

October  
2024

St. Luke's  
Hospice Bereavement

Team:

484-526-2499



**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.

## Comfort for the Grieving Heart

### Grief is the Healing

Going through the intense physical, emotional, and behavioral changes that people who are grieving often experience can be really tough and confusing. It can affect every part of your life. You might find yourself wondering how to “heal from grief,” thinking that grieving is the cause of these changes.

It may help to know that grief is not a wound. You don't need to heal from it. In fact, some would say **grief is the healing**.

When we experience loss, the grief that follows may offer a path to functioning in the world again. Grief is the process through which we find a new normal.

*What if grief offers a path to:*

**A Different Perspective.** Imagine if we saw grief as an ongoing process of healing rather than a problem to solve. Instead of fearing it, we'd invite it in as a companion.

**Continued Connection.** Through grief, we build a continued bond with the person who has passed away. It's not about forgetting; it's about finding a new way to relate to their memory, a way that keeps them alive in our hearts and minds.

**Befriending the Experience.** Maybe grief can be a friend instead of an adversary. It's not something to escape or fight against. Instead, it's a natural response to loss—a way for us to process the profound changes in our lives, a testament to the love we shared and the pain of our loss.

**Understand the Pain of Loss:** The real pain lies in the loss itself, not in grieving. Grief helps us navigate this altered world, where everything looks different without the person who has died.

**Discovering Ourselves:** Grief forces us to examine who we are now that our world has shifted. It's an opportunity for self-discovery and growth.

**Learning from Grief:** When we stop resisting, we can listen to what grief teaches us. It reveals our resilience, our capacity for love, and our ability to adapt.

Grief is not an obstacle; it's a guide. It is a natural part of healing that can shape the journey toward acceptance and understanding.



## Grief is Love ... Except When It Isn't

Lots of people experience grief as an expression of love—the flip side of the same emotional coin.

But grief doesn't always neatly mirror love. It can be a separate entity, a shadow that lingers even when love seems distant.

Grief can also be the love we deserved but never received.

It can be the memory of love that evaporated, leaving behind bittersweet traces.

Sometimes grief is love we always imagined but never experienced. A phantom longing for what could have been.

Sometimes, grief arrives uninvited, unattached to any specific love.

Grief doesn't always have a clear explanation or a tidy origin. Seek moments of stillness, where you can simply be with your feelings, without needing to label or explain them.

*One way to cope with grief is to lean on your support system. Reach out to friends, family, or support groups. Sharing your feelings and experiences with others who care about you can provide comfort.*

### What's Your Hope?

Hope is like a quiet voice inside saying, 'maybe things will get better.'

#### **What do you hope for?**

What things, big or small, would make your life feel more livable? What might make you feel more joy, comfort, connection, love, or peace?

Reflect on these questions and consider what brings meaning and fulfillment to your life.

## Am I Making Progress?

As you navigate your grief, remember that your relationship with it will evolve over time. It may be challenging to perceive this change on a daily basis. Instead of striving to return to the person you were, consider comparing your current self to your initial state of grief.

Acknowledge the progress you've made, no matter how small, and let it inspire hope for the future.

#### **Here are 10 ideas:**

1. Feeling a little better and being sad for shorter times.
2. Talking to people who understand how you feel and letting them help you.
3. Embracing the uncertainty and focusing on the present moment.
4. Taking care of your body and heart, making sure you're okay.
5. Recognizing that things won't be the same and being okay with that.
6. Finding moments to laugh and enjoy things more.
7. Saying the name of the person who died.
8. Being okay with not having all the answers.
9. Understanding that life is different now and living in the present.
10. Starting new things and using your energy in different ways.

## 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 halfway 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.

## Our Monthly Support Groups

Our bereavement support groups are facilitated by one of our grief counselors. We provide a safe and collaborative space to process your grief journey with others in a similar situation.

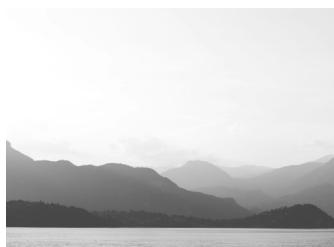
For more information, call us at 484-526-2499

### **Bethlehem Area Support Group**

Wesley United Methodist Church 2540 Center Street (Route 512) Bethlehem, PA 18017. Join us the first Friday of each month from 10-11:30am. Our next few meetings are on these dates: November 1, December 6.

### **Brodheadsville Area Support Group**

Western Pocono Community Library, 131 Pilgrim Way, Brodheadsville, PA 18322 from 1-2:30pm. Join on the following Wednesdays; October 16, November 13, November 27, December 11.



## 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, provide 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.

Upcoming Dates:

October 10—1— 2:30pm

November 7— 1- 2:30pm

## Other Places to Find Support

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)

### Community Bereavement Resources

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**Bradbury Sullivan LGBT Community Center** offers bereavement support for LGBT people who have experienced loss. Visit [bradburysullivancenter.org](http://bradburysullivancenter.org) or email at [reilly@bradburysullivancenter.org](mailto:reilly@bradburysullivancenter.org).

**Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley** provides professional programs of emotional support and education. Visit [cancersupportglv.org](http://cancersupportglv.org).

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

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

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

**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.

**Grand View Hospital Hospice** offers groups and services that change seasonally. Call 215-453-4210.

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

**Lehigh Valley Health Network** offers many groups and services for adults and children between the ages of 6-17. Call 610-402-7481. For information about program offerings in the Pocono area, call 272-762-3826 or email [Bryson.Boes@lvhn.org](mailto:Bryson.Boes@lvhn.org).

**OASIS Community Center** offers a variety of support groups to those grieving a loss due to substance-related causes. Therapist-led meetings are held in-person and virtually for bereaved parents and young adults (siblings, partners, friends, etc.). Groups for bereaved youth ages 7-17 and bereaved caregivers raising bereaved children are offered in-person. Visit [oasisbethlehem.org](http://oasisbethlehem.org), call 484-747-6825 or email at [rhonda@oasisbethlehem.org](mailto:rhonda@oasisbethlehem.org).

**Suicide Loss.** The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention has excellent information on risk factors, statistics, and education about suicide. Visit [afsp.org](http://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.

### Support Information in New Jersey

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**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 [karenannquinlanhospice.org/services/bereavement](http://karenannquinlanhospice.org/services/bereavement).