

HORIZONS

A newsletter from the
Center for Grief & Healing and the Center for Children,
programs offered by Hospice of the Piedmont

Dear Friend,

Whether you are grieving the death of a beloved, anticipating loss, or working with those who are grieving, we invite you to reach out to us for support or dialogue. 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 continue to cope with effects of the pandemic and 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 both to heal and to 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.

~ Center for Grief & Healing Staff

The Well of Grief

David Whyte

Those who will not slip beneath
the still surface on the well of grief,

turning down through its black water
to the place we cannot breathe,

will never know the source from which we drink,
the secret water, cold and clear,

nor find in the darkness glimmering,

the small round coins,
thrown by those who wished for something else.



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

To learn more about our programs, please turn to page 2.

HOW WE CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Our *Center for Grief & Healing* bereavement team has created a continuum of care that supports the entire family on the end-of-life journey. We offer ongoing bereavement support for everyone during a time of significant concern, worry, stress, and grief, from children to adults; for those whose loved one 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 in which to process their grief and work on healing in the year following 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. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, **all of our programs have moved to an online or telehealth platform and will continue in this format as long as needed.**



Our *one-of-a-kind Center for Children* supports kids and teens as well as their families with comprehensive, compassionate, non-medical services and a safe and positive place to learn and grieve. Our *Center for Children* art therapy team offers two distinct programs for children and adolescents. Our *Journeys* program uses expressive, music, and art therapy to help kids—ages four to eighteen—express their feelings about the loss of a loved one, cope with the death process, and create memories in a safe and caring environment. This program includes individual counseling by our caring and professional bereavement specialists.



Our *OASIS* group (**now offered virtually via Zoom**) is a dinner-discussion program connecting teens who have experienced the death of a significant person in their lives with each other to learn about grief and creative ways to work through it. The *OASIS* program is made possible thanks to a generous grant from the Wardle Family Foundation.

Our bereavement 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 and **all services are provided at no cost.**



Many of our programs are supported by the generosity of donors. If you are interested in making a donation to the Center for Grief & Healing or the Center for Children, please call us at 434-817-6900 or visit our website to donate online: www.hopva.org/donate-online-now/

To learn more about the above programs, visit our website: www.hopva.org

The Art of Losing

Then practice losing farther, losing faster:
places, and names, and where it was you meant
to travel. None of these will bring disaster.
I lost my mother's watch. And look! my last, or
next-to-last, of three loved houses went.
The art of losing isn't hard to master.
I lost two cities, lovely ones. And, vaster,
some realms I owned, two rivers, a continent.
I miss them, but it wasn't a disaster.

– Excerpt from “One Art” by Elizabeth Bishop

Life keeps getting smaller and smaller.

It feels as though I just keep losing huge, integral swaths of my life. I lost my husband and my dad—losses that demolished my emotional foundation and rearranged all my familial relationships and friendships. I left the apartment and the city where I lived with my husband for our entire married life. I lost my sense of safety and security in the world. I've even lost parts of myself.

Now, along with everyone else, I'm grappling with pandemic-imposed isolation and uncertainty.

Sometimes it seems we lose one thing and then we just keep losing things. We lose bigger, more important things. We lose things at an accelerated rate. We lose things before we're ready to part with them. We lose another thing when we're in the midst of trying to recover from the last thing we lost.

I've been struggling with how to rebuild my life, how to recover the basic pillars that make life worth living: love, connection, community, meaningful work, creative inspiration. I was already struggling emotionally when I lost my husband (the sudden loss of my dad was an incredibly destabilizing experience). And I was already traumatized and grief-stricken when the pandemic hit less than a year and a half after losing my husband.

It occurs to me that life does not always give us the breathing room we need after a horrifying and painful event. Life does not always space out tragedies so that we're on solid ground when another catastrophe strikes. Life respects no one. That last one is a phrase I've

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heard repeated over the years. When I was younger it used to strike me as cold, harsh and unfeeling. Now, I find the phrase to be uncannily accurate.

There is so much grief in the world right now, both individual and collective. There are so many people who were suffering very deeply before the pandemic, who were hanging on by a thread before unforeseen circumstances piled on more pain. And virtually all of us have endured added suffering as a result of all that's going on in the world—COVID-19, police brutality, sociopolitical unrest, economic uncertainty.

For me, it feels as though the chaos and terror of my internal world has spilled over into the external world. There is chaos within and without.

