved one die. Groups are subject to change.

## Virtual Support Groups

For virtual groups, please email [thebereavementcenter@hospicewr.org](mailto:thebereavementcenter@hospicewr.org) to give your name, phone number, email address and the group you are interested in. You will be contacted by the facilitator. *Registration is limited.*

### Parents Together

**MONTHLY** For parents who have experienced the death of an adult child

#### Shawn Eigenbrode

Second Wednesday of the month  
2:30 to 4 p.m.

### Parent Loss

**MONTHLY** A support group for adults adjusting to life after the death of one or both parents.

#### Judy Beckman

Second Monday of the month  
(starting on July 13)  
6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

### Healing the Heart

**MONTHLY** Grief after an overdose death

#### Shawn Eigenbrode

First Tuesday of the month  
6 to 7:30 p.m.

### New Journey

**MONTHLY** For adults of any age

#### Vanessa Smylie

First Wednesday of the month  
6 to 7:30 p.m.

#### JoDee Coulter

Third Wednesday of the month  
1 to 2 p.m.

### Women's Group

**MONTHLY** A workshop for women who have lost their partner, significant other or spouse.

#### Judy Beckman

Second Tuesday of the month  
6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

### Hope and Healing

**MONTHLY** An ongoing monthly support group for grieving adults.

#### Susan Hamme

Second Monday of the month  
6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

#### Mary Murphy

Third Wednesday of the month  
1 to 2:30 p.m.

### Grief 101

This one-hour class is for those who have experienced the death of a loved one in the past six months. Learn about signs and symptoms of grief as well as helpful strategies.

#### Lisa Florjancic

Thursday, October 8  
3:30 to 4:30 p.m.



**THE ELISABETH SEVERANCE  
PRENTISS BEREAVEMENT CENTER**  
300 East 185th Street  
Cleveland, OH 44119-1330  
216.486.6838

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Westlake, OH 44145-1077  
440.414.7349 or 835.281.5727

**ASHTABULA OFFICE**  
1166 Lake Avenue  
Ashtabula, OH 44004-2930  
440.997.6619

**DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE  
AND LAKESHORE CAMPUS**  
300 East 185th Street  
Cleveland, OH 44119-1330  
216.383.2222 or 800.707.8922

**EAST CAMPUS**  
34900 Chardon Road, Suite 105  
Willoughby Hills, OH 44094  
440.951.8692

**HEADQUARTERS**  
17876 St. Clair Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44110  
216.383.2222 or 800.707.8922

**LORAIN COUNTY OFFICE**  
2173 N. Ridge Road E., Suite H  
Lorain, OH 44055-3400  
440.787.2080

**HMC HOSPICE OF MEDINA COUNTY**  
5075 Windfall Road  
Medina, OH 44256  
330.722.4771

**WEST CAMPUS**  
22730 Fairview Center Drive  
Fairview Park, OH 44126  
216.227.9048

## In-Person Support Groups

Call to verify time, location and in-person or virtual status.

### Circle of Hope: Art Therapy

**SERIES** An educational support group for adults who have had a loved one die.

#### **The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**

Wednesdays

October 21 to December 2

(Skipping the day before Thanksgiving)

10 a.m. to noon

 Mollie Borgione 216.486.6544 or  
mborgione@hospicewr.org.



Circle of Hope:  
Art Therapy  
Edition

### Parents Together

**MONTHLY** For parents who have experienced the death of an adult child

#### **Lakeshore Campus**

Second Wednesday of the month

2:30 to 4 p.m.

 Shawn Eigenbrode 216.486.6364

### The Aftermath: Grief & the Conflicted Relationship

**SERIES** This four-week series explores the feelings of grief due to a conflicted relationship.

#### **Lakeshore Campus**

Mondays, October 5 – 26

6 to 7:30 p.m.

Please register by October 1.

 Tensie Holland 216.383.3741

### New Journey

**MONTHLY** A monthly support group for adults of any age who have experienced the death of a spouse, partner or significant other.

