



2023 bereavement support groups

Join the Henry Ford Hospice bereavement teams in virtual support groups on the following days of each month:

2nd Wednesday of the month
6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Monthly:
1/11, 2/8, 3/8, 6/14.
Spring Series:
4/12, 4/19, 4/26, 5/3, 5/10, 5/17

3rd Tuesday of the month
1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Monthly:
1/17, 2/21, 3/21, 6/20.
Spring Series:
4/18, 4/25, 5/2, 5/9, 5/16, 5/23

4th Thursday of the month
10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Monthly:
1/26, 2/23, 3/23, 6/22.
Spring Series:
4/27, 5/4, 5/11, 5/18, 5/25, 6/1

SandCastles Children's Grief Support Program
Pre-registration is required. To register, please call:
313.771.7005
St. Clair Shores, Livonia, Clinton Twp., Rochester, Detroit
Southfield, and West Bloomfield

Registration is required for all support groups and space is limited.

**To register, call:
586.276.9570**

Note: Six week series are a day and time commitment of six consecutive weeks.

You will need to provide your name, contact number, and email address so we may forward the invitation and provide further instructions.

For information regarding any of the listed support groups or bereavement services offered by Henry Ford Hospice, please call the Henry Ford Hospice bereavement team at 586.276.9570.

Henry Ford provides qualified interpreters and other aids and services for the deaf and hard of hearing at no cost. To request assistance, call Henry Ford Bereavement Services at 586.276.9570.

If possible, please notify us three days in advance of the event.

Henry Ford Hospice

Bereavement news for people living with grief

**HENRY
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Editor:
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The Bereavement Process

Grief is a natural and normal response to the death of someone we love. The emotions, moods, thoughts and experiences are many and varied. It is not something to be "gotten over" but something to be worked through. Each person works through their grief in their own way and in their own time. We never "get over" the death but we learn to walk through it, as we do the pain is lessened and the burden lightened.

Grieving is not neat and orderly. People drift in and out of the various stages and not everyone experiences all of the stages. Several stages can be experienced at the same time. Grief is unique. The depth and duration of grief is unique. Personality, previous losses, bonds of the relationship, the age of the mourner and the role the person who died played in your life and yours in his life all affect the process.

Remember, grieving is healthy and normal. Relationships bring joy and pain. We grieve at the death of others and realize the price and costliness of relationships. If we understand what we are going through and how it is effecting us, we will have more realistic expectations about our recovery.

- Denial
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance

Why?

Author unknown

Why?
That's what we ask.
The truth is, we may never be able to know for sure WHY.
But we do know that there is no single "should have done" or "could have done" or "did" or "didn't do" that would have changed that WHY.
All that LOVE could do was done.



Prevent The Negative Health Impacts of Grief

by Laura Slap-Shelton, Psy.D.

Studies have shown that the bereaved, particularly in the early stages of grieving, are at risk for a greater number of health problems. As hard as it is to think about yourself at the time of a significant loss, it is important to take care of yourself in order to handle the difficult emotions and adjustments you will be making. For many of us there are others who care about and depend on us. Here are some ideas which may be helpful.

- Try to get enough sleep.
- Attend an exercise class on a bi-weekly basis.
- Drink alcohol only in company and in moderation if at all.
- Do not start new bad habits such as smoking.
- Wear your seat belt when driving. Drive carefully. Pull off the road if suddenly overwhelmed by grief and always drive with a box of tissues.
- Do not over schedule your time.
- Find a bereavement support group and attend regularly.
- Create down time for yourself in which you will not be disturbed.
- Keep a journal of your feelings, experiences, dreams and goals.
- Try to go out with a friend at least once a week. Start small with a lunch or breakfast. When you are ready try a movie or dinner.
- Get out in nature.
- Create a memorial for your loved one.
- When you're ready, dare to laugh. Find a funny book, movie or comedy album. Don't feel guilty.
- Breathe Breathe Breathe. Do deep breathing exercises on a daily basis.
- If you are suddenly a single parent, find ways to have time to yourself. Find a babysitter or ask a friend to take your children for a few hours during the week.
- Find a support group for families which can help you as you help your children through the grief process.
- Check the symptoms of depression. If you have several of them consider seeing a counselor, psychologist or psychiatrist who is able to help you with your depression.

Whatever you do, remember to be kind to yourself. Reduce your stress, and give yourself the time you need to heal.

When Should I Seek Professional Help If I Am Grieving?

From the guidance of Dr. Michael E. Hirsch, MD, an individual should seek the counsel of a professional when serious and/or long-lasting symptoms interfere with daily life. He emphasizes the importance of talking with your doctor or mental health professional if you are experiencing suicidal thoughts or other intensified symptoms of bereavement-related depression.

He noted the following as symptoms of concern

- persistent feeling of worthlessness, which is generally felt with depression, but not with healthy grief.
- ongoing guilt
- marked mental and physical sluggishness
- persistent trouble functioning
- hallucinations, other than occasionally thinking you see or hear the deceased.

Dr. Hirsch mentions that the combination of psychotherapy and antidepressant medication can prove beneficial in alleviating symptoms of depression associated with grief. Grief can be consuming to some individuals. There are times when individuals find that their circumstance doesn't improve at all over the course of months or years. This may be a sign that he or she is suffering from Complicated Grief. There may be layers of grief due to ongoing losses, or inadequate time to grieve the loss of loved one because one moves from one season of caregiving into the next, i.e., in the case where one parent passes away and the other parent requires ongoing caregiving in the absence of spouse or financial turmoil, this is also called Protracted or Chronic Grief. Grief coupled with a traumatic experience or unbearable separation from a loved one is diagnosed as Traumatic Grief.

Complicated Grief is said to occur when the perception of death appears traumatic, sudden, violent or unexpected. Often times there are underlying conflicts within relationships, workplace, or decline in bereaved health that challenge bereaved's ability to cope with loss. A sense of abandonment, angry relationships without a "final" conversation or goodbye, and indifference to attachment with loved one can facilitate this type of grief. At present statistics show that among adults who suffer a significant loss, approximately 1 in 11 will experience complicated grief.

Prevalent symptoms are as follows:

- intrusive, upsetting memories, thoughts, and images of the deceased.
- constant, painful yearning for the deceased.
- inability to accept reality of death
- frequent nightmares
- detachment from others
- desperate loneliness and helplessness, anger, and bitterness
- thoughts of suicide and wanting to die.

Many individuals will walk through their grief without needing professional help, however, it is important to evaluate what aspect of grief you are not able to overcome. An individual should feel somewhat better after a year. When your grief begins to take a toll on your daily functioning it is important to acknowledge that professional help is needed.

