

# HORIZONS

a Publication of Hospice of the Piedmont's Grief and Healing & Kids' Grief and Healing Programs

Dear Friend,

*Whether you are grieving the death of a loved one, anticipating loss, or working with those who are grieving, we invite you to reach out to us for support.*

*Like you, many of us here at Hospice of the Piedmont have navigated loss and have met grief in one form or another. And, like you, we are doing our best to take care of each other and those we love.*

*We are dedicated to abiding with each other and with you on this life journey to heal and live as graciously and fully as each day allows. We hope the articles, quotes, programs, and events we share with you will lift you up in some way. Peace to you and those you love.*

Sincerely,

The Grief & Healing Staff at

**HOSPICE** OF THE *Piedmont*

Email: [Grief@hopva.org](mailto:Grief@hopva.org)

Hospice of the Piedmont, the oldest and most experienced hospice in the region, has provided expert, compassionate comfort care and symptom management for tens of thousands of terminally ill patients since 1980. We pride ourselves in companioning those who are dying, family members and friends who are caring for their loved ones, and those who are grieving.

Our Grief & Healing team has created a continuum of care that supports the entire family on the end-of-life journey. We offer ongoing grief and healing support for everyone during a time of significant concern, worry, stress, and grief, from children to adults, for those whose loved ones participated in our hospice program, and for community members who are navigating the loss of a beloved.

We offer many programs that provide those experiencing a loss with an understanding and supportive environment to process their grief and heal after a loved one's death. Our support groups, events, workshops, camps, and counseling for adults, teens, and children encourage a healthy adjustment to feelings of loss. We are currently offering a mixture of online and in-person support.

Our grief and healing services are available to adults, children, and families in our 12-county service area: Albemarle, Augusta, Buckingham, Culpeper, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, and Rappahannock.

All services are provided at no cost, thanks to generous community philanthropy. If you are interested in donating to any of our Grief and Healing Services, please visit [hopva.org/give](http://hopva.org/give).

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# HOSPICE OF THE *Piedmont* GRIEF AND HEALING

WINTER 2022 / 2023

## ZOOM GROUPS

### Drop-In Support Group for General Grief

Wednesdays from 3:00–4:00pm

Grieving the loss of a loved one is a painful, yet natural part of healing. We are here to help you navigate through that process. Please join in for a drop-in support group where grief related to any loss will be shared and supported. Participants can attend just one time or as many times as needed. *Starting January 11th and ending March 29th.*

### Drop-In Loss of Spouse/Partner Women's Group

Mondays from 4:30–5:30pm

This is an open drop-in process group specifically for women who have lost a partner or spouse to connect with those who have experienced a similar loss. Participants can attend just one time or as many times as needed. *Starting January 9th and ending June 19th.*

### Winter Blues Workshop

Monday, January 23rd, 3:00–4:00pm

The winter season can be a joyful time and yet it can also bring down our spirits with dreary days and long, dark, and cold nights. Many of us experience feelings of stress, fatigue, confinement, boredom, and a general sense of depression during this time of year. The facilitators of this online workshop will share ideas and positive steps to help us take care of ourselves mentally, physically, and spiritually, especially during the winter season.

## HYBRID GROUP

### Remembering Our Children (Zoom and in-person)

First Monday of Every Month from 5:30–6:30pm

If you are a parent who has experienced the death of your child (of any age), we invite you to join us for grief education, support, and healing.

## IN-PERSON GROUPS

### General Grief Group (Charlottesville)

Thursdays from 5:30–6:30pm

This is a facilitated eight-week support group offering participants an opportunity to explore grief themes and share strategies for navigating grief in a community of trust. A book and journal will be provided. *Starting January 12th and ending March 2nd.*

### Loss of Spouse/Partner Women's Group (Charlottesville)

Tuesdays from 3:45–5:00pm

Our loss of a spouse or life partner support group provides a safe place to connect with other women who have experienced a similar loss. This group will be a structured group with guided reading. Books and journals will be provided. *Starting on January 10th and ending February 28th.*

### Holiday Grief Workshop

Tuesday, December 13th, 5:30–6:30pm

Healing-grief can occur in spite of or even because of the holidays. As we head into the holiday season, those of us who have experienced loss may be feeling a wide range of emotions. Coupled with unrealistic expectations and commercial hype, the holiday season may seem more overwhelming than happy or merry. This is NORMAL. Join us as we discuss the struggles particularly related to grieving during the holidays and how to best care for ourselves during this time.

Pre-registration is required for all groups.

