

See the Good in Grief

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Good Grief!

Hello,

2020...what a year it has been for you, for us at the Centers for Good Grief, for the world! There have been so many challenges to our coping and so many changes in the way we do things day to day. The holidays are here in the midst of a year that has been strange and stressful, both in grief and outside of it. It may be that this year you are not feeling very hopeful. Guess what? It's pretty normal for grieving people to feel this way around the holidays. So what do we do about it? Well, that depends on you.

If you are feeling truly hopeless and empty, it is vitally important that you reach out to the Center, a trusted loved one, or a spiritual advisor and talk to them about how you are feeling. The Centers for Good Grief are here for you and want you to get through the season. It may be that you need more support or a different plan. We talk with our clients a lot about the idea of "borrowed hope." If you are in a place where you cannot access hope for the holiday or for your future, borrow your hope from someone who has more. Borrow your hope from the staff at the Centers for Good Grief. Instead of a tree, you might hang pine branches in your home as a symbol that someday light and hope will return to the holiday. In the meantime, we feel that hope for you and lend it out to you at the holidays and whenever you need it.

Sincerely,
Angela Hamblen Kelly, LCSW
Executive Director
Baptist Centers for Good Grief



How To Remember Your Loved Ones At The Holidays

Many grieving people and families have the impulse to avoid their grief. This is a natural impulse because grief is painful. However, at the heart of deep grief is the love that you feel for the person who died. Deliberate remembering, while challenging, honors your love and releases the pain in a healthy way. In addition, it can provide an opportunity for family and friends to mourn together.



The following are some examples of ways to “bring your loved one to the table” at the holidays. You might consider a ritual of remembrance. This can include sharing favorite memories of your loved one during the holiday meal or lighting a candle that burns through the day in their memory. Some families have created a memorial table with pictures and items that spark memories of their loved one. Gift giving can be challenging when grieving – you may not feel that you have the time, energy, or extra money to dedicate to the task. Memorial gifts, donations, or special object gifts can be a way of remembering and also easing one of the more difficult tasks of the season. Special object gifts can include linking objects (things of your loved one’s that help you and others who loved them to feel connected to them) or other symbols of hope. Some families have had quilts made out of the clothing of their loved one. Other families have had ornament parties where each guest brings an ornament that reminds them of their loved one. This year, you may have to consider a “virtual ornament party.” This would give the opportunity to interact, but each member could keep their ornament in their own home. Finally, memory notes can be placed in stockings in lieu of stocking stuffers. Each note has a special memory the writer shared with your loved one who died. Remember, it is important to acknowledge your loved one, even if it feels difficult. Family and friends are feeling the weight of the absence too, and remembrance allows you to rely on one another for support.

Self-Care and the Holidays

Remember how important it is to take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and spiritually during the holiday season. Physical care seems intuitive, but at this time of year, it has to be intentional. Allow time for both rest and nutrition. Some clients have built in a “rest time” during the middle of the day to either nap or just put their feet up and relax. Even if this happens in the middle of a holiday event, it is all right. Sometimes it gives you just what you need to keep going the rest of the day. Similarly, paying close attention to what you are eating and how much water you drink daily can help your overall feeling of well-being. There is a tendency to eat too much heavy holiday food and neglect staying hydrated. Being mindful about eating and drinking in healthy ways is a simple thing that you can do to take care of yourself.



Emotional and spiritual care are just as important as your physical self-care. Be sure you create some “heart time” – time to confide how you are feeling and coping with someone you trust. Be sure this is someone you can be honest with and who will support you. Allow yourself some “soul time” as well. Write in a journal, read, or pray to tend to your spiritual needs. Attend a “virtual” church service if you feel up to it. This can help you feel more a part of your faith community during this difficult time. Above all, maintain hope that the holidays will be good once again, even if not this year.

Be The Good In Grief

2020 has been a hard year to navigate.

As we approach the end of the year, we hope you can look back and see how far you have come. We admire your courage, strength and willingness to share your grief and love story with us. You are an example to others watching you navigate life.

Unfortunately, loss and grief don't take breaks for holidays or new calendars, and we receive calls daily from people in need of our services for the first time.

We are asking you to help us this holiday season and light the way to the Baptist Centers for Good Grief. Financial support ensures that our programs and services are available to anyone in our community for free and that our "virtual" doors remain open.

Can you make a special holiday gift to support the Baptist Centers for Good Grief? Visit <https://baptistgriefcenters.org/give/> to donate online.

As always, you can like, comment, and share our messages on social media. Follow along on Facebook at *Baptist Centers for Good Grief* – *Kemmons Wilson Family Ctr & Milla's House and NEA Baptist Center for Good Grief*.



