



About *grief*

A PUBLICATION OF HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE

SPRING 2021

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STAY IN TOUCH

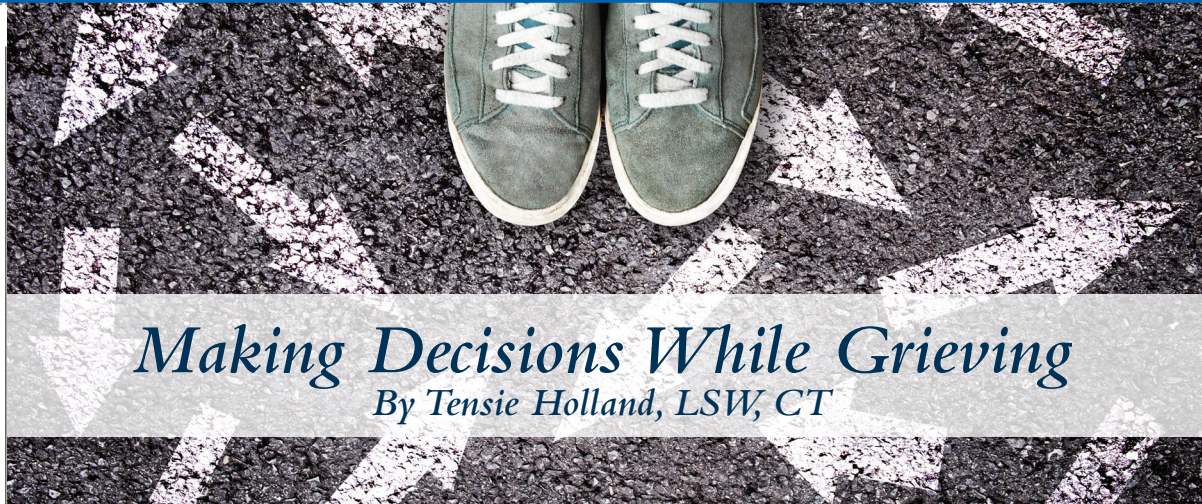
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OUR MISSION

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.



Making Decisions While Grieving By Tensie Holland, LSW, CT

After the death of a loved one, you may experience many changes. Grief can affect your thought processes and your mental and emotional state of mind. The efficient way you managed everything and made decisions prior to the death of your loved one seems to have suddenly disappeared. You may feel as though you are treading water, trying to stay afloat.

In addition to changes in routine, habits and lifestyle brought about by the death of loved ones, we are all adapting to the many changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic over the past year. You may long for things to return to the way they were before the pandemic and before the death of your loved one. It can be a struggle to find some level of comfort or peace, and it may be tempting to make additional changes to help cope with your new reality.

Society in general tends to rush us through our grief, which may prompt you to move faster than you should. Making changes may seem to be the answer as you look for ways to escape the pain of grief.

The National Institutes of Health and the Mayo Clinic suggest avoiding making major decisions while actively grieving the death of a loved one. Most bereavement professionals advise a one-year wait. Of course, there are always individual situations to be considered.

Plans made or discussed prior to your loved one's death may be important to continue. Financial limitations may create the need for change that you cannot control. Just be aware of the impact grief can have on your ability to make sound decisions.

When possible, consider postponing major decisions such as moving/relocating, changing jobs, making major purchases, dating/marriage, etc. Ask yourself: Can it wait? If it cannot wait, talk with a trusted friend, family member or professional to review the pros and cons of decisions that may have a long-lasting impact.

As you go through your grief journey, you may find that certain things that were painful in the beginning become softer and even comforting. Your thought processes may become clearer as things in your world stabilize. Be patient with yourself and take your time as you consider making important changes.

On a personal note, this will be my final article for About Grief. I will be retiring in March after 30 years with Hospice of the Western Reserve. It has been an honor to work with the bereaved. Each family I have met has left an imprint on my life. I send a heartfelt thank you to each of you! Wishing you all peace and healing on your grief journey.