Please call  
**434-817-6915**

or email  
**register@hopva.org**



## THE GRIEF & HEALING TEAM



**JORDAN SHOVER, MA**  
GRIEF AND HEALING COUNSELOR /  
MANAGER  
Prior to joining HOP, Jordan was an outpatient counselor with residents at Bridgewater Retirement Community and the Arrow Project. She has worked with clients with multiple needs, including crisis, substance use, trauma/PTSD, anxiety, depression, family conflict, death and dying, meaning-making, loss of autonomy, and interpersonal relationships. She enjoys working with all ages but is passionate about working with elders. She focuses on collaborating with clients to individualize each client's treatment and goals.



**CRAIG WILT, MA, MED, CT, CBT, CECR**  
GRIEF AND HEALING COUNSELOR /  
COORDINATOR  
Craig Wilt has been a member of the HOP team for over twenty years. Previously, Craig worked in human services and as a missionary. He has been blessed by his life experiences, which, he believes, helped prepare him for his work in grief-care counseling. For Craig, grief care is about hope and finding renewed meaning and purpose. He is routinely awestruck by the strength, courage, and faith of those journeying through the healing-grief process.



**KRIS SHAFER, MA**  
RESIDENT IN COUNSELING  
Kris interned with HOP last year and returned to work with us again as a Resident in Counseling. She is an Army Veteran. When she left military service, she and her husband moved to Charlottesville, where they raised their two children. Kris decided she wanted to work in a helping profession and completed her MA in Counseling in May. Both of her parents were hospice patients, and she feels that working at HOP's Grief and Healing program is a great way to serve her community.



**SHIRLEY PAUL, MS**  
GROUP FACILITATOR  
Shirley has been with HOP for more than eight years. She facilitates workshops and co-facilitates grief support groups. She is an important mentor for students and new staff. Shirley is an artist and is dedicated to making the world a more beautiful place.



**JEFFREY C. FRACHER, PHD**  
VOLUNTEER GROUP FACILITATOR  
Jeff is a retired Clinical Psychologist. He practiced clinical psychology for 44 years in N.J. and Virginia. A native Virginian, he lives in Charlottesville with his wife of 50 years, Kay, and his two beloved rescued Golden retrievers, Kaiya and Khema. He has two adult sons. In addition to volunteering at HOP as a bereavement group facilitator, he is a clinical assistant professor in Clinical Psychology.



**FRANCES PRYLUCK**  
VOLUNTEER GROUP FACILITATOR  
Fran is from the Hudson Valley in New York, where she attended school, raised a family, and enjoyed a 40-year career as a Registered Nurse. After the death of her parents in 2005, she found herself searching for a better understanding of my bereavement. She enrolled in Pace University in Westchester County, New York, completing a Masters's degree in Grief and Loss Counseling. During her internship, she did palliative care work and facilitated bereavement groups at Orange Regional Medical Center in New York.



**MARNITA SHEPHERD**  
VOLUNTEER GROUP FACILITATOR  
Marnita is an Albemarle County native. She has four awesome sons and three cherished grandchildren. The time spent with them is the most priceless thing in her life. She loves the outdoors. Providing bereavement support and engaging with our grief support group is an added bonus.



# HOSPICE OF THE *Piedmont*

## KIDS' GRIEF AND HEALING

WINTER 2022 / 2023

### JOURNEYS SPRING BEREAVEMENT CAMP

*Saturday, April 15th*  
*8:45am–4:30pm*  
*Triple C Camp*

Children and teens ages 5-17 who have lost a person close to them are invited to attend this full-day camp that will include drumming, music, art making, nature exploration, a challenge course, pet therapy, and a candle-light memorial. Campers will have fun, see that they are not alone, and understand that their feelings of grief are normal.

### S'MORE JOURNEYS CAMP

*Thursday, January 12th*  
*Thursday, February 9th*  
*5:30–6:30pm on Zoom*

*Saturday, December 10th*  
*11:00am–1:00pm In Person Drive-In*

Join Journeys families for activity time with special guest presenters and Journeys art therapists. Families will be encouraged to remember loved ones, express feelings, learn coping skills, and have fun together.

Attendees will receive Camp@Home materials, create art projects to share, enjoy s'mores with a virtual campfire, make music, remember their loved ones, and more. Ages 4-12 welcome!

### OASIS TEENS ON ZOOM

*Third Tuesday of Every Month*  
*5:30–6:30pm on Zoom*

Teens will gather on screen with peers who know what it is like to experience the death of someone they love. We will connect with each other, do expressive activities, and share our joys and concerns. Unique grief topics will be explored, and each teen will find that they are not alone. Groups facilitated by board-certified, registered art therapists. Ages 13-17 welcome!