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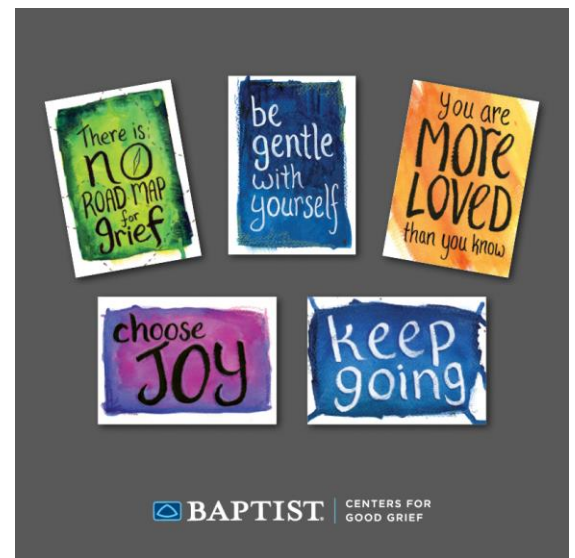
Last year, Milla's House, our midtown Memphis grief center location, made some new friends at Palladio Memphis. They were so touched by the story of how Milla's House came to be, and they wanted to help. They sold greeting card packs and copies of a special book written about Milla's family, *Voyage to the Star Kingdom*. From these sales, they were able to donate over \$3,000 to support our mission. This year, they want to continue spreading the word and hope to raise even more money to fund grief sessions at Milla's House.



With every purchase of a book or card pack, Palladio Memphis will enter you for an opportunity to win a painting by Amy Carlisle. She tells beautiful stories through her art and is connected to the mission of Milla's House as well. In addition to their regular shopping hours, Palladio Memphis will also be open on Sundays leading up to Christmas, which will allow you a few more hours each week to find the perfect gifts for others (or yourself)! And, to give you even more reasons to shop their beautiful store on Central, they are offering you an opportunity to save big by giving back. On top of an opportunity to win Amy's

painting, when you purchase a book or pack of cards during their Shop Small weekend, Palladio Memphis will pay the tax on your purchase!

We are so grateful for friends and community partners like Palladio Memphis. For more information, you can find them on Facebook at *Palladio Home & Garden* and on Instagram @palladiomemphis.



Dates to Remember: Kaleidoscope Series

Educational and supportive virtual grief seminars provided by grief counselors for grieving adults.

When Tragedy Strikes Your Family & Community - January 21 from 4:00-5:00pm

Dates to Remember: Grief Support Groups

Adult Grief Groups

Pregnancy and Infant Loss – Monthly
Virtual Support Group
December 17 from 11:00am-12:00pm



6 Week Series Grief Group – Weekly Virtual Support Group

January 19, 26, February 2, 9, 16 & 23 from 4:00-5:00pm

January 20, 27, February 3, 10, 17 & 24 from 5:30-6:30pm

COVID-19 Grief Support Group - Weekly Virtual Support Group

January 21, 28, February 4, 11, 18 & 25 from 4:00-5:00pm

Registration Required:

TN/MS call 901-861-5656

AR/MO call 870-936-7719



Teen Grief Groups

Monthly Virtual Support Group for 13-17 year olds.

December 17 from 5:30-7:00pm

Children's Grief Groups

8-12 year olds Bi-weekly Virtual Support Group

December 7 from 4:00-5:00pm

Registration Required:

TN/MS call 901-861-5656

AR/MO call 870-936-7719

Take Five!

Here are five resources to help you along your journey.

1. “Wanting Memories” – song by Keali’i Reichel
2. “Remember Them” -Jennifer Stern, LISW

<https://transformativegrief.com/2017/12/31/remember-them/>

3. The Mourner’s Book of Hope – Alan Wolfelt PhD
4. Zenradio.com – free relaxing music for meditation or sleep
5. “The Loss of a Loved One , Your Holiday Traditions Change But Hope Endures” – <https://www.npr.org/2018/12/23/679334018/after-the-loss-of-a-loved-one-your-holiday-traditions-change-but-hope-endures>



The Next Step

This is an activity to complete on your own as a way of expressing your grief and coping.

Create a memory ornament. Secure a plain ornament - either wooden or plastic work the best for this activity. Using a paint pen, craft paints and a brush, a sharpie, or whatever you might have on hand, write your loved one’s name on the ornament and decorate as you would like. Hang the ornament on the tree, in a window, on the mantle, or anywhere around your home. This can be considered a holiday item or an item of remembrance for anytime. It is simply a physical reminder of that which is in your heart. This activity can be a positive act of memorial for adults and children.



CENTERS FOR
GOOD GRIEF

**KEMMONS WILSON FAMILY
CENTER FOR GOOD GRIEF**
1520 W. Poplar Ave.
Collierville, TN 38017

MILLA'S HOUSE
326 Ellsworth
Memphis, TN 38111

**NEA BAPTIST
CENTER FOR GOOD GRIEF**
1717 Executive Square
Jonesboro, AR 72401

baptistgriefcenters.org