What strikes me about my personal losses, and also the losses we're collectively experiencing, is the lack of a sense of agency. A sense of agency is what seems to distinguish difficult but surmountable losses from intolerable, catastrophic losses that strip a person to their core (such as loss of a loved one).

Losing keys, a watch, whole cities and former lovers—these losses run the gamut from simply frustrating to utterly heartbreaking. But the person doing the moving or the breaking up usually has some say in the matter. As painful as it may be, making big changes and leaving things behind involves personal agency, and, perhaps, just a tiny bit of satisfaction when all is said and done.

But losing a loved one is different. Having the two most important people in my life ripped away from me suddenly, without warning, has left me with such an abject sense of helplessness that I struggle to put it into words. There is such a strong, intense need to DO SOMETHING about my circumstances, but there is nothing I can do to change what happened. My losses are permanent. All I can do is try and find a way to survive this pain, try and figure out how to harness some semblance of meaning and purpose in life again. I'm grasping at straws.

When everything has been turned upside down, when any illusion of control has been shattered, I find that I have to take things day-by-day, sometimes minute-by-minute. I can't worry about next month or next year. All I can do is get through today. I meditate every day. I go for a walk every day. I write in my journal every day. It may not seem like much, and my natural inclination is to gloss over these daily rituals and direct my attention to the elephant in the room: that is, how to piece back together the wreckage of my life. But the reality is that I can't fix that overnight. There is no magic bullet that will take me from my current broken-hearted and shattered existence back to some semblance of the life I had before all the tragedy. It's baby steps. It's one tiny step and then another and another. I keep trying to make one giant leap into some unknown but less painful future.

Although it was against my will, I've practiced losing farther and losing faster. Now I'm just trying to find moments of peace, day-by-day, minute-by-minute.

From: Notes on Grief – Musings on Loss from a 30-Something Widow and Fatherless Daughter
Elizabeth Rose, September 16, 2020
<https://notesongrief.com/>

EXPRESSING GRIEF: A CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS



In response to a request for submissions for this newsletter, Shannon Wilson shared two mixed media pieces she created in honor of her mother, Amy Wilson.

From Shannon: "My mom, Amy Wilson (d. 11/7/20) encouraged me to take art classes and work on art projects because she knew these activities helped me express my often neglected creativity.

After Mom died, I saw a listing for a collage/mixed media class at The Center at Belvedere (in-person, before the recent surge in COVID cases), and I heard her, in my heart-of-hearts, encouraging me to sign up. Using materials provided by the instructor, I produced two mixed media pieces (see attached). My desire, as I worked, was to create lively, uplifting—even exuberant—pieces as an antidote to sadness. Mom would have liked that."



Expressing grief through artistic expression can be a healing method for those grieving. These activities provide an opportunity to express the depth of grief while simultaneously honoring a loved one's life and the uniqueness of the relationship. These activities can also offer ways to imagine into the next steps of healing, to make meaning of grief, and to offer comfort and solace to others who are also grieving.

We'd like to invite you to submit a contribution for forthcoming editions—you may submit poems, pictures of artwork, a short narrative, a favorite quote that has helped you or a brief reflection, or other items. With your permission, we will print them, along with your name. You may send submissions to Teresa.Haase@hopva.org or mail them to Teresa Haase, Hospice of the Piedmont, 675 Peter Jefferson Parkway, Suite 300, Charlottesville, VA 22911.

An internet-based, live conference: Grief, Loss, and Advocacy in BIPOC Communities

Dates: May 28-29, 2021 | *Time:* 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. | *Registration Limit:* 75 Participants

The need for grief support and training on grief support has never been more evident, particularly as we have accounted for more than 500,000 deaths from COVID-19. BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities are experiencing death at disproportionate rates, both as patients and as front-line health care workers. This reality, compounded by the fact that grief has been a steady companion for BIPOC communities for generations, calls for an intentional response and action. Grief education, intervention and training is a specialized discipline and not required by most professional training programs, yet grief and loss is a daily experience of living. Training those who serve as leaders in BIPOC communities will allow for a wider reach of intervention and support. Hospice of the Piedmont's *Center for Grief & Healing*, in collaboration with Operation Social Equality and The Arrow Project, offers this conference to provide a supportive and safe forum for exploring grief and healing.