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a publication from



**WESTERN
RESERVE**
GRIEF SERVICES

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Go green! If you would like your copy
of About Grief emailed to you, please
send your email address to Karen
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FROM THE EDITOR

***To plant a garden is to
believe in tomorrow***

- Audrey Hepburn



Most years in the spring, the "From the Editor" column focuses on the promise of the changing season – more sunshine, new growth and the opportunity for change. The days are getting longer, and many people instinctively feel a bit more energized. All these things are still true despite the new reality brought on by COVID-19 over the past year. For many of us, it has been an exercise in learning to adapt over and over to changes in the way we live, work, play, socialize and yes, in the way we grieve.

For many of our bereaved families, the climate of uncertainty related to the pandemic coupled with the unpredictability of grief has been especially difficult. The dual crises create the feeling: "What's next?" The ability to acknowledge hardships while appreciating even small wins is a balancing act many of us are still working on. I haven't met anyone yet who has perfected it. But I've learned from our families that unexpected blessings and memories that bring a smile are moments to be celebrated and remembered.

The predictability of the changing seasons is something we can count on and be comforted by. As we move into warmer, sunnier spring days, take some time to identify what brings you joy this time of year. Is it planting flowers and tending to their growth, or maybe shedding your heavy winter coat for lighter layers? As you continue your grief journey, consider trying one new thing to help you tell your story or memorialize your loved one.

We continue to welcome new members to our virtual support groups and would be happy to help you find one that is right for you. We remain here with comfort and support.

Karen Hatfield, MMT, MT-BC, CHPCA
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How Do **YOU** Deal with Change?

By Mollie K. P. Borgione, ATR-BC, PC

Virtual art therapy workshops? How would that work?

This is what we had to ask ourselves when it was apparent after the first few weeks of March 2020 that the COVID-19 pandemic would be with us for quite some time. In-person workshops were out of the question. Trying to keep attendees and myself physically distanced and masked, the gathering spaces sanitized and cleaning shared art supplies would be a nightmare. How could we continue to serve the grieving people that attend the in-person art therapy bereavement workshops AND make sure we all stayed safe?

As in all other areas of life, we had to adapt. We had to reinvent Healing Arts workshops from in-person to virtual. We had to, because grief wasn't going to go away during the pandemic, in fact, it was only compounded by all the other losses we experienced due to COVID-19. Would people be interested in attending art therapy grief workshops online? Would they be able to show and see each other's art well enough on a smartphone? After a practice group with some friends last April, it became apparent that it just might work! And it has!

The greatest predictor of resiliency is our ability to adapt to change. We do not always do well with change. We like things to stay the same - to be predictable and constant. Most people believe that people do not change, but the reality is that we change all the time. Because we are "with" ourselves constantly, it is hard at such close range to see changes in our attitudes, our emotional maturity and our thinking over the years.

In the late '80s, I attended a presentation by a speaker about change. Using personal examples of how her attitudes, behaviors and beliefs have changed over the years, she added the phrase, "Change is a process, not an event!" after every illustration. She repeated it several times during her speech. It really made an impression on me, and I have never forgotten her words.

Change is one of those guaranteed things in life. We know this all too well when a loved one dies. How do we look to

a future without our loved one's presence in it? Who are we now, without our loved one? We must learn to live our lives in a new way, to incorporate all the lessons and experiences and memories we have had with our loved one and carry them forward with us into the future. Struck by my use of the word "incorporate," knowing that the root of the word means "body," I looked it up. According to Merriam-Webster, the verb "incorporate," means "add into a body" or "form into a body."

This reminded me of the "Continuing Bonds" theory of grieving put forward by Klass, Silverman and Nickman (1996). This theory recognizes the fact that grief is an ongoing process which continues for our lifetime after the loss. It also acknowledges the griever's need for connection in the present with the person who has died. In this way, we acknowledge that we now need to gather our loved ones into ourselves and carry them with us in our hearts.

We have to find a way to continue living without them, and this will involve change. Change takes time and energy. We need to be gentle with ourselves as we go through these changes. As we continue to heal, we carry the memories of our loved one's touch, the sound of their voice and all the adventures we had together with us each day. As that speaker said so many years ago: "Change is a process, not an event."

