

See the Good in Grief

Issue #010 • 02/01/2021



Good Grief!

Hello,

I think many grieving people would rather just skip the month of February. The focus on love and relationships can feel stifling and create feelings of bitterness. One of the keys to coping through the month is a little bit of reframing. According to grief specialist, Dr. Wolfelt, "Love and grief are two sides of the same precious coin. One does not, and cannot, exist without the other." If you did not love the person you lost, you would not grieve. This means that all grieving people have a beautiful love story.

Honor that love story by sharing it with someone this month. That can be your celebration of love.

Sincerely,

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

**"Love and grief are two sides of the same precious coin.
One does not, and cannot, exist without the other."**

~ Alan Wolfelt, PhD



Love Does Not End With Death

We started laying the foundation for this article last month in our January edition, “Grief Is an End but Also a Beginning.” If you missed out on that, here’s the gist of it – you do not stop loving the person you lost just because they died. The love endures. Your task becomes how to situate that love inside your heart, head and body because it’s external target is no longer here physically. This is no small task. Dr. Alan Wolfelt would categorize this process as part of the creation of a new identity. Who am I now that my loved one is gone, and how do I stay connected to them?

As a reminder, identity reformation is a complicated task and not one suited to early bereavement. If you are newly bereaved (whatever that may look like) you will not be able to tackle these questions (at least not in their entirety). Your task will only be day-to-day survival. But suppose you are ready to consider these questions. What are some ways that you can stay connected, feel connected?

Here are some possibilities: tell your story (see article below), look at photos, be creative, access sensory reminders (smell their clothing, go somewhere they liked to go, look at something they wrote to you), or do something in their honor (volunteer, give a donation, plant a tree). Sometimes you may need extra help to find ways to connect – consider talking to one of our counselors about other ideas for maintaining connection.



Telling Your Love Story

As supporters of grieving people, we know that there is incredible power in story telling. Each and every counselor at the Center has experienced this in individual and group sessions. These are the times that we don’t do anything more than bear witness to the love that struggles to find its place after death. Love stories connect us to other people, help us to cultivate compassion and empathy, and sustain us when there are no new

memories to be made. Sharing your story with other people can allow them to try to imagine what it is like to be in your shoes and then take it a step further and support you better.

“Every death deserves a hundred tellings.” This is a quote that we use regularly in our group therapy sessions. You may say, “That says death. The death story is not my love story.” Well, dear griever, the death story is forever linked and connected to the love story because, as per the previous article, your love story is not actually over with the death itself. Telling your love story (including the death piece) can go a long way toward internalizing the love that you feel for the person who died while externalizing some of the more difficult emotions that come with grief. Full healing cannot happen without some sort of externalization. Full healing cannot happen if you never tell your story. Consider sharing your love story with family, friends, church support, and/or your counselor.



Be the Good in Grief

You might wonder why we would encourage you to be the good in grief if you are actively grieving right now. Research continues to show us that helping others makes us feel good, and it is actually good for our bodies as well. A recent *Psychology Today* article even points to a connection between generosity and happiness in the brain.

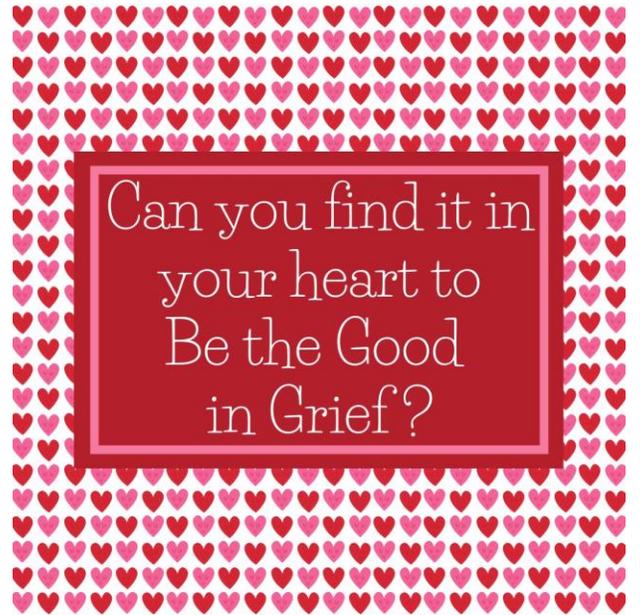
We know that joy and happiness can coexist with loss and sorrow. Even though helping others doesn't exactly fix our broken hearts or take away the pain from losing someone we love, we do have the ability to positively impact our own emotional well-being when we acknowledge others' needs and help where we can. We are proud to help grieving children, teens and adults find a safe community to explore and express thoughts and emotions surrounding the loss of a special person. We are even more proud to help individuals learn to thrive again after loss.

We encourage you to find it in your heart to be the good in grief. Annually, our Baptist Centers for Good Grief provide over 5,000 individual grief sessions. Can you donate \$130 to cover the cost of one of these sessions?

Another easy way to be the good in grief is to share messages with family, friends, coworkers and anyone who may need to hear about the work we do. Follow along on Facebook at *Baptist Centers for Good Grief – Kemmons Wilson Family Ctr & Milla’s House* and *NEA Baptist Center for Good Grief*. Like, comment and share our messages, or even pass along this newsletter!

Visit <https://baptistgriefcenters.org/give/> to donate today!

Grief is real. Grief is BIG. Grief is better shared.



Support Camp Good Grief

We hoped to host this Kendra Gives Back event at our local store in Saddle Creek, but this online event might be even better! For 2 full days, Friday, February 5 and Saturday, February 6, you can purchase ALL THE JEWELRY, and Kendra Scott will donate 20% of your purchase(s) back to support Camp Good Grief!

