

See the Good in Grief

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Good Grief!

If you ask a grieving person how they are doing, they might say “OK” or “I’m fine.” They might be truly ok, or they might be masking their real feelings. The point here is that we don’t always say how we truly are, and there are lots of reasons for this. It may be that we don’t feel like having a conversation about the difficult waves of grief we are experiencing. It may be that we don’t feel like you are the person to confide in. It may be that it’s just “too complicated” to discuss during a grocery store visit.

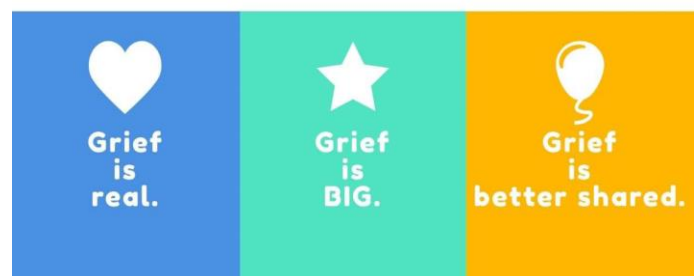
Because, at its heart, grief is complicated. I wish it were a simple thing, an organized thing, a predictable thing – but it’s not. In spite of this complexity, most grieving people naturally experience an overall movement toward healing and reconciliation. However, some people have what is known as “complicated grief,” and we will talk about that more in the next article. Complicated grief necessitates the need for some additional support and treatment. If you are concerned that you might be experiencing some form of complicated grief, please reach out to us. We can help!

As we enter June, we also want to remember the men in our lives whom we’ve lost – our dads, grandfathers and uncles. I think of my own father every day, and I so miss our Father’s Day cookouts. We also remember the fathers this June who are grieving the death of a child. We hope that you feel seen and loved and that you can feel supported by us.

Sincerely,

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

Baptist Centers for Good Grief



Complicated Grief – What Is It?

In order to understand complicated grief, let's be sure we understand the "normal" course of bereavement. Before you get too excited, I'm not about to give you the step-by-step secret guidebook – we've talked about that before, and you know it doesn't exist. No, a "normal" course of bereavement looks different to different people, but the overall pattern of movement is the same. There is an initial period of acute distress, followed by months (sometimes years) of ebbs and flows, with grief affecting all facets of life from emotional to physical. The other vital movement that is (hopefully) happening during this time is the integration or reconciliation of the loss. This is a process of adaptation to a new reality, acceptance of what has happened, and reformation of identity. All of this is the course of normal bereavement (and yes, it can take months to years).

So that brings us to complicated grief. Our friends at Columbia University also call this prolonged grief disorder (PGD). This is grief in which the movement toward reconciliation has been interrupted. It's marked by an inability to accept the reality of what has happened, difficulty engaging in life the way it looks now, and an overall preoccupation with the death and the deceased. It is marked by a sense of hopelessness and emptiness when thinking about the future. We want you to remember that all griever may feel a measure of these things at various points during their grief journey. However, the person struggling with PGD does not move in and out of these feelings and toward other things in their lives. They stay in this space and feel too stuck to make movement.




Now, before you put on your Doctor Google hat and diagnose yourself, consider talking to one of the counselors at the Center. All of the counselors are well-trained to distinguish the normal course of bereavement from one that is complicated or showing signs of being prolonged. Our counselors are able to help people who are experiencing complicated grief process their loss experience in ways that are safe, structured, and supportive so that it can be healthfully integrated into their overall life.

See the Good in Grief

Good Grief, begins as a movie about death. It ends as a movie about hope and one that showcases the resilience of the human spirit. Each year, dozens of families and children who have experienced traumatic loss receive free counseling from the Baptist Centers for Good Grief. Every summer and fall, children attend Camp Good Grief where they have the freedom to not just grieve but to play, to bond, to laugh, and to heal. This is a movie about these families and their extraordinary journeys taken one day at a time.

Now you are able to view the Indie Memphis Film Festival Winner. Click on <https://www.goodgriefdoc.com/> and see the good in grief. We ask that you please share this on your social media platforms, as we do not want this to be the best kept secret.

Thank you to all of our families, campers and volunteers who so graciously shared their stories. And thank you to every client who continues to trust us each and every day.



