The grieving process fills us with many different feelings. They dash in and out, some linger for a time, some grip us tightly and some become a part of us. As we grieve, we carry them around with us and often we are overwhelmed. We wonder, “What do I do with these feelings?” We may wish that we could find someone to share each feeling with us, as well as each story and memory. However, this solution is not always possible.

One of the ways we can identify and express our feelings is through creating and using a personal journal. The purpose of journal writing is to afford ourselves the time to attend to our grief by expressing the feelings we so often keep inside. Our journal may house our innermost thoughts and provide a healthy release from these emotions. It provides a safe place to express ourselves. It acts as a reflector of what we are experiencing and can give us the stimulation and support which many of us seek from other people.

Writing is an effective way of identifying our feelings while sharing them with a “fully accepting friend.” This allows us to release our powerful emotions. We can use it as our companion on the long journey of grief, bringing to it our own unique feelings and experiences. While our inner world is chaotic, journaling helps to add structure to our outer world by assisting us in clarifying our thoughts and feelings.

You may choose to make your own journal or purchase one at most bookstores. There are also several geared specifically for the grieving person and offer daily guides to journaling. When journaling, you may simply jot down feelings, or you may wish to write a narrative. Some have found it helpful to write daily letters to their loved one or to their God or Higher Power. In addition to your feelings, you may want to include drawings of your own or illustrations from magazines and articles. Helpful or inspirational quotations you hear or read may also be incorporated into your journal.

Over time, you may find that journaling has been very therapeutic in helping you move through your grieving process. Remember, it is your unique journal. You bring to it who you are.
Spring is right around the corner. Soon we will see signs of new growth with snow drops, crocus, daffodils and tulips. I look forward to this spring with mixed emotion. This will be my first spring since my mom died.

I was given a birdbath and 30 tulip bulbs after her death. I built and planted a small memory garden before the first frost. Now, I look forward to spring to see these flowers dancing in the wind.

But with the spring comes Mother’s Day and that worries me a bit. I know the anticipation is usually worse than the day itself, but I am apprehensive nonetheless.

My grief journey has been the typical roller coaster of emotions with good days and bad days. But I did find one thing that brought me comfort each day—my mom’s jewelry.

My mom had a lot of jewelry. There were rings, earrings and other pieces she wore frequently. Mom went back and forth to the hospital quite often in the last months of her life. I would take the gold chain from around her wrist and put it on mine during her hospital stay. After the last visit, she no longer wanted the bracelet back on her wrist. She said that I should continue to wear it and I have rarely taken it off since.

After her death, my siblings and I split up the costume jewelry that we wanted, donated the rest and locked up the good pieces. There was a ring that I loved and a few other items that spoke to me. My siblings were similarly drawn to other pieces. A jeweler told me that gems and metals absorb the energy of the person who wears them and that’s why certain pieces spoke to each adult child differently. This made perfect sense to us.

During the first few months after mom’s death, I found that I was an extremely grumpy griever. BUT—when I wore the ring or a pair of earrings in addition to the bracelet, I felt great consolation. The jewelry became my transition objects. Just as a toddler finds solace in carrying her security blanket wherever she goes, I comfort myself by wearing my mom’s jewelry.

What is your blanket? What brings you comfort? A letter in your loved one’s handwriting? A pair of pajamas? A photo? Allow that treasured item to soothe you on the harder days of grief.

We hope that you will consider joining us at our Mother’s Day Tea this year to honor the mother figure in your life. And know that we are here with comfort, hope and healing.

Diane Snyder Cowan, MA, MT-BC, CHPCA
216.486.6312 • dscowan@hospicewr.org
Nature's Comfort in Grief
By Mollie K. P. Borgione, ATR-BC, PC

Thirty-five years ago, J. William Worden first put forth The Four Tasks of Mourning, through which he believed grieving people must navigate following the death and loss of a loved one. Over the years, he has distilled the wording of these tasks to make them easier to understand and more meaningful.

The latest version (2018) is:

1. To accept the reality of the loss.
2. To process the pain of grief.
3. To adjust to a world without the deceased.
4. To find a way to remember the deceased in the midst of embarking on the rest of one's journey through life.

