



# IN TOUCH

## Bereavement Newsletter

Bereavement Department (602) 530-6970 or [hov.org](http://hov.org)

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2019

## GETTING THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS

When your loved one dies, you grieve not only for the person, but also for the life you used to have, the love the person gave you and all the special times you spent together. Perhaps there is no time of the year when you're more aware of the empty space your dear one has left behind than during the holiday season.

Holidays can create feelings of dread and anxiety in those who are bereaved. The clichéd images of family togetherness and the often unrealistic expectations of a season filled with picture-perfect, joyful gatherings can cause tremendous stress for those who are not grieving, let alone for those in the midst of the painful, isolating experience of loss. Holidays by nature are filled with nostalgia and tradition, but in grief, even the happiest memories can hurt. When you're in the midst of pain, and the rest of the world wants to give thanks and celebrate, you need to find ways to manage your pain and get through the season with a minimum amount of stress.

### Suggestions for coping with the holidays

**Have a family meeting.** List all the things you ordinarily do for the holidays (sending greeting cards, decorating the house, stringing outdoor lights, putting up a tree, holiday baking, entertaining business associates, buying something special to wear, going to parties, visiting friends, exchanging gifts, preparing a big meal, etc.) Decide together what's important to each of you, what you want to do this year, what you can let go of, and what you can do differently. For each task on the list, ask yourself these questions: Would the holidays be the holidays without doing this? Is this something I really want to do? Do I do it freely, or out of habit or tradition? Is it a one-person job, or can it be a group effort? Who is responsible for getting it done? Do I really like doing it?

**Do some things differently this year.** Trying to recreate the past may remind you all the more that your loved one is missing. This year, try celebrating the holidays in a totally different way. Nothing is the same as it used

to be anyway. Go to a restaurant. Visit relatives or friends. Travel somewhere you've never gone before. If you decide to put up a tree, put it in a different location and make or buy different decorations for it. Hang a stocking in your loved one's memory, and ask each family member to express their thoughts and feelings by writing a note to, from or about your loved one, and place the notes in that special stocking for everyone to read. Buy a poinsettia for your home as a living memorial to your loved one for the holiday season.

**Do other things more simply.** You don't have to discard all your old traditions forevermore, but you can choose to observe the holidays on a smaller scale this year.

**Take good care of yourself.** Build time in your day to relax, even if you're having trouble sleeping. Eat nourishing, healthy meals, and if you've lost your appetite, eat smaller portions more frequently throughout the day. (Sweet, sugary foods are everywhere, from Halloween until Easter, but too much sugar will deplete what little energy you have.)

Continued on page 2

## GETTING THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS *(continued)*

Get some daily exercise, even if it's just a walk around the block. Avoid drinking alcohol, which intensifies depression and disrupts normal sleep.

**Just do it.** We all know that we ought to think positively, eat right, exercise more and get enough rest—but grief by its very nature robs us of the energy we need to do all those good and healthy things. Accept that in spite of what we know, it's often very hard to do what's good for us—then do it anyway. Don't wait until you feel like doing it.

**Pay attention to yourself.** Notice what you're feeling and what it is you need. Feelings demand expression, and when we acknowledge them and let them out, they go away. Feelings that are “stuffed” don't go anywhere; they just fester and get worse. If you need help from others, don't expect them to read your mind. It's okay to ask for what you need. Besides, doing a favor for you during the holidays may make them feel better, too. Be patient and gentle with yourself, and with others, as well.

**Expect to feel some pain.** Plan on feeling sad at certain moments throughout the season, and let the feelings come. Experience the pain and tears, deal with them, then let them go. Have faith that you'll get through this and that you will survive.

**Seek support from others.** Grieving is hard work, and it shouldn't be done alone. You need to share your experience with someone who understands the pain of your loss. If your spouse, relative or friend cannot be the source of that support, you can find it elsewhere. See page 3 for a list of support groups sponsored by Hospice of the Valley.

**Give something of yourself to others.** As alone as you may feel in your grief, one of the most healing things you can do for yourself is to be with other people, especially during the holidays. Caring for and giving to others will nourish and sustain you, and help you to feel better about yourself. If you can bring yourself to do so, visit someone in a nursing home, or volunteer your time at your church or synagogue. Do whatever you can, and let it be enough.



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/resources](http://hov.org/resources) and click on the “Online Store.”

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 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](http://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](http://newsongcenter.org).

## 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.

**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.  
**Start time will be 6 p.m. in 2020**

**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.  
**Start time will be 6 p.m. in 2020**

### 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

**Pecos Community Center**  
17010 S. 48th St., Phoenix 85048  
Every other Wednesday, 6–7:30 p.m.  
See [hov.org](http://hov.org) for dates, or call  
(602) 530-6970  
**No group 12/25**

### EAST VALLEY, continued

**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 and Last 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.  
Recreation #1 Banquet Room

### WEST VALLEY

**Lord of Life Lutheran Church**  
13724 W. Meeker Blvd.  
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.  
**No group 12/25**

**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](http://hov.org) for dates,  
or call (602) 530-6970.  
**No group 12/25**

**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 Community Hospital**  
520 Rose Lane, Wickenburg 85390  
2nd Thursday, 3–4:30 p.m.

**St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church**  
232 N. Teger St., Wickenburg 85391  
Every Thursday, 1–2 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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**Administrative Office**  
1510 E. Flower St.  
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**hov.org**

A not-for-profit organization



This annual remembrance event honors departed loved ones through a photo montage set to music. The event will be held at 6 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 24, at Steele Indian School Park, 300 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix.

The highlight of *Light Up a Life* is a photographic tribute to loved ones who have died. Everyone is welcome to submit a photo for the tribute, regardless of whether that person received Hospice of the Valley services. Please submit photos as soon as possible.

***Final deadline is 5 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019.***

- Please submit only ***one photo*** per person (do not send multiple photos of the same person or collages)
- ***No writing or graphics*** on photos
- Digital photos ***should be high-resolution*** (at least 300 dpi); high-quality smart phone photos are okay
- Minimum size is 2" x 3"
- ***Photo-lab*** printed photos only, please. No photocopies, newspaper prints or prints made from desktop printers.

### **Upload your photo**

High-resolution digital photos may be submitted electronically through our website: [hov.org/LUAL](http://hov.org/LUAL).

### **Use your previously submitted photos**

If you would like a previously submitted photo to be included in this year's tribute, call (602) 530-6992, or e-mail [LUAL@hov.org](mailto:LUAL@hov.org) to request its inclusion.

### **Mail your photo**

Photos may be mailed to Hospice of the Valley, Light Up a Life, 1510 E. Flower St., Phoenix, AZ 85014. Include your name, phone number, email address and a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you'd like the photo returned.