

See the Good in Grief

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Good Grief!

Hello,

A heartfelt thanks to you all for taking the time to read our newsletter. It is something simple that you can do for yourself to tend to your needs and your grief. You might take the time that you are reading this month's content to "dose your grief." We've talked some about that before. Most simply put, it's taking some time out of your life to dedicate to your grief, whatever that means. Some days your grief will feel sharp and overwhelming, making you want to cry. Some days your grief is softer and lighter, making you have gratitude for the good. Some days your grief is nothing more than warm memories that sustain you and make you feel content. Whatever it is today, allow yourself to feel it, honor it, and express it.

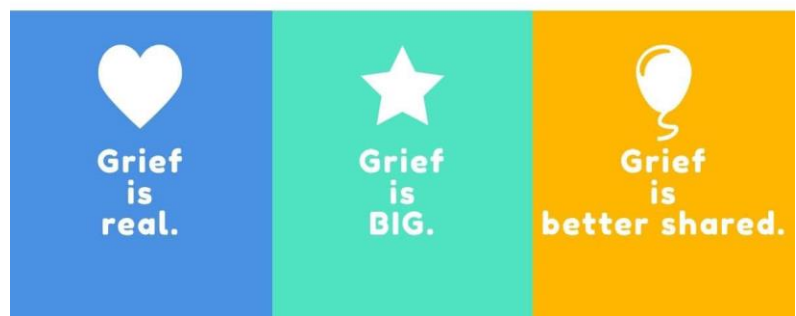
While you are honoring your own grief, consider sharing it with another griever. Your experiences and the wisdom you carry from your own process can help other people. Each time you share your grief, it chips away at the boulder of grief that you carry. Grief is better shared, and this month, we'd like you to do just that.

Every day, we post helpful thoughts, articles, and grief tips on our Facebook page. We welcome you to comment on these posts as a way to connect and share with other grievers in our community. Follow us at *Baptist Centers for Good Grief – Kemmons Wilson Family Ctr & Milla's House and NEA Baptist Center for Good Grief*.

Sincerely,

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

Baptist Centers for Good Grief



Grief and Love

"Some of you say, "Joy is greater than sorrow," and others say, "Nay, sorrow is the greater." But I say unto you, they are inseparable. Together they come, and when one sits alone with you at your board, remember that the other is asleep upon your bed."

from The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran

For griever, that quote rings painfully true. Joy and sorrow, love and grief are conjoined. Dr. Alan Wolfelt reminds us that they are two sides of the same coin. The reason that we so grieve when we lose is because we experience great love. When our relationships begin, we don't often consider that all of our relationships will someday end in death, if not before. And that's all right. That is one of the reasons that we allow ourselves to love as freely as we do. But griever know the full weight and cost of that love. So, what do we do with this awareness?

Some people will tell you to seek closure, but that's what we do when we choose to end a relationship. With death, the relational shift is not really a choice – this is something that has happened to us. Closure isn't an option because we didn't stop loving the person who died. So instead, we look for reconciliation. We look for a way to continue the relationship in a spiritual sense. We find a way to keep on loving our special person from where we are. We cope with their absence, reengage in our lives here, and keep them in our hearts and minds (which are the places they never really left).

At the Baptist Centers for Good Grief, one of our favorite songs is, "Keep Me In Your Heart" by Warren Zevon. Our teen campers and camp volunteers know this song well. Do your heart some good by listening to it. Allow yourself to feel it, honor it, and express it.



Coping Skills Toolbox Series – Self-Love

Grief can wreak havoc on every aspect of a person's life. It affects the griever physically, cognitively, spiritually, behaviorally, and emotionally. So it goes that self-esteem and self-worth can be hurt by grief too. When you feel the intense swings all day most days, it is easy to feel badly about yourself or question if there is really something wrong with you as a person.

Take heart, there's nothing wrong – this is just how the process goes. But it can make you feel bad about you. Practicing self-love can help with this issue.

When you hear the internal critic – the one that tells you that you are doing this wrong, that you should be better by now, that you aren't doing as well as the griever down the street – practice shutting it down. Reassure yourself that you are normal, you are ok, and you are doing the best you can. Essentially, treat yourself as you would a best friend who

is struggling. Take the warmth, compassion, and gentleness that you would direct at that friend, and turn it inward toward yourself. You deserve compassion and empathy. Grief is hard enough without your own self-criticism.



