

See the Good in Grief

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Good Grief!

Hello. Welcome to the first edition of the “See the Good in Grief” newsletter from the Baptist Centers for Good Grief. We hope this newsletter serves two purposes for you: 1) keeps you informed of the work at the Centers for Good Grief and 2) provides support and education to help you as you grieve. At the Baptist Centers for Good Grief, we follow Dr. Alan Wolfelt’s Companioning Model for caring for the bereaved. This model allows us to walk with people who are grieving and help them process their grief in their own unique way.

Like everyone, the Centers had to shift gears quickly in response to COVID-19. Currently, we are providing individual and group counseling through video and phone sessions. We have also increased our presence on social media through our Good Grief Breaks and Creative Grief Challenges. We restructured Camp Good Grief to Camp Good Grief 2020: At Home Version, which will take place June 1-4. This year marks the 22nd year for Camp Good Grief, but it is the first year for Camp Good Grief to be filmed in advance. Our staff and volunteers jumped in and made it a virtual success! Here are a few pictures of the process to create Camp Good Grief 2020: At Home Version. We are so thankful for our Camp Good Grief staff and volunteers for their commitment to our campers.

We hope to “see” everyone soon!
Angela Hamblen Kelly, LCSW
Executive Director



Grief During a Pandemic

During these unprecedented times of the global pandemic, many are experiencing grief in an unexpected way. We can grieve from all types of losses, whether it be the loss of a person, a job, our health, or our lifestyle. We have all been placed in this unexpected “new normal,” and we are left to find a way to live life in the midst of the change and grief.

As you continue to process your loss in this time of uncertainty, it is important to give yourself permission to grieve. Acknowledge your loss and allow yourself to feel what comes with it. Continue to find ways of coping that work for you. People grieve in different ways, and so the manner in which they cope will be unique as well.



A key aspect to healing in grief is support, so reach out to others. Find new ways of connecting through FaceTime and other video platforms, virtual religious services, and online therapy. Most of all, remain hopeful. Even in the midst of crisis and tragedy, you can find beauty and meaning throughout your grief journey. Allow yourself open eyes to see both loss and significance, beauty and sorrow, pain and joy.

Grief and Your Physical Body

When people are grieving, they expect emotional reactions, such as sadness and anger. They expect changes in thinking and behavior. Often, however, the physical aspects are overlooked. In the early days of your grief journey, the physical effects can manifest in the form of headaches, stomachaches, high blood pressure, trouble sleeping and many other symptoms. Grief can also worsen pre-existing conditions because of the stress that it can cause. It can be easy to neglect self-care during this time, but this can have negative effects on physical health. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that you take good care of yourself and treat yourself with kindness. Ways of being good to yourself include getting good rest, eating well, exercising, staying hydrated, and managing stress through relaxation imagery and meditation.

It is essential that you give yourself grace to let go of some things and focus on yourself. This may be a time to minimize the number of activities in which you are involved. You need to give yourself time to mourn and heal. Grief takes a great deal of energy, so you might notice that you are more tired than before or that you feel overwhelmed by too many responsibilities. This is the time to slow things down and focus on the basics. How is grief affecting your physical health? Tune in to your body and develop a plan to address your physical symptoms.



*"The weight of grief" sculpture by
Celeste Roberge*

Meet The Staff

Blair Hayes, Michelle Redick and Rhonda Parker are the first people you meet when calling the Centers for Good Grief. Blair is at the Kemmons Wilson Family Center for Good Grief in Collierville, Michelle is at Milla's House in Memphis, and Rhonda is at the NEA Center for Good Grief in Jonesboro. Blair, Michelle and Rhonda love talking with our clients and helping everyone feel welcome and safe. We are so thankful for these three women and all they bring to our staff and clients.



Be the Good in Grief

These days have been full of challenges as staff at the Baptist Centers for Good Grief have begun adapting to the new normal created by COVID-19. Many clients have faced complicated grief situations precipitated by the inability to have traditional funerals and remembrance events for their loved ones. Many of our clients have lost loved ones due to the virus.

In spite of the many changes necessitated by the virus, the Centers for Good Grief have not wavered in their work and mission. The need for charitable contributions has never been so great, as we strive to meet the needs of the community in new and creative ways, including providing a virtual Camp Good Grief experience for children in June.



We invite you to support our efforts by making a contribution to the Baptist Centers for Good Grief so that this important work can continue. There is no revenue for our programs and giving has never been so important for the future of the Baptist Centers for Good Grief. We hope you will partner with us. You may make a contribution by going to www.baptistgriefcenters.org or you may call 901 227-7123. Thank you for your commitment to those who are grieving in our community.

Growing the Good in Grief

We have taken very seriously the feedback from our families over the years regarding the resources that they need as they make their individual grief journeys. This feedback has been the basis for program growth since we hosted our first Camp Good Grief in 1999, and then when we moved into our first fixed site grief center location to provide grief support services year round. Today, we find ourselves at an exciting crossroads with a need to expand programming to meet the needs of our clients.



We invite you to join with us in our campaign to build an expanded space, “The Cottage” on the campus of the Kemmons Wilson Family Center for Good Grief at Baptist Collierville. The new site will provide additional counseling rooms and community group space, and it will allow for enhanced programming, including on-site day camps for children, teens and adults, support groups addressing specific needs, and education events for therapist, school counselors, clergy, and the general community. A campaign like this requires the support of our community and we want you to be a part of this exciting plan for future growth. There will be a variety of ways to contribute, including commitments that can be pledged over time, corporate sponsorships, individual contributions and gifts made through estate plans. We will be offering tours and presentations to the community and we hope that you will consider how you can be a part of this exciting effort. The future is before us and we hope that you will choose to grow with us. For further information, you may call Jenny Nevels at 901 227-7141.

THE NEXT STEP

Now it is time for YOU to take action. We encourage you to try these two relaxation activities:

Calming Color Relaxation Visualization:

www.innerhealthstudio.com/calming-color-relaxation.html

Mandala Coloring Pages: Find the App Free in your App store



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