As an art therapist, I have watched grieving people as they address all these tasks over time. That said, Worden’s last task, is perhaps, the primary function of our Healing Arts workshops. We offer art therapy workshops monthly for people to create something in memory of their loved ones. Art can help them to make sense of their loss, find their way to healing and growth and begin to live in a world in which their loved one is physically absent.

Often in their creations, people use images of nature to symbolize transformation and spiritual connection with loved ones. These are seen as transitional objects, or things that help people navigate through difficult times in their lives. Encounters with nature bring them comfort in their grief.

One man told of the special affection he and his wife had for groundhogs because they saw several of them on their honeymoon in Niagara Falls. “The day after my wife passed away I went to the cemetery to make arrangements. When I came home there was a groundhog in the backyard before, and after he ran away there has never been another one in the yard,” he told me. “It’s a messenger – a reminder of the good times and to let me know that she is OK, and I am too.”

When my friend’s sister entered hospice care, my friend went to her plot at the community garden where she finds peace. A big hawk came to rest on a fence post in her small plot and sat staring at her for several minutes. She was comforted by its presence. Another time, she was talking to her neighbor about her sister after she died, and they noticed several hawks flying above them. On Christmas day, the first after her sister’s death, the family noticed a hawk flying outside the window. They took this as a message that their sister, wife and mom was with them in spirit.

These experiences help people make meaning of their losses. Have you had encounters with nature that help you make the transition into a life without your loved one?
Support Groups

SPRING 2019

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. Please call to verify time and location.

Adult Support Groups

Circle of Hope

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

- **The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**
  - Thursdays, April 4 – May 9
  - 10 to 11:30 am.
  - Vanessa Smylie 216.763.6441

- **Lakeshore Campus**
  - Mondays, April 15 – May 20
  - 1 to 2:30 p.m.
  - Tensie Holland 216.383.3741

- **West Campus**
  - Mondays, April 29 – June 3
  - 6:30 to 8 p.m.
  - Judy Beckman 440.414.1731

Circle of Hope Art Therapy Edition

**SERIES** Six-week art and educational support group for adults who have had a loved one die.

- **The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**
  - Wednesdays, April 17 – May 22
  - 10 a.m. to Noon
  - Mollie Borgione 216.486.6544 or mborgione@hospicewr.org

Hope & Healing

**MONTHLY** An on-going monthly support group for grieving adults. Registration is not required. Please call facilitator for more information.

- **Lakeshore Campus**
  - Third Tuesday of the month, 6 to 7:30 p.m.
  - April Ratcliffe 216.383.3782

- **The Robertson Bereavement Center**
  - Second Tuesday of the month, 3 to 4 p.m.
  - JoDee Coulter 330.662.4240

- **East Side**
  - Mentor Public Library
  - 8215 Mentor Avenue, Mentor
  - First Tuesday of the month, 10 to 11 a.m.
  - Lisa Florjancic 440.853.5365

- **Portage County**
  - United Church of Christ
  - 1400 E. Main Street, Kent
  - Second Tuesday of the month, 1 to 2:30 p.m.
  - Margaret Bossaller 330.241.6282

Parent Loss

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

- **West Campus**
  - Second Tuesday of the month, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
  - Judy Beckman 440.414.1731

Parents Together

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

- **Lakeshore Campus**
  - Second Thursday of the month, 2:30 to 4 p.m.
  - Shawn Eigenbrode 216.486.6364

Hopeful Hearts

**MONTHLY** A monthly support group for anyone age 60 and over who has experienced the death of someone special in the past two years.

- **Avon Lake**
  - Holy Spirit Parish Center
  - 410 Lear Road, Avon Lake
  - Fourth Tuesday of the month, 1-2:30 p.m.
  - Mary Ellen Jordan 440.414.1737

New Beginnings

**MONTHLY** For adults in middle life.

- **West Campus**
  - Second Wednesday of the month, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
  - Mary Ellen Jordan 440.414.1737

Yoga Matters

*Designed for caregivers & bereaved.*

**ONGOING** Give yourself the gift of time and attention. The practice of Yoga helps you tune into yourself and take care of your physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Classes held at Hospice of the Western Reserve Lakeshore Campus.

