



# Comfort for the Grieving Heart

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Provided by St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program

September  
2024

*"Grief changes shape, but it never ends." – Keanu Reeves*

St. Luke's  
Hospice Bereavement

Team:

484-526-2499



Coping with grief in September can be a poignant experience, as the month marks the transition from the warmth of summer to the cool embrace of autumn. This time of year, characterized by changing colors and shifting weather, often mirrors the emotional journey of those mourning a loss.

One coping strategy is to embrace the symbolism of the season. September signifies a period of transition and renewal, much like the process of grieving itself. The changing leaves can serve as a reminder of the impermanence of life, encouraging individuals to reflect on memories while also acknowledging the inevitability of change.

Engaging with nature can be particularly healing during this time. Taking walks in parks or forests allows one to connect with the natural world, finding solace in the beauty of the changing scenery. The act of observing leaves turning from green to shades of red, orange, and yellow can evoke a sense of peace and acceptance, fostering a deeper connection to both inner emotions and external surroundings.

Creating rituals that honor the memory of a loved one can also provide comfort in September. Lighting a candle, visiting a special place, or participating in activities that were meaningful to you and your loved one can help keep their spirit alive. These rituals offer a sense of continuity and provide opportunities for reflection and emotional expression.

Seeking support from others is crucial in coping with grief during September. Whether through friends, family, support groups, or counseling, sharing experiences and emotions can alleviate feelings of isolation and provide a sense of understanding and compassion.

Using September as a time to embrace the natural rhythms of the season, engage with nature, create meaningful rituals, and seeking support can be an empowering step. By finding ways to honor memories and connect with others, individuals can navigate this transitional time with resilience and hope, finding moments of healing amidst the seasonal changes.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If you would like to be added or removed from our mailing list or prefer to receive an electronic copy, please contact us at 484-526-2499.

# News & Events

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Grief rituals are deeply personal and can provide comfort and a sense of connection when mourning a loss. Here are some ritual ideas that can help honor and remember a loved one:

**Candle Lighting:** Light a candle daily, weekly, or on significant dates in memory of your loved one. This ritual can provide a peaceful moment for reflection and remembrance.

**Memory Box:** Create a memory box or memory table filled with photos, letters, meaningful objects, or mementos that remind you of your loved one. Adding to it over time can be a comforting ritual.

**Planting:** Plant a tree, flowers, or a garden in memory of your loved one. This act of nurturing life can symbolize the continuation of their spirit and provide a place of solace.

**Writing Letters:** Write letters to your loved one to express your feelings, share memories, or update them on your life. You can keep these letters or release them in a symbolic way.

**Memory Book:** Create a scrapbook or memory book filled with photos, stories, and memorabilia that celebrate the life of your loved one. This can be a creative and healing way to preserve their memory.



**Personal Rituals:** Incorporate personal rituals that were meaningful to your loved one into your routine. This could include cooking their favorite meal on special occasions or visiting their favorite places.

**Nature Walks:** Take walks in nature as a way to connect with the natural world and find solace. You can dedicate these walks to your loved one, reflecting on their life and the beauty around you.

**Community Gatherings:** Organize or participate in community gatherings, memorial services, or events that honor your loved one's life. Sharing stories and memories with others who knew them can be comforting and healing.



**Quiet Reflection:** Set aside moments of quiet reflection or meditation to connect with your emotions and memories. This can be done at home, in nature, or in a place that holds significance for you and your loved one.

These rituals are meant to be personalized and adapted to suit your individual needs and preferences. The key is to find rituals that resonate with you. They should provide a sense of comfort and connection as you navigate the grieving process.

## Grief Support for You

**Individual support:** Our bereavement counselors provide support and information through video and telephone counseling sessions. Contact St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Team at 484-526-2499



**Good Grief Workshops:** These 90-minute workshops are offered virtually twice a month to provide you with a better understanding of what grief is, how it may affect you emotionally, physically, spiritually and psychologically, coping strategies and ways to reconcile the loss. For more information and to receive an invitation to join the meeting, call (484) 526-2499. You will be asked to download the Microsoft Teams app on your smart phone or computer.

### Good Grief:

**Thursday, September 26th, 1-2:30pm**

**Thursday, October 10, 1-2:30pm**



## Monthly Support Group

### Bethlehem In-Person Support Group

**The Bethlehem support group** meets on the first Friday of the month from 10:00am to 11:30am at the Wesley United Methodist Church 2540 Center Street (Route 512) Bethlehem, PA 18017. This group provides a safe and collaborative space to process your grief journey with others in a similar situation. Together we will review a topic that meets the need of the group that day. This group is facilitated by a grief counselor. For more information, please contact St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Team at 484-526-2499.