Learn more and register: <https://www.nursing.virginia.edu/sonce/ce-events/love-in-action-2021/>

Desired Outcomes/Educational Objectives:

Through participation in this virtual conference, participants will:

- articulate key grief support concepts
- articulate how grief has been a steady companion in BIPOC communities
- describe ways the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected BIPOC communities
- describe processes for facilitating a healing circle
- identify and practice concepts that support transforming grief into advocacy





Drop-In OASIS on Zoom

Teens will gather on screen with peers who know what it is like to experience the death of someone they love. Oasis will meet every Tuesday at 5:00 pm for discussion, art and support. We will get to know each other, make altered books together, share our joys and concerns, and enjoy treats each week. Unique grief topics will be explored and each teen will receive a box of supplies. Groups facilitated by board certified, registered art therapists. Start date to be determined. Please call to register. Ages 13-17 welcome!

S'More Journeys Camp@Home

Join Journeys families and us for family time with special guest presenters. Families will be encouraged to spend time remembering loved ones and having fun together as spring time approaches. Highlights include: receiving a Camp@Home box, creating an art project to share, enjoying s'mores with a camp fire, listening to storytelling, making music and song writing, joining in activities, remembering with a memorial ceremony, and more. All ages welcome!

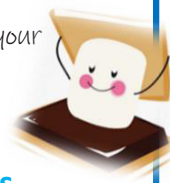
April 15, 2021 @ 5:30 pm - Rhythm and music for self-expression and relaxation with Mike Deaton

May 13, 2021 @ 5:30 pm - Learning from horses with Kelsey at Ride with Pride

June 12, 2021 @ 10 am – 2pm Grand Finale to the Camp@Home sessions with a live S'more Journeys Camp@Home day!!

****With Social distancing precautions**

Sign up now since space is limited! There is no cost for your participation, thanks to donations from our community.



Pre-Registration required for all groups.

Please Call [434-817-6915](tel:434-817-6915) to Register

Spring 2021 SCHEDULE

New! **Zoom GROUPS**
(groups will be offered virtually as long as needed.)

The journey through grief and loss may be difficult and lonely, especially for children and adolescents who are sometimes forgotten grievers. They need a safe place to express the grief, anger, and fear related to loss—thereby developing important coping skills. Through Journeys, children and teens discover that they are not alone and that their feelings are normal.

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



All services are offered at no charge thanks to the generosity of the community.

For more information or to register for an event please call 434-817-6915



Ongoing Drop-In General Grief Group Support Wednesdays, from 3-4pm

Grieving the loss of a loved one is a painful, yet natural part of healing. We're here to help you navigate through that process. Please join in for a drop-in support group where grief due to any loss will be shared and supported.

Remembering Our Children

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. **Meets on the first Monday of the month from 5:30 pm until 6:30 pm**

Loss of Spouse/Partner Group for Women

Our loss of a spouse or life partner support group provides a safe space to connect with other women who have experienced a similar loss. This group will be a structured group with guided reading and journaling. Books and journals provided. **Meets on Tuesdays for 8 weeks beginning June 1 from 6 – 7:30pm**

COVID-Loss Workshop

If you have experienced the loss of a loved one due to COVID-19, we invite you to join us for grief education, support and healing. A grief counselor, social worker, chaplain and Director of Hospice Home Services will be present to provide information and support. **Meets on Tuesday, April 27 from 3:30-5pm**

[Pre-registration required for all groups.](#)

Please Call 434-817-6915 or email bereavement@hopva.org

* Spring Group Schedule*

NEW! AND CONTINUING ZOOM GROUPS
(GROUPS WILL BE OFFERED VIRTUALLY AS LONG AS NEEDED.)

GRIEF IS A UNIVERSAL EMOTION AND NATURAL PART OF HEALING. THE CENTER FOR GRIEF AND HEALING ALLOWS ADULTS, CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND FRIENDS PROCESS THEIR LOSS AND HEAL AFTER THE DEATH OF A LOVED ONE IN A SUPPORTED, SAFE ENVIRONMENT. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT AND A VARIETY OF SUPPORT GROUPS ARE AVAILABLE.

IF YOUR LOSS IS RECENT, PLEASE CONTACT US BEFORE ATTENDING A GROUP





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Spring Memorial Available Virtually

With the ongoing pandemic continuing to prevent us from gathering in person, we will produce our spring memorial ceremony virtually again this year and share it via YouTube so that anyone may access the event.

Hospice of the Piedmont staff, volunteers, and board members are proud to invite you to view the spring memorial online. It will be available on May 21 at www.hopva.org/our-services/center-for-grief-and-healing/

We hope you can tune in and enjoy this virtual ceremony.

