

IN TOUCH

HOSPICE OF THE VALLEY BEREAVEMENT NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2009

Managing Your Grief

DOING GRIEF WORK

Once you begin to recognize—and experience most intensely—all the reactions to your loss, the real work of mourning begins. In ways that are personal and unique, you will gradually integrate your loss into the framework of your life.

Grief work is an active rather than passive process, which includes coming to terms with your loss, as well as finding meaning in it. It can be done through private activities such as reading and writing, and with others through talking, participating in bereavement counseling, or finding support in a group. Grief work can be emotionally and physically exhausting, but it can also produce tremendous healing and growth.

IDENTIFYING A PERSONAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

Think about and identify the people, groups and activities in your life that form your personal network of support and help give meaning to your life. Consider asking a friend or family member to help you develop a more complete listing. Write down potential sources of support, including their names, telephone numbers and addresses, so you'll have them handy when you need them.

People you can depend on might include family members, relatives, friends, neighbors, teachers, colleagues, clergy, your family physician, family lawyer, accountant, insurance agent and Hospice of the Valley bereavement staff.

Groups might include your church community or your affiliation with work or special interest circles, clubs and organizations, and Hospice of the Valley bereavement support groups.

Activities include whatever brings you satisfaction, relaxation, comfort, or relief, such as meditating, writing or

journaling, engaging in hobbies (gardening, photography, collecting) or arts and crafts (painting, drawing, modeling), listening to or making music, exercising, or simply talking and crying. Other suggestions:

- List all the interests, activities, hobbies, courses, or skills you've enjoyed in the past or always wanted to pursue, and follow up on at least one of them each week or each month.
- Visit your public library or local bookstore and ask for information, literature, films, audiocassettes and videotapes on grief, bereavement and loss.
- Find local chapters of national self-help and support organizations related to your specific type of loss.
- Watch and listen for announcements of lectures, workshops and seminars on grief in the community. Check local radio and television stations, newspapers and bulletin boards in your grocery store, library, church, or school.
- If you have a computer and access to the Internet, use the keywords grief and grieving and visit one of the many sites that offer information and support to people who are mourning.
- If you work outside your home, let your supervisor or employer know what's happening in your life.

SEEING A BEREAVEMENT COUNSELOR

When it seems that support from family and friends is either too much or not enough, a few sessions with a bereavement counselor may give you the understanding and comfort you need. Individual bereavement counseling is one of the services available at no cost to individuals and families whose loved ones were patients of Hospice of the Valley.

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

Unlike friendship, a professional counseling relationship offers you the opportunity to relate to a caring, supportive individual who understands the grief process, doesn't depend on you and who will allow you to mourn without interference. Within the safety and confidentiality of such a relationship, you can share your intimate thoughts, make sense of what you're feeling and clarify your reactions. An effective bereavement counselor is knowledgeable about the mourning process, helps you to feel understood, offers a witness to your experience, encourages you to move forward, fosters faith that you will survive and offers hope that you will get through your grief.

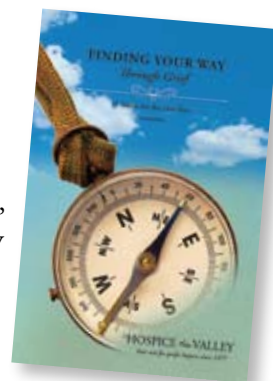
Seeing a bereavement counselor is appropriate if:

- You feel uncomfortable with yourself or find yourself unable to function normally.
- You have reactions from which you can get no relief, or over which you feel no control.
- You wonder if your responses are normal, or if they've gone on too long.
- You have recurring feelings of guilt or anger.
- You simply have a need to talk to someone outside the "family circle."

FINDING SUPPORT IN A GROUP

Friends, family members and co-workers may not fully understand or appreciate the attachment you have with your loved one and the pain you may still be feeling weeks and months after the death. A support group may be one of the few places where you can be among others who understand and where you can talk freely about the one you have loved and lost.

This is an excerpt from the book, *Finding Your Way through Grief: A Guide for the First Year*, Second Edition, by Marty Tousley, CNS-BC, FT © 2008. If you would like a copy of the entire book, please call the Bereavement Office: 602.530.6970.



Announcements

“Mother Loss” - Healing Support for Daughters

Hospice of the Valley – East Valley

East Charting Station

3489 S. Mercy Rd., #101, Gilbert, AZ 85297

Six Wednesdays beginning September 30, 6–7:30 p.m.

Hospice of the Valley – Northeast

5111 N. Scottsdale Rd. #108, Scottsdale, AZ 85250

Six Wednesdays beginning October 14, 6–7:30 p.m.