#### **Ashtabula Office**

First Thursday of the month

11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Susan Hamme 440.596.3582

### Healing the Heart

**MONTHLY** Grief after an overdose death.  
*Please call to register.*

#### **East Campus**

First Tuesday of the month

6 to 7:30 p.m.

 Shawn Eigenbrode 216.486.6364 or  
seigenbrode@hospicewr.org



Gratitude Flags



Relax-O-Doodles

Giving Hand,  
Grateful Hand



Gratitude Bowls



Kids Art:  
My Rock



# Healing Arts Workshops FALL 2020

Healing Arts Workshops provide grieving people with a creative outlet for their grief and are open to the community. No art experience is necessary. Please call **Mollie Borgione** at **216.486.6544** or email her at **mborgione@hospicewr.org** to register no later than four days in advance of workshop date. *Suggested \$5 donation for supplies*



## GRATITUDE FLAGS

Prayer flags are hung high outdoors all over Tibet, Nepal and India. They are hung to send out blessings and wishes to the world. The traditional Tibetan belief is that the prayers of a flag become a permanent part of the universe as they are weathered by rain, snow and sun. In this workshop, you will decorate a string of flags to send out your gratitude and appreciation for your loved one's life into the world.

### **The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**

Thursday, September 10  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

### **West Campus**

Tuesday, September 22  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

### **Christ Episcopal Church**

3445 Warrensville Center Rd.,  
Shaker Heights  
Wednesday, September 23  
6 to 8 p.m.

**Please note the time.**

## VIRTUAL WORKSHOP: GIVING HAND, GRATEFUL HAND

Our hands give and receive. Our hands cared for our loved ones and received back their love and gratitude. Make an actual air-dry clay tracing of your own hands and paint them to represent what you give and what you receive.

**NOTE:** This two-session workshop is on Microsoft Teams, an audio/visual platform. Art supplies will be shipped to your home. *Reservations for this workshop must be made by September 21st.*

Tuesdays, October 6 and 13  
6 to 7:30 p.m.

Mollie Borgione 216.486.6544 or  
mborgione@hospicewr.org

## ART FOR RELAXATION: RELAX-O-DOODLES

Doodling is usually done while your mind is concentrating on something else like talking on the phone or daydreaming. In this workshop, you will create a "conscious" doodle as a meditative practice to give your mind a rest from your grief.

### **Christ Episcopal Church**

3445 Warrensville Center Rd.,  
Shaker Heights

Wednesday, October 14  
6 to 8 p.m.

**Please note the time.**

### **The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**

Thursday, October 15  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

### **West Campus**

Tuesday, October 20  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

## KIDS ART: MY ROCK

Was your loved one the rock in your life? At this workshop, you can decorate a rock with paint, images or words in memory of your loved one. You may bring a large flat unpolished rock (about the size of your hand or smaller) or pick one when you get to the workshop.

Ages 6+. Kids are invited to bring family members along for this workshop.

### **West Campus**

Tuesday, October 27  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

### **The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**

Tuesday, November 10  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

## GRATITUDE BOWLS

November is our traditional month for giving thanks. At this workshop, shape and decorate an air-dry clay bowl in which you can place notes of gratitude for the gifts given to you by your loved one.

### **Christ Episcopal Church**

3445 Warrensville Center Road,  
Shaker Heights

Wednesday, November 11, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

**Please note the time.**

### **West Campus**

Tuesday, November 17, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

### **The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**

Thursday, November 19, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

## FABRIC AND FEELINGS

**WEEKLY** A group where participants use fabric techniques such as quilting (sometimes involving clothing from loved ones) or photo transfer to create quilts, pillows, dolls and other types of lasting memories. Sewing expertise is not necessary.

### **The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**

Thursdays, 2 to 4 p.m.



Fabric and Feelings

# How to Help Grieving Children and Adolescents Through the Pandemic

By

By **Lindsey Neag, MSSA, LSW, LSSW**

The COVID-19 pandemic is a unique time in our community and country. Our way of life has been completely uprooted. As we try to find our new normal, it is important to understand how the pandemic affects children and adolescents, specifically the losses that they are experiencing. Many associate grief with the death of a loved one, but we can also grieve significant non-death losses.