The Healing Arts program provides grieving people with a creative outlet for their grief and is open to the community. Please see page 6 for dates and times of our virtual workshops. The program is made possible by a project support grant from Cuyahoga Arts and Culture.

If you wish to make a donation to the Healing Arts program, go to www.hospicewr.org and click "Donate Now".



THE VISTA WALK AND TRIBUTE WALKS

Remember Your Loved One

THE GARDENS AT AMES FAMILY HOSPICE HOUSE AND DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE 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 to learn more.



AMES FAMILY HOSPICE HOUSE



DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE

Support Groups

SPRING 2021

Community Support Groups and Activities

Please note that at the time of this printing, all support groups will be offered virtually via Microsoft Teams. Registration is required for all groups, and the number of participants is limited. Please call or email the group facilitator for more information or to register. Once registered, you will receive an email invitation that includes a link that will allow you to join the group at the designated time.

Virtual groups can provide a valuable source of 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

Virtual Support Groups

Unless otherwise noted, our support groups are open to anyone who has had a loved one die. Groups are subject to change. Please call or email the facilitator for more information or to register for a group. *Registration is limited.*

Circle of Hope

SERIES An educational support group for adults who have had a loved one die. *Please contact the facilitator for more information. Registration is required no later than a week prior to start date.*

4-week series
Tuesdays, April 6 to April 27
10 to 11:30 a.m.

Susan Hamme
shamme@hospicewr.org
440.596.3582

6-week series
Thursdays, March 18 to April 22
6 to 7:30 p.m.

JoDee Coulter
jcoulter@hospicewr.org
330.662.4240

Hope and Healing

MONTHLY An ongoing monthly support group for grieving adults

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

Susan Hamme
shamme@hospicewr.org
440.596.3582

Parents Together

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

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

Shawn Eigenbrode
seigenbrode@hospicewr.org
216.486.6364

Parent Loss

MONTHLY For adults adjusting to life after the death of one or both parents

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

Judy Beckman
jbeckman@hospicewr.org
440.414.1731

Millennial Grief

MONTHLY For adults ages 24 – 39 grieving the death of a parent or parent figure

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

Mary Murphy
mmurphy@hospicewr.org
216.763.6442

Child Loss

MONTHLY Parents who have experienced the death of a child aged 20 or younger are invited to join us for an opportunity to find support and feel community with others who experienced similar losses

Third Wednesday of the month
6 to 7 p.m.

Jonathan Cahill
jcahill@hospicewr.org
216.389.0704

Healing the Heart

MONTHLY Grief after an overdose death

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

Shawn Eigenbrode

seigenbrode@hospicewr.org
216.486.6364

New Journey

MONTHLY For adults of any age who have experienced the death of a spouse, partner or significant other

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

Vanessa Smylie

vsmylie@hospicewr.org
216.763.6441

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

JoDee Coulter

jcoulter@hospicewr.org
330.662.4240

Women's Group

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

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

Judy Beckman

jbeckman@hospicewr.org
440.414.1731

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.

Wednesday, March 31
3:30 to 4:30 pm

Lisa Florjancic

lflorjancic@hospicewr.org
440.853.5365

COVID-19 Loss

A three-week series for adults who have experienced the death of a loved one due to COVID-19

Tuesdays, March 18 to April 1
6 to 7:30 p.m.

Susan Hamme

shamme@hospicewr.org
440.596.3582

Grief During a Pandemic

Join us for a discussion of the impact of the pandemic on grief, as well as suggestions for connecting and memorializing during a time of continued social distancing. For adults who have experienced the death of a loved one within the past year.

Tuesday, May 4
6 to 7 p.m.

Laurie Mason

lmason@hospicewr.org
440.787.2099

Veteran Grief/Equine Group

A two-part group for veterans who have experienced the death of a loved one within the past two years. This program is offered in partnership with Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center.

Space is limited and registration is required. At the time of this printing, we expect this event to be held in person.