### Brodheadsville In-Person Support Group

**\*\*RETURNING FALL 2024\*\***

For more information, contact the St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Team at 484-526-2499 .

**Video library:** St. Luke's website includes a dozen short videos that provide information about the grieving and mourning process and ways to care for yourself after a loss. To view the videos, go to <https://www.slnh.org/vna> and click on the hospice heading. On the left side of the screen under the VNA heading, click on grief support. About half-way down this page, click onto the video library heading "Want to understand your grief?" Access the library by answering the question about your connection with St. Luke's Hospice (if any). Then view the videos from the comfort of your home.

# Additional Places to Find Support and Share Your Story

Below is a list of free bereavement services in the area. Because of the pandemic and the need for physical distancing, many resources may only be offered virtually. Please contact our bereavement department at 484-526-2499 if you need additional support.

**Bradbury Sullivan LGBT Community Center** offers bereavement support for LGBT people who have experienced loss. For more information, please visit their website at [www.bradburysullivancenter.org](http://www.bradburysullivancenter.org) or call 610-347-9988

**The Compassionate Friends** offers ongoing support for parents, grandparents and adult siblings grieving the loss of a child, grandchild or sibling. Visit [www.thecompassionatefriends.org](http://www.thecompassionatefriends.org). Enter your zip code to locate the local chapter and contact person near you.

**Gentle Yoga for Grief, Stress and Life Transitions** is currently being offered virtually by Wendy Littner Thompson, M.Ed., LPC, RYT. Visit [www.givinggriefavoic.com](http://www.givinggriefavoic.com) or call 610-730-1992. Be sure to indicate if your loved one was a St. Luke's Hospice patient.

**St. Luke's Psychiatric Associates** is offering a grief support group. This group provides a safe place to discuss, express, and experience grief for a loved one, as well as provides the opportunity to gain a toolbox to help cope in the most challenging moments. The group is held in Bethlehem. For more information please call Nicholas Reilly at 484-658-7773 or Daniel Phillips at 484-658-6782.

**Doylestown Hospital Hospice** offers a variety of support groups and programs that change seasonally. Visit their website at [www.doylestownhealth.org/hospital/services/bereavement](http://www.doylestownhealth.org/hospital/services/bereavement) or call 215-345-2079.

**Grand View Hospital Hospice** offers groups and services that change seasonally. For more information, call 215-453-4210.

**Grief Share** is a faith-based support group offered throughout the Lehigh Valley. Visit their website at [www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org) and enter your zip code to find the contact person and program near you.

**OASIS Community Center** offers a variety of support groups to those grieving a loss due to substance related causes. Therapist-led *Hopeful Hearts* meetings are held in-person and virtually for bereaved parents, siblings, partners & friends. Groups for bereaved youth ages 7-17 and bereaved caregivers raising bereaved children are occasionally offered in-person. For dates and times, visit [www.oasisbethlehem.org](http://www.oasisbethlehem.org) or call 484-747-6825. Advanced registration is required, please email [rhonda@oasisbethlehem.org](mailto:rhonda@oasisbethlehem.org) to register.

**GRASP** (Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing) currently offers two virtual evening meetings per month, plus an afternoon meeting at the Oasis Center. Call 484-788-9440 or Call/Email at [nancyhowe@gmail.com](mailto:nancyhowe@gmail.com) or 484-788-9440 or Tim Howe at [howet60@yahoo.com](mailto:howet60@yahoo.com) or (646-401-4455).

**Suicide Loss:** The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention has excellent information on risk factors, statistics and education about suicide. Visit [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org) and enter your zip code to find the chapter/contact person near you. All chapters are run by people who have experienced the suicide of a loved one.

**Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley** [cancersupportglv.org](http://cancersupportglv.org)

We encourage you to call the **number on the back of your insurance card** to find resources paid by your individual insurance plan.

Find an individual therapist at: [Psychologytoday.com](http://Psychologytoday.com)

**Support Information in New Jersey Karen Ann Quinlan Hospice** offers support to those who are grieving the death of a loved one. For more information, call 973-948-2283 or visit [www.karenannquinlanhospice.org/services/bereavement](http://www.karenannquinlanhospice.org/services/bereavement).