One major loss is a sense of normalcy. As the school year begins, our children may have had expectations about returning to school, seeing friends and returning to their normal pre-COVID activities. While some of these may be possible, some may not. Or, they may look and feel very different than they did before due to new rules and regulations. As our kids adjust to these changes, you can help by establishing a regular routine. This can include morning and bedtime hours, educational activities, outdoor play and exercise to foster a sense of control, predictability and wellbeing.

Children and teens are also experiencing the loss of their social lives and ability to see friends and other family members. Engaging in meaningful activities can help ease feelings of isolation. Take a walk in the park, bake together or make crafts. Use technology to stay connected with others.

Children have also lost their sense of safety. They may have questions like: Will I get COVID-19? Will my family get it? Will life ever be normal again? Listen to their concerns, correct misinformation and use age-appropriate language to ease fears. Provide reassurance. Explain that the risk of serious illness

**A CHILD'S VIEW**



is low for children when infected, for example. Explain and demonstrate ways to decrease risk, such as washing hands and maintaining social distancing. Avoid fear-based approaches such as, "If you don't wash your hands, you will get sick." Answer questions accurately, but without unnecessary detail.

Finally, some of our children may be unable to see a dying loved one, whether from COVID-19 or other causes. Due to social distancing requirements, many hospitals, long-term nursing homes and hospice facilities have limited the number of visitors. Families are forced to make the difficult decision of who can see their dying loved one. Acknowledge how painful and unfair that feels and encourage children to engage in activities at home that help them to feel connected to their person before they die. This can include sharing stories, eating the person's favorite foods and connecting virtually with their loved one.

This is a difficult and uncertain time in our children's lives, but support and comfort from trusted adults can make all the difference.

## **SAVE THE DATE**

### **HOLIDAY FAMILY NIGHT: COMFORT BAGS**

The holiday season can be difficult to negotiate when one is grieving. In this workshop, individuals and families can paint and decorate a large or small canvas bag which can be used to carry items of comfort to help them cope during the holidays. Please bring an apron or wear old clothes as we will be using fabric dyes.

**Christ Episcopal Church**  
3445 Warrensville Center Road,  
Shaker Heights

Wednesday, December 9, 6 to 8 p.m.  
**Please note the time.**

**West Campus**

Tuesday, December 15, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss  
Bereavement Center**

Thursday, December 17, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.



If you do not speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 216.383.6688.

OBAVJEŠTENJE: Ako govorite srpsko-hrvatski, usluge jezičke pomoći dostupne su vam besplatno. Nazovite 216.383.6688.

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*Western Reserve Grief Services is a community-based grief support program that provides services throughout Northern Ohio. We offer support to anyone who has experienced a loss due to death.*

## BOOK REVIEW

# Healing Grief Card Deck: 55 Practices to Find Peace

by David Kessler

By Tensie Holland LSW, CT

David Kessler's 2016 book *Healing Grief Card Deck: 55 Practices to Find Peace* provides an alternative to a traditional grief book. This collection contains 55 cards to help guide users on their grief journey.

The first card in the collection explains how to use the deck. Kessler, a grief expert and bestselling author, recommends choosing one card daily, preferably at the same time each day. This allows those grieving to move slowly and take their time identifying grief reactions.

The rest of the deck is split into three sections: Your Response to Loss, Understanding Grief and Healing. Each section has 15-20 cards that contain grief education, tips on coping or affirmations. This is a powerful resource, which can be very therapeutic and help you to identify and express your feelings.

Below are examples of cards from each section:

### Your Response to Loss:

"You don't get over grief. You learn to live with it in your heart forever."

### Understanding Grief:

"Grief is work, avoiding grief is even more work. Today, I will not run from the pain. I will allow the healing powers of grief to soften my feelings and mend my broken heart."

**Healing:** "We can be hard on ourselves in grief. Today I will be gentle with myself."