Be the Good in Grief

Hearts are everywhere in February. Pink and red have painted over all the other colors. Sometimes it feels like the whole world is celebrating – a holiday, milestone, birthday, anniversary, or even just making it to another weekend. And we may not feel like celebrating as much (or at all) because we are missing our special person. Oftentimes, it feels like the world wants us to move on, to get on with being happy again, to go back to normal. But our normal has changed.

Love doesn't go away because a person isn't physically with us. In fact, we grieve because we love. Exploring and expressing that love, as well as the grief that comes with it, will enable us to learn to thrive again.

So, with hearts everywhere, we think this is a good opportunity to think of your loved one(s) each time you see a heart. Remember that love, be grateful for that love, and even celebrate that love!



Be the good in grief today: scan the QR code, visit <https://baptistgriefcenters.org/give/>, or call 901-227-7123 to make a gift!



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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Dates to Remember: Grief Support Groups

Adult Grief Groups

Homicide Grief Support Group— monthly virtual support group

February 15 from 5:00 - 6:30pm

March 15 from 5:00 - 6:30pm

Grief Support Group for Grieving Parents— weekly virtual support group series

March 24, 31, April 7, 14, 21 & 28

4:00 - 5:30pm

Registration Required:

TN/MS call 901-861-5656

AR/MO call 870-936-7719

Dates to Remember: **Kaleidoscope Series**

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



March : Learning to Relax Your Body While Grieving – March 24 from 5:30-7:00pm

Relaxation is one of the many tools that can be used to help regulate the stress associated with grief. Learning to calm our mind and body is not always as easy as some would like to believe. In this seminar, we will examine the benefits of intentional relaxation from a mind-body perspective and discuss how relaxation can be a coping skill for grief. We will look at the ways in which relaxation can help you to create balance in your emotional experience so that you do not feel so overwhelmed and controlled by the intensity of painful thoughts and feelings. You will also have the opportunity to learn and practice a variety of relaxation techniques that you can use in your daily life to experience peace and calmness.

2022 Virtual Group Preview – more info to come

April: Teen Monthly Grief Support Groups

May: Monthly support groups begin for Suicide Loss; Pregnancy & Infant Loss; Alcohol & Drug Related Loss; Walking Grief Group & Grief Bible Study

June: Camp Good Grief & Putting Emotions Into Motion for children

Walking with Your Grief will begin in May. Grief manifests itself in many ways and we are often left wondering how to cope with it all. This easy-paced walking group offers participants an opportunity to express their grief through movement alongside others while connecting to the present moment through mindfulness walking. This walking grief group six-session series is not an exercise group, but rather an alternative to more traditional grief support groups for people who would benefit from expressing their grief in different ways.

2022 Virtual Seminar Preview – more info to come

April: Coping with Anger in Grief – April 19 from 4-5:30pm

May: The Importance of Self-Care in Grief – May 10 from 4-5:30pm

June: Grief & Your Body – June 23 from 12-1:30pm



Take Five!

Here are five resources to help you along your journey.

1. *Loving from the Outside In, Mourning from the Inside Out*– Alan Wolfelt, Ph.D.
2. “Keep Me in Your Heart” – song by Warren Zevon
3. “Grief is Love” – *What’s Your Grief* -
<https://whatsyourgrief.com/grief-is-love/>
4. “How to Love Yourself More” – Tchiki Davis, PhD –
Psychology Today
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/click-here-happiness/202111/how-love-yourself-more>
5. “22 Tips for 2022 – How to Be Kind to Yourself and Squash Your Critical Inner Voice” – *NPR*
<https://www.npr.org/2022/01/02/1066578162/stop-being-self-critical-tips>





The Next Step

An Exercise in Self-Love

Grief can destroy people's sense of self-worth.

It may rob you of your confidence because it makes everything so new, complicated, and messy.

Things that used to be easy don't feel easy anymore.

But take to heart: this is the grief. It isn't you.

Take 10-15 minutes and write down all of the things that you love and appreciate about yourself. If you are having trouble with this activity, talk to the people who love you best and get some of their input as well. You are a person of value, with gifts and talents. Don't let your grief convince you otherwise.



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