



IN TOUCH

Bereavement Newsletter

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

MAY / JUNE 2022

SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL REACTIONS TO LOSS

Social reactions

There are times when you would give anything to be with your loved one again, if only long enough to be relieved of your loneliness and reassured that your loved one is still a part of your life. At other times, you may feel a need for solitude, to withdraw temporarily from others and the pressures and decisions of daily life. This need to turn inward, to reflect on your loss, to get in touch with your innermost feelings, can be a helpful time for you to find your tears and figure out where you are going from here.

As a child, you may have learned that feelings should be buried and mourning should be done alone. Perhaps you never learned to accept or ask for help. As an adult, you may be too embarrassed or ashamed to let your emotions show in front of others, equating grief with self-indulgence or self-pity. You may feel isolated, different and apart from everyone else, convinced that no one understands. You may feel stunned at the normalcy of life around you as people go about their business, totally unaware that your world has stopped and your entire life has been turned upside down.

Some people you know may be done with your grieving long before you are, expecting you to be “over it by now” or worrying that you’re somehow “hanging on” to your grief. Uncomfortable with your strong feelings, they may change the subject or avoid any mention of your loved one’s name.

Suggestions for coping with loneliness and isolation

- Think about who is supportive to you and the most accepting and caring with your grief. Look for those who will listen without judging you, or for those who have suffered a similar loss.
- Find time with others to talk, to touch, to receive support. Be honest about what you’re feeling. Allow yourself to express your sadness.
- Don’t expect others to guess what you need. When you want to be touched, held, hugged, listened to or pampered, say so.
- If all you want from others is help with simple errands, tasks and repairs, say so.
- Let others (especially children) know if and when you need to be alone, so they won’t feel rejected.
- Go somewhere and have a good, long cry—and do it as often as you wish. You have every right to miss the person who has died. Accept your feelings as normal.
- Identify your loneliest times, and think of ways to alter your routines and environment (for example, rearrange the furniture in a room; plan your weekends ahead of time; use your microwave for quick, easy meals).
- Realize that no one can totally understand the relationship you had with your loved one. Though well-intentioned, things said to you may hurt.
- Ask people to remember, talk about and share stories about your loved one with you.

Continued on page 2



SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL REACTIONS TO LOSS *(continued)*

Spiritual reactions

Regardless of one's identification or affiliation with an organized religion, spiritual doubts and questions may arise when a loved one dies. Suffering a major loss often leads us to confront and re-think our basic beliefs about God, religion, death and the afterlife. Some may turn to God as a source of strength and consolation at the time of a loved one's death and find their faith has deepened. Others may question the religious teachings they've practiced all their lives and find the very foundations of their beliefs shaken to the core. Even those who had no religious upbringing at all may feel abandoned by God or angry with God for "letting their loved one get sick and die." Not all people respond to loss in the same way, and not everyone shares the same cultural, religious or spiritual beliefs about death and the afterlife.

Death forces us to confront the spiritual questions we may have been avoiding or haven't taken time to address, the questions that get at the very heart and meaning of life: Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?

Whether a strong religious faith will be a help or a hindrance in your recovery from grief depends on what you believe and how your beliefs are practiced. Like any other tool, religion can be used in healthy, appropriate ways, or it can be abused in unhealthy, inappropriate ways.

Religion can be a great antidote for the loneliness that accompanies every major loss, and it can be a source of strength and group support. What it cannot do is give us immunity from loss or give us back our lost loved ones—nor can it provide us with a shortcut through grief.



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), visit <https://hov.org/news/> and click on the "Online Store" link at the bottom of the page.



It will never be the same.
I will never be the same.
You came. We loved. You left.
I will survive until I survive.
And one day I will find myself alive again.

—From "How to Survive the Loss of Love"
Colgrove, Bloomfield, McWilliams

ADULT GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

Some groups have re-opened for in-person participation. Please watch for updates at hov.org or call the Bereavement Dept. at (602) 530-6970. Groups marked virtual below require a call to (602) 636-5390 to obtain the invite link on the Zoom platform.

If you are in need of crisis support, please call the **Maricopa County Crisis Response Network:** (602) 222-9444 or **Non-Crisis Warm Line:** (602) 347-1100.

PHOENIX

Hospice of the Valley
1510 E. Flower St., Bldg. 1
Phoenix, AZ 85014
2nd & 4th Tuesday
5:30–7p.m.
In person

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

Phoenix Virtual
1st & 3rd Thursday
5:30–7 p.m.
Call for link: (602) 636-5390

Healing Rainbows: Phoenix
(Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender)
2nd & 4th Tuesday
6–7:30 p.m.
Virtual; Call for link: (602) 636-5390

WEST VALLEY

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

West Valley Virtual
Every other Thursday starting Jan. 6
1–2:30 p.m.
Call for link: (602) 636-5390

EAST VALLEY

St. Matthew's
1st & 3rd Tuesday
6–7:30 p.m.
Virtual; Call for link: (602) 636-5390

East Valley Virtual
1st & 3rd Tuesday
1–2:30 p.m.
Call for link: (602) 636-5390

Pecos Community Center
1st & 3rd Wednesday
6–7:30 p.m.
Virtual; Call for link: (602) 636-5390

Hospice of the Valley
2020 E. Woodside Ct.
Gilbert, AZ 85297
1st & 3rd Thursday
1–2:30 p.m.
In person
Lost Dutchman Room

Mountain View Funeral and Cemetary
7900 E. Main St.
Mesa, AZ 85207
1st Monday
11 a.m.–12 p.m.
In person

San Tan Mtn. View Funeral Home
21809 S. Ellsworth Rd.
Queen Creek, AZ 85142
2nd and Last Monday
2nd Monday, 11 a.m.–12 p.m.
Last Monday, 6–7 p.m.
In person

Leisure World
908 S. Power Rd.
Mesa, AZ 85206
2nd & 4th Tuesday
1–2:30 p.m.
In person
Recreation #1 Banquet Room

NORTHEAST VALLEY

Granite Reef Senior Center
1700 N. Granite Reef Rd., Room 8
Scottsdale, AZ 85257
2nd & 4th Monday
1:30–3 p.m.
Please call for info: (602) 530-6970

Virginia G. Piper Center
2nd & 4th Tuesday
3–4:30 p.m.
Virtual; Call for link: (602) 636-5390

Northeast Valley Virtual
2nd & 4th Tuesday
3–4:30 p.m.
Call for link: (602) 636-5390

NORTHWEST VALLEY

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

PET LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

1st Saturday
9–11 a.m.
Virtual; Call for link: (602) 636-5390



NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PHOENIX AZ
PERMIT NO 417

Administrative Office
1510 E. Flower St.
Phoenix, AZ 85014
hov.org

A not-for-profit organization

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bereavement services

Hospice of the Valley provides bereavement support for up to 13 months following the death of your loved one. Virtual support groups and telephonic or virtual grief counseling support are available. Information can be found at hov.org/grief-support-groups, or by calling (602) 530-6970.

Special group for the newly bereaved

“Gone from our Sight, Never from Our Hearts”

If you have recently suffered the death of a loved one and would benefit from sharing with other adults who are also newly bereaved, this might be the right group for you.

For more information, call (602) 636-5390 or visit hov.org/grief-support-groups.

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. Support groups are currently being offered for all age groups virtually and in-person in Gilbert, Scottsdale and North Phoenix, at no cost to participants.

“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 (602) 776-6789 (Spanish), email info@newsoncenter.org or view newsongcenter.org.

Additional resources are available at <https://hov.org/our-care/grief-support/>.