- Wednesdays, 5:30 to 6:45 p.m.
- **Fee:** $40/month or $12 Drop-in (sliding scale fee available)
- Please call 216.486.6838.
## Partner/Spousal Loss Groups

Monthly support groups for adults who have experienced the death of a spouse, partner, or significant other. Groups are open-ended and on-going. *Registration is not required.*

### New Journey

**MONTHLY** For adults of any age.

**Ashtabula**
St. Paul’s Lutheran Church  
89 East Satin Street, Jefferson  
First Thursday of the month,  
11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
✉ Susan Hamme 440.596.3582

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**  
Fourth Thursday of the month,  
10 to 11:30 a.m.  
✉ Kathryn Harrison Brown 216.486.6331

### Horizons

**MONTHLY** For adults in later life.

**Mayfield Village Baptist Church**  
6500 Highland Road, Mayfield  
Second Tuesday of the month, 1-2:30 p.m.  
✉ Kathryn Harrison Brown 216.486.6331

### Women’s Workshop

A periodic workshop for women who have lost their partner, significant other or spouse. *Please call for date and to register.*

**Panera Bread**  
19705 Center Ridge Road, Rocky River  
6 to 8 p.m.  
✉ Judy Beckman 440.414.1731

### Restoring Hope: When a Loved One Dies From an Overdose

**SERIES** This six-week group is for those adults who have had a loved one die from an overdose death. *Registration is required.*

**The LCADA Way**  
Avon Lake Wellness Center  
525 Avon Belden Road, Suite 1, Avon Lake  
Mondays, March 18 – April 22  
6:30 to 8 p.m.  
✉ Judy Beckman 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. *Registration is required.*

**Ashtabula Office**  
Wednesday, May 1, 5 to 6 p.m.  
Register by April 24  
✉ Susan Hamme 440.596.3582

**East Campus**  
Thursday, April 11, 2 to 3 p.m.  
Register by April 9  
✉ Lisa Florjancic 440.853.5365

### WHO AM I?

**SERIES** A 5-week group for those who are trying to rediscover personal interests, explore new opportunities and identify support systems and tools to help since the death of your loved one. Come brainstorm, share and discover new ideas and resources with the group. There will be independent assignments most weeks. *Recommended for those whose loss was 6 months ago or more.*

**Ashtabula Office**  
Wednesdays, March 20 - April 17, 10 to 11:30 am  
Register by March 15  
✉ Susan Hamme 440.596.3582

### WALKING IN GRIEF

Some benefits of walking include decreased stress, decreased blood pressure, and increased endorphins—all which are beneficial to helping us cope with loss. Why not take the first step and join others for a time of friendship, motivation and sharing. *Weather permitting.*

**Carolyn Ludwig Mugrage Park Pavilion**  
4985 Windfall Road, Medina  
First Tuesday of the month, May through September  
9 a.m.  
☎ JoDee Coulter 330.662.4240

### Mother’s Day Tea

For those who have experienced the death of their mother or mother figure, please join us for a Mother’s Day Tea where we will honor the memory of those relationships.

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**  
Saturday, May 4, Noon to 2:00 p.m.  
Register by April 26  
☎ 216.486.6838
Healing Arts Workshops SPRING 2019

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.

SPRIT STICKS
Paint and decorate a piece of driftwood to commemorate the spirit and personality of your loved one. Small mementoes, jewelry, trinkets or pieces of clothing may be incorporated into the piece.

Christ Episcopal Church
3445 Warrensville Center Rd, Shaker Heights
Wednesday, April 10, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Please note the time.

West Campus
Tuesday, April 23, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Thursday, April 25, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

KIDS ART: MEMORY BOXES
These Memory Boxes are inspired by artist Joseph Cornell’s boxes of assembled artifacts. Participants will line a wooden cigar box with photos, fabric or paper and assemble small mementoes and objects inside it such as keys, marbles, jewelry, natural objects, thimbles, buttons, coins, and any other meaningful items that remind you of your loved one(s). Ages 6+. Kids are invited to bring family members along for this workshop. Light refreshments provided.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Tuesday, April 9, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

West Campus
Tuesday, April 30, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

MEMORIES OF US
Remember catching fireflies in a jar as a kid? It may be one of the memories you have of you and your loved one. In this workshop, participants will decorate a jar and write down those memories on colored strips of paper to fill the jar. A string of LED lights will add a glow of warmth to your jar of memories.

West Campus
Tuesday, May 7, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Thursday, May 16, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Christ Episcopal Church
3445 Warrensville Center Rd, Shaker Heights
Wednesday, May 22, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Please note the time.