Wednesday, June 9 and 16
1 to 3:30 pm

Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center
16497 Snyder Road, Chagrin Falls

Vanessa Smylie

vsmylie@hospicewr.org
216.763.6441

Kids Hope

MONTHLY A grief group for children 8-12 years old who have experienced a death in the last year

Items needed for each group: paper, pens, markers and crayons.

Second Tuesday of the month
4 to 5 p.m.

Lydia Amoa-Owusu

lamoaoowusu@hospicewr.org
216.486.6287



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WESTERN RESERVE**

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EAST CAMPUS

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WEST CAMPUS

22730 Fairview Center Drive
Fairview Park, OH 44126
216.227.9048

VIRTUAL Healing Arts Workshops SPRING 2021



We use the Microsoft Teams platform, which is similar to Zoom. Registered participants will receive an email invitation that provides a link to join the workshop at the designated time. Each workshop consists of two sessions, a week apart. At the first session, a theme or topic is introduced, and we have a discussion. Then you will be given instructions on the art assignment and the required basic supplies will be shipped to you. Complete your art assignment during the week, then join us for the second session to share and talk about your art. The supplies will be new and yours to keep.

We have waived our suggested donation for supplies during the pandemic; however, if you wish to make a donation to the Healing Arts program, go to hospicewr.org and click "Giving Back" to find out how.

Call Mollie Borgione at **216.486.6544** or email at mborgione@hospicewr.org to register no later than two weeks before the workshop date.



BEFORE AND AFTER

Life is forever changed after the death of a loved one. The art technique sgraffito used in ceramics, paintings and glass work illustrates this meaningfully. It comes from the Italian word "sgraffir" which means "to scratch." Participants will first do an oil pastel drawing or design that represents life as it was before their loved one died. After covering that drawing with black paint, they will scratch into it another drawing representing life after their loved one's death.

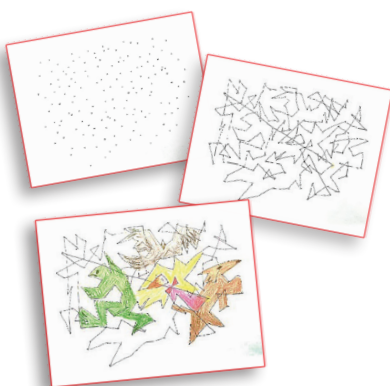
Thursdays, April 8 and 15
6 to 7:30pm

Tuesdays, April 13 and 20
6 to 7:30pm

CIRCLE OF HOPE: ART THERAPY EDITION

A six-week art and educational support class for adults who have had a loved one die.

Wednesdays, April 21 – May 26
10 to 11:30 a.m.



KIDS ART: DOT TO DOT

Kids love connecting the dots to see what kind of picture it will become! In this workshop, participants will draw random dots, connect them, find images within the drawing then tell a story about it. Automatic drawing and storytelling help release the emotions of grief without focusing on it. Ages 6+. Kids are required to have an adult family member in attendance for this workshop.

Tuesdays, April 27 and May 4
6 to 7:30 p.m.



WHO AM I NOW?

"That drawing looks as if you couldn't see what you were doing" you say? Well, you're right. It's called a blind contour drawing because you don't look at the paper, you only look at the subject. Have you looked at yourself in the mirror since your loved one died and asked, "Who am I now?" This drawing workshop is designed to help you identify your strengths as you navigate a life without your loved one.

Thursdays, May 13 and 20
6 to 7:30 p.m.

Tuesdays, May 18 and 25
6 to 7:30 p.m.



LGBTQ ART THERAPY EVENT: HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

Home is where we feel comfortable in ourselves, loved and emotionally supported. In the past, we may have needed to reinvent home and choose a new family. The death of a partner, spouse or other family member or friend may begin another reimagining of home and family. What will they look like?

This event is for members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer community who have experienced a loved one's death.

Wednesdays, June 2 and 9
6 to 7:30pm

SAVE THE DATE

ART FOR RELAXATION: MY PERSONAL SYMBOL

Could you sum up your strengths, talents, dreams, or personality in a word? How about a symbol? (Think of the multi-media artist, Prince.) After surviving the challenges of 2020 and finding your way through the grief of losing a loved one, how would you envision your symbol? What would help you on your road to healing?