"Everyone has heard the story of Heather's death, but nobody has heard the story of how we put the pieces back together and went on."

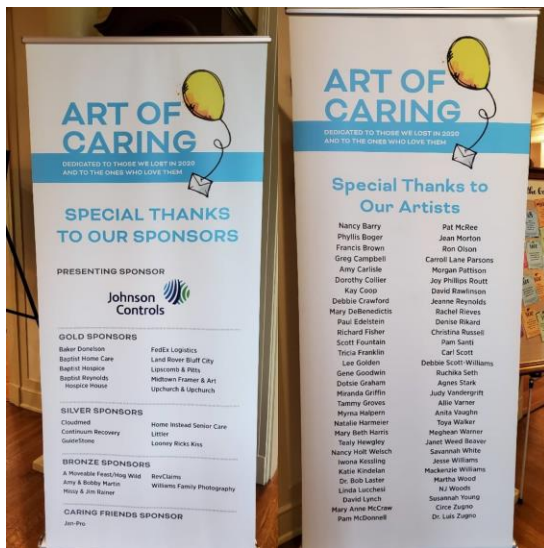
- Sherry Perry,
Baptist Center for Grief Center
Advocate

Be the Good in Grief



We are excited to announce that this year's Art of Caring was our most successful event to date! Even with all the challenges of planning a fundraiser in the midst of a pandemic, we had an amazing week showcasing art from our favorite local artists and raised over \$98,000! An incredible group of sponsors led by Johnson Controls and 61 artists made Art of Caring possible. In-person viewing was held at the Junior League of Memphis' Community Resource Center, and our online auction was a hit across the country. We introduced our first ever Good Grief socks designed by local sock artist, Jeffrey Farmer with Rock Ya Sox. We also enjoyed MEMFOLK's immersive art experience themed around sitting with grief. 100% of the proceeds from Art of Caring directly benefit our

Centers for Good Grief, and we rely on these funds to make our programs and resources available for FREE to anyone in the community. Thank you for making this year's event such a success, and we hope you will join us next year!





Mark your calendars for Thursday, June 17th and Friday, June 18th to shop at Kendra Scott Saddle Creek or online at www.kendrascott.com for a Kendra Gives Back event benefiting Milla's House! We hope you will encourage your family and friends to come out for this special opportunity to shop for a cause; Kendra will donate 20% of all purchases made back to support the special work happening at Milla's House. When you are ready to check out, be sure to tell them you are shopping for Milla's House, and if you are making purchases online, there is a special code you can use to ensure your purchase counts towards our fundraiser. Watch our FB page, <https://www.facebook.com/KemmonsWilsonFamilyCenterForGoodGrief> closer to June 17 for the special code. We know you can find gifts for yourself and others, so make your list and shop with us June 17-18!

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

Dates to Remember

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

Coping With Grief Through Journaling – June 24 from 5:30-6:30pm

Registration Required:

TN/MS call 901-861-5656

AR/MO call 870-936-771

Grief Support Groups

Adult Grief Groups

6 Week Series Grief Group –
weekly virtual group

June 15, 22, 29, July 6, 13, and 20
from 12:00-1:00pm or 5:30-
6:30pm



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. “Differences Between Normal and Complicated Grief” –
Angela Morrow, RN –

<https://www.verywellhealth.com/grief-and-mourning-process-1132545>

2. The Center for Complicated Grief – resources for the
public from Columbia University –

<https://complicatedgrief.columbia.edu/professionals/complicated-grief-professionals/overview/>

3. *How to Go on Living When Someone You Love Dies* – Therese Rando

4. “Complicating Grief – Grieving while Social Distancing” - The Brian Lehrer Show

<https://www.wnyc.org/story/complicating-grief/>

5. “The Biology of Grief” – New York Times –

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/22/well/what-happens-in-the-body-during-grief.html>





The Next Step

Check in with yourself.

Review the signs and symptoms of normal bereavement (there's a lot of them). Here is a list: <https://www.centerforloss.com/grief/im-seeking-help/>).

Take inventory of what you are experiencing and to what extent.

Consider writing down each grief reaction as large or as small as it feels to you at the moment.

Based on what's there or not there, do you need more help? Additional support? Reflect on it and consider reaching out if you are concerned.



BAPTIST

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