Fabric and Feelings
A group where participants use fabric techniques such as quilting (sometimes with 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
Weekly - Thursdays, 2 to 4 p.m.

Together We Can camps provide the opportunity for kids to be with others who are also grieving the death of a loved one. Camps are expressive in nature and led by experienced facilitators in art, music, play and nature activities. For more information or a registration packet, please contact us at 216.486.6838.

Five-Day
Riding Through Grief
June 24 – June 28
This camp is offered in collaboration with Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center and is for children ages 8-12 who have experienced the death of a loved one. Through riding and working with horses, campers explore grief issues supported by trained counselors.

Three-day
Red Oak
Red Oak Camp, Kirtland
August 6 – 8, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
A 3-day bereavement day camp for children ages 6-13 who have experienced the death of a loved one. Pick up and drop off times to be determined.
Should Children Attend Funerals and Memorial Events?

**A CHILD’S VIEW**

by Jane Arnoff Logsdon, LSW, ACHP-SW

In my work as School Liaison, the question of whether kids and teens should attend funerals comes up frequently. Parents and caregivers are often uncertain about whether their children should attend funerals; teachers may not be sure what to say to students about attending a classmate’s service. Young people have expressed their concerns and opinions to me. Most students feel strongly that they should be given the opportunity to attend. I have heard from several teenagers who were not permitted to attend the services of grandparents and now harbor resentment and regret.

Ideas about children and funeral and memorial service attendance have evolved. The widely held belief for many years was that children should not attend funerals or memorial events, that death is an “adult” issue or too much for a young person to bear. We now realize that children are very perceptive and are in tune with what we say and do, even if we try to hide it from them. They are fully feeling and experiencing people, smaller versions of adults who are learning how to navigate life. Many want to understand and experience the difficult areas of life. Additionally, it’s a way for them to learn and grow on the path to becoming a healthy, functioning adult. We recommend that young people be included in the decision about attendance and participation in memorial activities.

Youth and memorial activities can still be a tricky combination. If you have concerns about your child’s attendance, consider your child’s temperament and willingness to accept support. You may decide to do a smaller, private memorial or perhaps visit the cemetery. Leave the door open to what makes sense for that young person, knowing that he or she may be much more ready and stronger than you think.

**THINGS TO CONSIDER:**

- Explain what your child will hear and see before the event. Answer questions as candidly as you can.
- Realize that it’s okay to mourn together and cry in front of your child. Also, be aware of when your own emotional needs are so potent that you need support, and you may be unable to fully support your child.
- Set your child up with a “buddy” at the service who can take him or her out if needed, especially if you want to stay in the service the whole time or need to attend to your own emotional needs.
- Offer children the opportunity to engage in memorial activities. Their ideas and contributions for a deceased loved one can be extremely meaningful. For example, you can give a child a chance to give a reading at a funeral, act as a pallbearer or pass out programs.

**TRIBUTE GARDENS AND WALKWAYS**

A Tranquil Comfort

THE GARDENS AT AMES FAMILY HOSPICE HOUSE, DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE AND THE MEDINA HOSPICE INPATIENT CARE CENTER offer beautiful outdoor spaces for meditation and reflection. Whether it is with a paver or a stone bench, when you dedicate an outdoor tribute to your loved one, 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.
Dr. Louis E. LaGrand sets the tone for his book, *Healing Grief, Finding Peace: 101 Ways to Cope With the Death of Your Loved One*, before it even begins. “Dedicated to all who are mourning and all who must inevitably respond to the opposite side of the coin of love,” LaGrand wrote.

*Healing Grief, Finding Peace* is a self-help resource book for individuals coping with a loss through death. Whether the death was sudden or prolonged, the book presents many ideas and practical advice on how to adapt to the loss.

This book is separated into six easy-to-read chapters, each beginning with an affirmation. The first three chapters focus on understanding and learning about grief, as well as dealing with our feelings and deciding how to respond to those feelings. The last three chapters offer suggestions and practical ideas to incorporate into one’s life to help work through the grief process. LaGrand also includes a list of additional resources for further reading.

The author emphasizes that one can find ways to grow—even in grief. The healthy outcome of the journey is to achieve peace and healing. With more than 100 different coping strategies, every reader should find several ideas that are helpful to them.