



IN TOUCH

Bereavement Newsletter

Bereavement Department (602) 530-6970 or hov.org

MARCH / APRIL 2019

NORMAL REACTIONS TO LOSS

Grief does not occur in easily defined stages; rather it is a blend of emotional, cognitive and behavioral responses. The death of your loved one will affect the whole of you, body and soul. Your initial and later reactions will be felt and expressed physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

Physical reactions to loss

- The stress of an emotional injury may be expressed through physical symptoms such as fatigue, high blood pressure, muscle tension, headaches, shortness of breath, erratic sleeping and eating patterns, or aggravation of chronic or new medical conditions.
- Nutrition can suffer. In an effort to comfort and nurture yourself, you may eat more or less than usual. Stress can interfere with the absorption of important nutrients, while fats and sugars deplete energy.
- Rest and relaxation are essential. Because rest relieves, restores and refreshes, it is important that you make time for routine “mindless” activity, or get away for a relaxing weekend. You may sleep less or more than usual as a way to avoid or shut out the pain.
- Although grief saps your energy, exercise is good for you. Regular physical activity increases your circulation, stimulates your heart, cleanses your body, discharges negative energy and gets you out and about.
- Human contact is a basic human need. Touching, hugging, holding and having contact with another is comforting and healing.

Suggestions for coping with physical symptoms

- Inform your physician about what is happening in your life, so your health can be monitored.
- Avoid self-medicating and alcohol, which can offer only temporary escape and may have serious side effects.
- Drink lots of water.
- If your diet is not well balanced, try supplementing with vitamins and minerals. Add fruits, vegetables and grains. Eat smaller, more frequent meals rather than three big ones. Eat foods that are easy to fix and digest, and include a special treat now and then.
- Cut back on your caffeine intake, and drink a cup of warm milk or water at bedtime (plain milk is a natural sedative).
- Take a relaxing bath or warm shower before bed.
- Stick to a regular routine; retire and get up at the same time each day.
- Follow a deep relaxation routine; perform deep breathing exercises in bed.
- Listen to music that soothes your soul and decreases tension.
- Visualize being in your favorite pleasant place.

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NORMAL REACTIONS TO LOSS *(continued)*

- Recognize that your thinking processes, coordination and reaction time aren't up to par right now.
- Find an exercise you can do (stretching, walking, swimming, dancing, swinging or swaying to music), and set aside time to do it regularly.
- Ask someone to stay with you to help you focus and prioritize what needs to get done.
- Reach out and touch someone. Cuddle children and pets; hold hands with your friends; get a massage.
- Attend to personal grooming (hair, skin, nails, wardrobe) that will enhance your body image. There is truth in the saying that when you look good, you feel good too.
- You may have difficulty concentrating and remembering, and feel incapable of making the simplest decision.
- You may experience nightmares, dreams and phobias, and you may fear that you're going crazy.
- You may find yourself crying at the slightest provocation or at unexpected moments. Alternatively, you may fear that if you permit yourself to cry, the tears will never stop.
- You may have the pessimistic belief that things will never get any better, as if life and living are useless, and you may even want to die. While not unusual in grief, such thoughts are usually fleeting and simply reflect how desperately you want the pain of loss to end.

Emotional reactions to loss

- For weeks, months, or even years after the death occurs, the shock of loss continues in a wave of disbelieving aftershocks.
- You recognize that your loved one has died, but you're unable to grasp all the ramifications of that reality.
- Even simple tasks like getting out of bed in the morning, tending to personal grooming, fixing a meal or going somewhere with friends may seem overwhelming and exhausting.



This is an excerpt from the book, *Finding Your Way through Grief: A Guide for the First Year*, Second Edition, by Marty Tousley, CNSBC, FT, DCC. If you would like to purchase a copy of this book (\$12), please visit hov.org/publications and click on the "Online Store."



The only courage that matters
is the kind that gets you from one moment to the next.

—Mignon McLaughlin

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

Adult drop-in groups, no registration needed. If the date of a meeting falls on a national holiday, please call to check whether the meeting will take place. For bereavement support, call (602) 530-6970.

PHOENIX

Hospice of the Valley
1510 E. Flower St., Bldg. 1, Phoenix 85014
1st & 3rd Thursday, 6:30–8 p.m.

For the Newly Bereaved
Hospice of the Valley
1510 E. Flower St., Bldg. 1, Phoenix 85014
2nd & 4th Tuesday, 4:30–6 p.m.

Luz del Corazón for Spanish Speakers
Hospice of the Valley
1510 E. Flower St., Bldg. 1, Phoenix 85014
Call to register: (602) 410-5252

Anthem Civic Building
3701 W. Anthem Way, Anthem 85086
1st & 3rd Tuesday, 6:30–8 p.m.

