

February
2025

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

A Little Bit About Grief

What is grief? What is mourning? Are they different?

Grief is the internal process of loss. It's not what you show to others; it is personal to you. Imagine a broken rib. It's painful to take a breath, but to others, you may look okay. This is what grief is like; you may hurt "on the inside" but seem okay to others.

Mourning, on the other hand, is grief expressed. It can show up in tears, in a mood, and our words and body language. It is in mourning that sometimes people make the mistake of comparing loss. "My grief isn't as bad as hers," you might think. This is a myth of grief – that it can be compared. Your grieving is unique to you, and your loss is the most painful one because it's the one you have.

Grief, a Universal Yet Unique Experience

No two people grieve the same way or even in the same timeline. For some people, grief can hit fast and hard, and talking about it, sometimes over and over, is very helpful. For others, grief gets put in a backpack of emotions to be dealt with in the future—or with the intent never to deal with it. This can work until that backpack gets too full. Grief will find us eventually.

Sometimes, Grief is Suffocated

When your normal grief reactions are not welcome, you may experience 'suffocated grief.' Children, for example, may express grief by being distracted, regressing to previous behaviors when they were younger, being 'disruptive,' or just generally having a hard time expressing emotions when and where it seems 'appropriate.' This can also be true for adults, especially if you are feeling the need to hide your emotions, feeling pressure to 'move on' quickly, or feeling guilty for still feeling sad after a significant amount of time. When this type of grieving is misunderstood, it can be considered 'suffocated.'

Talking Is Not Required

It is a myth that grieving requires talking with other people about it. Some people journal, spend time in nature, or do something physical to relieve grief. If you aren't sharing your grief with others, that is ok. That said, some find that talking with others does help. It can be a reminder that others have experienced grief and loss, too, and it provides an opportunity to learn what helped them cope.

Grief Doesn't Need to be Fixed

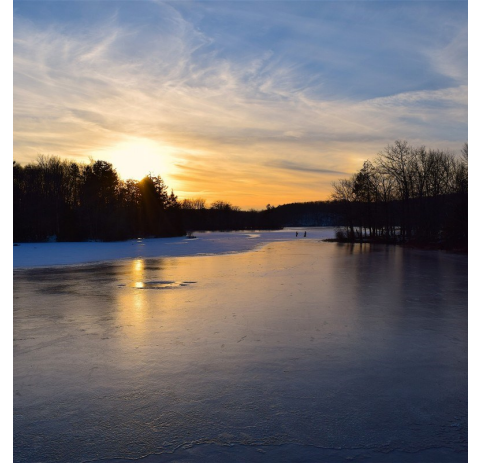
Most people need grief to be witnessed, not fixed. If you don't have someone in your life who is willing to witness your grief, consider joining a support group. A good grief support group will offer you a place to express your grief, witness the grief for other people, and share what is helping. You can find more about our support groups on page 3.

Grief is Love—Except When It Isn't

Some people say grief reflects love. It's the "receipt" we take for love. It is love's frustration of where to go. But grief can also be love never realized. It's also true that:

- ⇒ Grief can be the absence of love.
- ⇒ Grief can be the love we deserve, but we didn't receive.
- ⇒ Grief can be love that disappeared.
- ⇒ Grief can be the love we imagined would be ours but never came.

There are many reasons why people grieve. Relationships are complex, and sometimes grief is a reflection of what we didn't get to experience and wished we had.



On Valentine's Day

Here are some ideas of things to do this Valentine's Day, if you choose to.



- * Write a note of appreciation to someone who could use it.
- * Donate to a cause you or the person who died cared about.
- * Volunteer your time.
- * Give flowers to someone who might be feeling down.
- * Give yourself flowers, too.
- * Set a goal to do at least "one act of kindness" for a stranger.
- * Set aside some time to reflect on the person who died.
- * Do something that makes you smile.
- * Remember who loves you.
- * Tell someone if you need to talk about how you're feeling.
- * Ignore the day if you want to!

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 Groups—Morning and Evening Options

Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center Street (Route 512) Bethlehem, PA 18017.

Join us from 10-11:30am **Upcoming Dates:** February 7, March 7

NEW! Hanover Township Community Center, 3660 Jacksonville Rd, Bethlehem, PA 18017.

Join us from 6:30-8pm **Upcoming Dates:** February 11, March 11

Brodheadsville Area Support Group

Western Pocono Community Library, 131 Pilgrim Way, Brodheadsville, PA 18322.

Join us from 1-2:30pm **Upcoming Dates:** February 19, March 19

Good Grief Workshops

These virtual 90-minute workshops are offered monthly 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.

Join us from 1-2:30pm **Thursday, February 13; Thursday, March 20**

6-7:30pm Wednesday, February 26; Wednesday, March 5

St. Luke's Senior Meals



St. Luke's University Health Networks healthy, affordable meals for seniors (65 or older). It's a great opportunity for a great meal at a great price (under \$5 for a entrée, salad, side, veggie, dessert and drink) along with meeting new people.

- **Anderson, Carbon, Miners, Upper Bucks Campuses:** M-F, 4-6pm
- **Monroe Campus:** 7 days a week, 4-6pm
- **Bethlehem Campus:** Thursdays, 4-6pm (Speaker on the first Thursday)

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

[Community Bereavement Resources](#)

Bradbury Sullivan LGBT Community Center offers bereavement support for LGBT people who have experienced loss. Visit bradburysullivancenter.org or email at reilly@bradburysullivancenter.org.

Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley provides professional programs of emotional support and education. Visit 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. 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 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 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 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.

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, call 484-747-6825 or email at 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 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](#)

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.