“Picking Up the Pieces in Mid-Life” –When a Spouse or Partner Dies

Hospice of the Valley – Northeast

5111 N. Scottsdale Rd. #108, Scottsdale, AZ 85250

Six Thursdays beginning October 15, 6–7:30 p.m.

Space is limited for the above special groups. Please register by calling 602.636.5390.

“Life Cycle Interrupted” –When an Adult Child Dies

A six-week workshop for parents, coming this fall to the West Valley. Please indicate your interest by calling our RSVP and information line: 602.636.5390.

Bereavement Services

Hospice of the Valley provides bereavement support for 13 months following the death of your loved one. Support groups throughout the Valley, and grief counseling support are available. Information can be found at hov.org, or by calling 602.530.6970.

Our online grief discussion groups are monitored by professional grief counselors and are privately administered to ensure the highest level of quality, safety and security for participants. Membership is free and simply requires that visitors register with a username and password of their own choosing. (On the hov.org home page, click on “We Offer Various Forms of Grief Support.” Scroll down until you see “On-Line Grief Healing Discussion Groups.” Once at the site, click on “Register” next to the “Welcome Guest” greeting at the top of the page, and follow the instructions there.)

Also on our Web site, you can view previous issues of *Bereavement In Touch* newsletters, as well as other information, including social groups, writings by the bereaved, available books and other resources.



Grief Support Groups (Adult Drop-In Groups, No Registration Needed)

APACHE JUNCTION

Horizon Bay
2080 S. Ironwood Dr.
Meets 2nd and 4th Monday
9–10:30 a.m.

FOUNTAIN HILLS

Fountain Hills Senior Activity Center
13001 N. La Montana Dr.
Community Center
Meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday
10–11:30 a.m.

GILBERT

Hospice of the Valley
3489 S. Mercy Rd., Suite 101
Meets 2nd and 4th Monday
6–7:30 p.m.

GOODYEAR

Hampton Inn & Suites
2000 N. Litchfield Rd.
(North of McDowell Rd., next to
Macaroni Grill)
Meets 2nd and 4th Monday
6–7:30 p.m.

PHOENIX

Hospice of the Valley, Central Office
1510 E. Flower St.
Meets 1st and 3rd Thursday
6:30–8 p.m.

The Stratford Assisted Living
1739 W. Myrtle Ave.
Meets 2nd and 4th Tuesday
3–4:30 p.m.

MESA

LGBT Community*
Hospice of the Valley East Office
777 W. Southern Ave., Suite 301
Meets 2nd and 4th Monday
6–7:30 p.m.

* Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender Community

Hospice of the Valley East Office
777 W. Southern Ave., Suite 301
Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesday
6–7:30 p.m.

Fellowship Square
6945 E. Main St., Building 4
Meets 1st and 3rd Monday
1–2:30 p.m.

NORTH PHOENIX

Paradise Valley Community Center
17402 N. 40th St.
Meets 1st and 3rd Tuesday
6:30–8 p.m.

PARADISE VALLEY

Valley Presbyterian Church
6947 E. McDonald Dr.
Circular Chapel (off McDonald)
Meets 2nd and 4th Thursday
6:30–8 p.m.

PEORIA

Hospice of the Valley, West Office
9720 W. Peoria Ave., Suite 128
Meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday
2–3:30 p.m.

Hospice of the Valley, West Office
9720 W. Peoria Ave., Suite 128
Meets 1st and 3rd Thursday
6–7:30 p.m.

SCOTTSDALE

Scottsdale Senior Center
at Granite Reef
1700 N. Granite Reef Rd., Room 8
Meets 2nd and 4th Monday
1:30–3 p.m.

Virginia G. Piper Center
10460 N. 92nd St.
Research Pavilion
1st Floor Group Room*
Meets 2nd and 4th Tuesday
3–4:30 p.m.

* Note room change

SUN CITY

CIGNA Office Building
13041 N. Del Webb Blvd.
Classroom 2
Meets 1st and 3rd Monday
3–4:30 p.m.

SUN LAKES

Sun Lakes United Methodist Church
9248 E. Riggs Rd.
(North of Riggs Rd., 2 mi. East of I-10)
Meets 1st and 3rd Thursday
1–2:30 p.m.

**PET LOSS
Support Group**
Hospice of the Valley
Administrative Office
1510 E. Flower St.
Meets 1st Saturday each month
9–10:30 a.m.

If the date of a meeting falls on a national holiday, please call to check whether the meeting will take place.

For bereavement support, please call 602.530.6970



HOSPICE
of the VALLEY

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*There is a sacredness in tears.
They are not the mark of weakness, but of power.
They speak more eloquently than 10,000 tongues.
They are the messengers of overwhelming grief,
of deep contrition and of unspeakable love.*

—Washington Irving