La Siena Retirement Community
909 E. Northern Ave., Phoenix 85020
1st & 3rd Thursday, 2:30–4 p.m.

Healing Rainbows: Phoenix
(Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender)
Hospice of the Valley
1510 E. Flower St., Bldg. 1, Phoenix 85014
2nd & 4th Tuesday, 6:30–8 p.m.

EAST VALLEY

St. Matthews United
Methodist Church
2540 W. Baseline Rd., Mesa 85202
1st & 3rd Tuesday, 6–7:30 p.m.

Hospice of the Valley
2020 E. Woodside Ct., Gilbert 85297
2nd & 4th Monday, 6:15–7:45 p.m.
Lost Dutchman Room

EAST VALLEY, continued

Pecos Community Center
17010 S. 48th St., Phoenix 85048
Every other Wednesday, 6–7:30 p.m.
See hov.org for dates, or call
(602) 530-6970.

Sun Lakes United Methodist Church
9248 E. Riggs Rd., Sun Lakes 85248
1st & 3rd Thursday, 1–2:30 p.m.
Multipurpose Education building;
park on North side.

San Tan Mtn. View Funeral Home
21809 S. Ellsworth Rd., Queen Creek 85142
2nd & 4th Monday
2nd Monday, 5:30–6:30 p.m.
Last Monday, 10–11 a.m.

Leisure World
908 S. Power Rd., Mesa 85206
2nd & 4th Tuesday, 1–2:30 p.m.

WEST VALLEY

Benevilla
13576 W. Camino Del Sol #22
Sun City West 85375
2nd & 4th Thursday, 3–4:30 p.m.

Hospice of the Valley
9435 W. Peoria Ave., Peoria 85345
2nd & 4th Wednesday, 2–3:30 p.m.

Hospice of the Valley
9435 W. Peoria Ave., Peoria 85345
1st & 3rd Thursday, 6–7:30 p.m.

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
918 S. Litchfield Rd., Goodyear 85338
Every other Wednesday, 6–7:30 p.m.
Park in back lot. See hov.org for dates,
or call (602) 530-6970.

Adult Spanish Speakers
Hospice of the Valley
9435 W. Peoria Ave., Peoria 85345
3rd Tuesday, 6–7:30 p.m.

NORTHEAST VALLEY

Fountain Hills Community Center
13001 N. La Montana Dr.
Fountain Hills 85268
2nd & 4th Monday, 1–2:30 p.m.
Activity Center

Granite Reef Senior Center
1700 N. Granite Reef Rd., Room 8
Scottsdale 85257
2nd & 4th Monday, 1:30–3 p.m.

Virginia G. Piper Center
10460 N. 92nd St., Scottsdale 85258
2nd & 4th Tuesday, 3–4:30 p.m.
Educational Conference Room

Paradise Valley Community Center
17402 N. 40th St., Phoenix 85032
1st & 3rd Tuesday, 6:30–8 p.m.

Hospice of the Valley
16117 N. 76th St., Scottsdale 85260
2nd & 4th Tuesday, 3–4:30 p.m.

NORTHWEST VALLEY

Wickenburg Public Library
164 E. Apache St., Wickenburg 85390
Mar. 14 and Apr. 11, 3–4:30 p.m.

PET LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

Hospice of the Valley
Administrative Office, Bldg. 1
1510 E. Flower St., Phoenix 85014
1st Saturday, 9–11 a.m.



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Phoenix, AZ 85014

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Life Cycle Interrupted: When an Adult Child Dies

Six Thursdays, March 21 through April 25, 4:30–6 p.m.
Hospice of the Valley
9435 W. Peoria Ave., Peoria, 85345
Navajo Room

Please register online at [hov.org/grief support groups](http://hov.org/grief-support-groups)
or call (602) 636-5390.

This group is limited in size. Please reserve your
space soon.

Bereavement Services

Hospice of the Valley provides bereavement support for
up to 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/grief-support-groups, or by calling
(602) 530-6970.

New Song Center for Grieving Children

New Song Center for Grieving Children, a program of
Hospice of the Valley, provides grief support groups for
children, youth, young adults and adults at several
locations Valleywide at no cost to participants.

Families with children ages 5 through young adults up
to age 25 may participate regardless of the cause of
death or whether they received care from Hospice of
the Valley.

“Enduring Ties” is an evening support group for
families that have experienced the death of a minor
child. There is also a support group for grandparents
grieving the death of a grandchild.

“Luz del Corazón” is a support group program for
families whose first language is Spanish and who have
experienced any type of loss through death.

For more information, call (480) 951-8985 or view
newsongcenter.org.