### FAMILY LUMINARY WORKSHOP

*Thursday, December 15th, 5:30–6:30pm*  
*First Presbyterian Church*  
*500 Park Street, Charlottesville*

The Luminary Workshop offers an opportunity for children and families to create a personal luminary to display at the service before the Memorial Illumination, a community celebration of life. To learn more about the Memorial Illumination event, visit [hopva.org/illumination/](http://hopva.org/illumination/).

**Individual art therapy sessions and school groups available as needed.**

Pre-registration is required for all groups.

Please call  
**434-817-6915**  
or email  
**kids@hopva.org**



## THE KIDS' GRIEF & HEALING TEAM



### **KACIE KARAF**

**ART THERAPIST AND KIDS' GRIEF AND HEALING COORDINATOR**  
Kacie has been building the Kids' Grief and Healing program at HOP for 2 decades with her co-workers. She is a board-certified and registered art therapist who earned her master's degree in art therapy at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Kacie is happiest while helping others, spending time with children and teens, playing with art materials, knitting, drawing, and exploring nature.



### **RENEE LUCAS**

**ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR**  
Renee graduated from Old Dominion University with a Bachelor's in Human Services. She loves spending time outside with friends and family. She has one older brother and two dogs - a Jack Russell named Wendy and a lab named Onyx! Renee was born and raised in Madison, VA.



### **ALLY LOTHER** **KID'S GRIEF AND HEALING COUNSELOR**

Ally has a passion for working with grieving children and guiding them through their grief journey. She received her bachelor's degree in Social Work from Marshall University and her master's degree in Social Work from Radford University. She has been working with grieving children since 2015. She has volunteered at children's bereavement camps around the country and worked in Baltimore City as a social worker at a family grief center. Ally wants all children to feel supported during their grief journey and know that their feelings are normal and valid.



### **DARLENE GREEN**

**ART THERAPIST**  
Darlene came to the Hospice of the Piedmont in 2016. She is a board-certified and registered art therapist who received her degree from Saint Mary of the Woods College in Indiana. Darlene loves making art with children and their families and helping them in their grief journey. She enjoys spending time with her husband and boxer, gardening, traveling, fiber arts, and exploring new art techniques.

## ART PROJECT: MEMORY HEART COLLAGE

*This memory heart collage is an easy art activity to help your grieving child. Remembering the person who died is a great way to keep them in your heart.*

### **Supplies:**

White paper with a heart outline drawn on it, scissors, discarded magazines, and a glue stick.

### **Instructions:**

1. Cut out magazine pictures and words that remind you of your loved one and what you want to "keep in your heart".
2. If you can't find the picture you want, you can draw on the heart with markers too.
3. Arrange how you would like the pictures to look in the heart and then glue them down on the paper.



# GRIEF IS NOT A DISORDER

by Alan D. Wolfelt, PhD, Pathways Center for Grief & Loss

Our phone at the Center for Loss and Life Transition has been ringing off the hook in recent weeks with requests for my opinion of the new "PGD" diagnosis. Yes, everyone's talking about the new "disorder" included in the latest release of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders (DSM-5). Psychiatrists and other mental health professionals can now, at their discretion, diagnose an adult patient with "prolonged grief disorder," or PGD, one year or more after the death of someone loved (just six months for children).

According to the DSM, PGD is characterized by daily, intense yearning for the person who died and/ or a preoccupation with thoughts or memories of this person. Three additional symptoms from the following array are also required: identity confusion, disbelief, avoidance of reminders of the death, intense emotional pain, difficulty engaging with others and with life, emotional numbness, feelings that life is meaningless, and intense loneliness.

According to recent studies, say the experts who lobbied for the inclusion of PGD in the DSM, about one in ten griever suffers from PGD.

## Caring for Versus Curing

Under the traditional medical model, the aim is to cure disorders. Curing is a medical term that means "remedying," "correcting," or "eradicating." Yet grief is not an illness. It's a normal human response to being "torn apart," which is what the word "bereavement" means. It can only be cared for. Caring is about honoring a transformation of the heart and soul. Caring is about being a companion who walks alongside—not in front of—and accompanies grieving people as they find their way out of the darkness and into the light.

Grief therapists do need frameworks that help them understand, identify, and support griever's struggling with complications of their grief. If you're interested in the companioning model of complicated grief care, I would refer you to my book, *When Grief is Complicated: A Model for Therapists*.

My position is this: I disagree. I've been a grief counselor and educator for more than forty years now. I've spoken and worked with thousands of grieving people. Here are the essentials they've taught me:

- Grief is normal and necessary. It's simply love after loss.
- Because love doesn't end, neither does grief.
- The normal melancholy of grief often continues well beyond a year.
- To integrate it into our ongoing lives, grief takes expression (i.e., mourning), the support of others, and an indeterminate amount of time.