Thursdays, June 10 and 17, 6 to 7:30pm
Tuesdays, June 15 and 22, 6 to 7:30pm



A CHILD'S VIEW

Hi, kids. When someone you love dies, it feels like there are a million questions and not a lot of answers. The adults in your life are all there to offer support and listen to your questions, but sometimes they don't have a clear answer. And no, you are not crazy for asking the questions. They are an important part of your journey through grief.

Some questions you may have:

Why did this happen?
Will someone else I love die too?
Will I die?
Will mommy/daddy ever stop being sad?
Where is my loved one now?
Can I still play and have fun?
Was the death my fault?
Will the hurting ever stop?

Remember that healing from your loss is a long journey. As you walk along the path you may find answers that comfort you. In time, your pain will become a little softer and easier to cope with. Some kids (and even adults) find that creating a memory book or a journal can help you to explore difficult questions, find ways to say goodbye and to recall important memories to hold close to you forever.

Here are some tips to help you get started:

- ◆ Write a letter to your loved one



describing important times you spent together

- ◆ Write a goodbye letter, telling your loved one how much they mean to you and describing your life since they've been gone
- ◆ Draw a picture of what you are feeling
- ◆ Write a poem
- ◆ Take pictures of places and things that remind you of your special person

- ◆ Create a page to describe the loving people who remain in your life to support you

- ◆ Write in your journal about how you felt following the loss of your loved one; add entries every few days or weeks

Together We Can 2021 Camps

Looking for a summer camp to support a grieving child? Consider one of our **Together We Can** bereavement day camps for children who have experienced a loved one's death. Campers will share stories, laugh together, shed some tears and celebrate the life of their special person.

**At the time of this printing,
 we expect both camps to be held in person.**

Five-day Riding Through Grief Fieldstone Farm

16497 Snyder Road, Chagrin Falls
 June 21 – 25, 9 a.m. to noon

This camp is offered in collaboration with Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center and is for children ages 8 – 12 who have experienced a loved one's death. Through riding and working with horses, campers explore grief issues supported by trained counselors.

Three-day Red Oak Red Oak Camp

9057 Kirtland Chardon Road,
 Willoughby
 August 10 – 12, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

A three-day bereavement day camp for children ages 6 – 13 who have experienced a loved one's death. Transportation available from two locations.

**For more information
 and to register,
 visit hospicewr.org/camps
 or call 216.486.6838.
 Scholarships are available.**



**WESTERN
 RESERVE**
 GRIEF SERVICES



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

By Lisa Florjancic, MA, LSW

Jan Warner wrote *Grief Day by Day* to help others when they are grieving a loved one's death. After her husband died, Warner created a blog, a community on Facebook and now this book. She feels that honoring grief is honoring love. She reminds us that "grief is our common language" and that it is "messy," but there is hope.

Grief Day by Day includes:

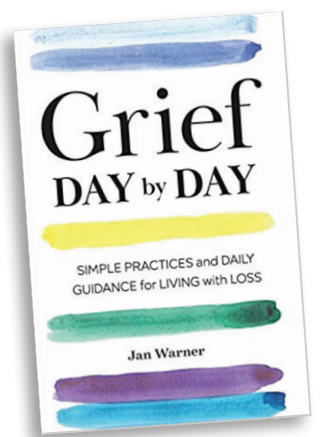
- 365 daily reflections
- Weekly themes that capture common feelings and experiences while grieving
- 52 healing exercises to help process your feelings at the end of each week

Warner understands that grief is complex, and that it can and does change from day to day. She recognizes that

Grief Day by Day: Simple Practices and Daily Guidance for Living with Loss

by Jan Warner

everyone grieves differently and encourages the reader to use this resource in whatever way they find most helpful. Warner feels that if something is useful, you should continue using it. If something doesn't connect with you, move on to the next section. Warner also shares her own grief journey throughout the book, including how the reflections have helped her. She states in the introduction, "Let us find a way to celebrate through our own actions the lives of our loved one, to make their lives matter more to us than their deaths."



Books reviewed by our team can be found at your local library or purchased online or from local bookstores.