Be sure to enter the special Camp Good Grief code when you checkout online: GIVEBACK-0VAU. (Zero is in front of the V!) If you happen to be out shopping on February 5-6 and want to shop in-person at the Kendra Scott store in Saddle Creek, you can let the staff know about this special code when you check out to make sure your purchase(s) count to give back to Camp Good Grief, too! Online and in-person shoppers unite!

We would love for you to consider sharing this wonderful opportunity to support Camp Good Grief with your friends and family. This is the perfect

SAVE

JOIN US FOR A VIRTUAL SHOPPING PARTY
BENEFITTING CAMP GOOD GRIEF
KENDRA SCOTT + CAMP GOOD GRIEF

THE

FEBRUARY 5TH-6TH | ALL DAY!
WWW.KENDRASCOTT.COM

DATE

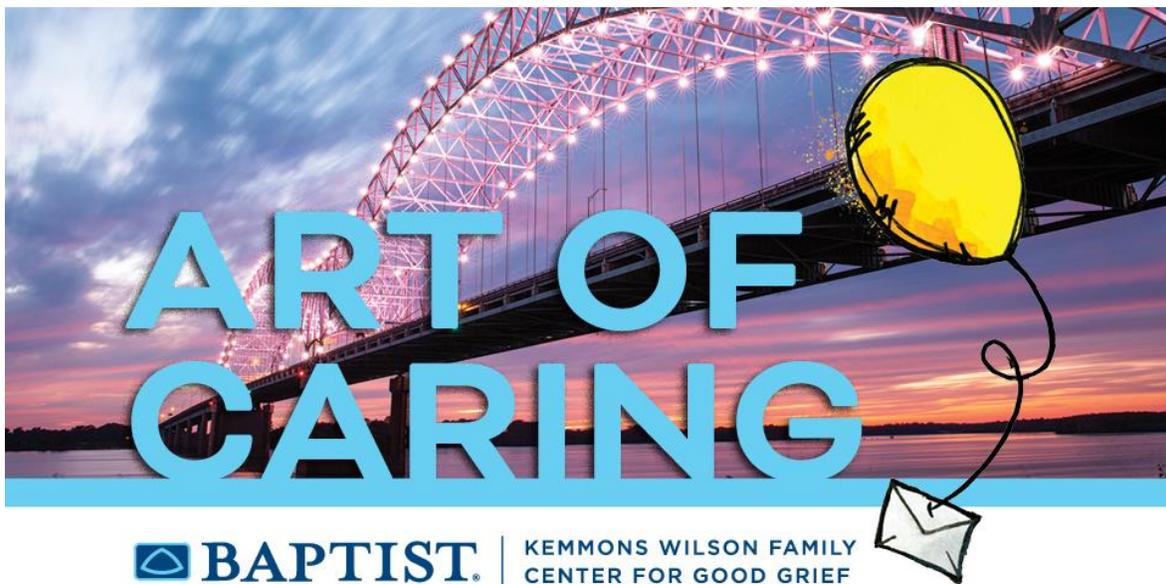
SHOP ONLINE AT WWW.KENDRASCOTT.COM AND
ENTER THE CODE GIVEBACK-0VAU AT CHECKOUT
FOR 20% OF YOUR PURCHASE TO DIRECTLY
BENEFIT CAMP GOOD GRIEF


KENDRA SCOTT

reason to grab something special for yourself, Valentine's gifts for friends and family, birthday happies, and even special gifts for graduation and other upcoming events this year. Make a list of your 2021 gift needs and knock it out on February 5-6!

Save the Date

We hope you will make plans to participate in Art of Caring, our signature fundraiser benefitting the Kemmons Wilson Family Center for Good Grief. Stay tuned for exciting details and announcements about this year's event, which will be held on Friday, April 30th!



Dates to Remember

Kaleidoscope Series - educational and supportive virtual grief seminars provided by grief counselors for grieving adults.

Parenting While Grieving – March 2 from 12:00-1:00pm

Registration Required:

TN/MS call 901-861-5656

AR/MO call 870-936-7719

Grief Support Groups

Adult Grief Groups

6 Week Series Grief Group – weekly virtual group

March 22, 29, April 5, 12, 19 & 26 from 12:00-1:00pm or 5:30-6:30pm

Child Loss Grief Support Group - weekly virtual group

March 23, 30, April 6, 13, 20 & 27 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. “More than Grief: How 7 Fathers Reimagined Life After Loss” - https://www.ted.com/talks/justin_yopp_more_than_grief_how_seven_fathers_reimagined_life_after_loss
2. *Loving from the Outside In, Mourning from the Inside Out* – Dr. Alan Wolfelt
3. “Grief and Valentine’s Day” - <https://whatsyourgrief.com/grief-and-valentines-day-2014/>



4. “Keep Me in Your Heart” – song by Warren Zevon
5. Instagram - *@selfcareisforeveryone* – platform and community gathering space on Instagram where they share self-care tips and reminders, including artwork from a wide range of independent artists and insights from diverse therapists and healers. The focus here is mental health and wellness, rather than grief. We all know that grieving people need help with self-care at times.



The Next Step

Your Visual Love Story

“I’m not a writer,” “I’m not creative,” – these are things we hear often from our grieving adult clients, in particular. This “next step” encourages you to use the inherent creativity that you DO have. The challenge is this: take 15 photos that already exist and use them to tell your visual love story. If you feel the need to create a new photo, do so – the “rules” are flexible. Share your visual story with a trusted support person.



baptistgriefcenters.org

**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