Here's another way of thinking about it: Grief is love's conjoined twin. Grief is what we feel when we are separated from the object of our love. Without love, there would be no grief. And if love is not a disorder, illness, or diagnosis, then neither is grief.

I'll say it again: Grief is not a disorder. In my experience, even grief meeting the criteria set forth under "prolonged grief disorder" in the new DSM is not pathological. If it were, most of us would be diagnosed with PGD at some point in our lives. Historically, we better understood that Thomas Kempis was right when he observed that if you live very long on this earth, you will experience some "proper sorrows of the soul."

## Pathologizing Grief and Mourning

Mourning is grief gone public. It's the outward expression of our inner thoughts and feelings of grief. It's our shared social response to loss. Whenever we cry, talk about our grief, or in any way express our anger or sadness or shock, or any other thought or feeling about a loss, we're mourning. And mourning, like grief, is necessary. Mourning is what allows us to ultimately reconcile our grief and find our way to a new normal.

Unfortunately, some in our culture have decided that open and honest mourning is inappropriate and improper. Many mourners are pressured to keep their normal and necessary grief inside of themselves. Spoken or unspoken, messages such as “carry on,” “keep your chin up,” and “keep busy” all too often prevail. That’s why myself and other authors often refer to North America as an “emotion-phobic” or “mourning-avoidant” culture.

I would say that even the inner experience of grief has been tainted by this thinking. We are told we have a right to happiness. We are told that emotional and spiritual pain are bad and that we deserve to quell them as quickly as possible. But if sadness is maladaptive, then grief is also maladaptive, right? No wonder we ended up with grief and mourning too often being considered illnesses. No wonder we ended up with this unfortunate diagnosis.

### **Complicated Grief**

We all need the support of others if we are to reconcile our grief and go on to live a renewed, full life of love, meaning, and purpose. But sometimes we need extra help. In those situations, I call it “naturally complicated grief.”

First, let me clarify that I believe all grief is complicated. Just as love is always complex and multifaceted, so too is grief. Whenever someone we love dies, we naturally have lots of different and ever-changing thoughts and feelings about the death. Grief is often profoundly challenging and chaotic. In fact, it’s common for griever to feel like there is something wrong with them because their inner experience of loss as well as their outward behavior are so different from their usual thoughts and feelings. The experience I’m calling “naturally complicated grief” is grief that has gotten extra complicated somehow. It’s a matter of degree, feature prominence, and sometimes, yes, duration.

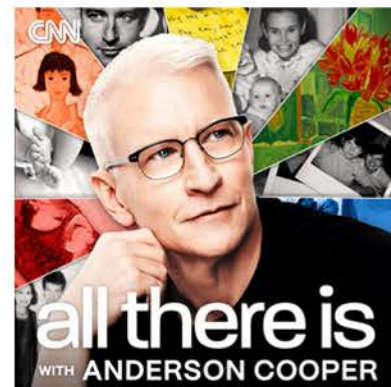
My professional experience has taught me that complicated grief is grief that has gotten stuck or off track somehow. It has encountered barriers or detours of one kind or another, and as a result has become stalled, waylaid, or

denied altogether. It is not, however, abnormal or pathological. It is not a disorder. Instead, it is a normal response in what is almost always an abnormally challenging loss situation.

I use the word “complicated” to describe stuck, offtrack, or denied grief because it better honors the unavoidable spiritual challenges of human life. It’s also more hopeful. If something’s complicated, you can uncomplicate it. You can tease apart and work through the complexities. What’s more, it’s not the human being who’s “disordered”—it’s the potential convergence of numerous factors that can contribute to the complications of grief. I have found that we often label things “disorders” when we lose an understanding of them.

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### **PODCAST RECOMENDATION**



*"I started to see grief as this beautiful thing, this essential thing, yet another linking force between us humans, not this shameful thing to be embarrassed about that smells like mental illness or whatever we humans foist on it. And so by working with others and seeing them move through their grief and how their grief connected them to the person they had lost, I finally let myself begin to feel things."*

BJ Miller, Episode Four



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YOUR PEACE  
OUR PURPOSE

[www.hopva.org](http://www.hopva.org)

## HOPE IS A STRANGE INVENTION BY EMILY DICKINSON

Hope is a strange invention—  
A Patent of the Heart—  
In unremitting action  
Yet never wearing out—  
Of this electric Adjunct  
Not anything is known  
But its unique momentum  
Embellish all we own—

