

# See the Good in Grief

Issue #026 • 06/01/2022



Good Grief!

Hello,

Do you ever wish that grief took summers off? Like children, we could look forward to early June, knowing that the intensity would decrease, the struggle would lessen, and we could sleep later. Unfortunately, grief does not do “summer vacation” – it just comes with us wherever we go, season to season, day to day.

While you don’t truly get to take a hiatus from your grief, there are some things that might feel a little different (better even) about the summer months. The days are longer, which might help you better balance the darkness of grief. The warm weather provides opportunities for outdoor activities that can nourish your body, mind, and spirit. Remember to do some practical things to help you cope – drink lots of water to stay hydrated, spend time in nature appreciating the sounds and smells, and breathe in deeply after a warm rain. Allow the season to soften the edges of your grief. We are here for you during every season.

Don’t forget about our podcast - “Grief is...Real. Big. Better shared.” This is the podcast everyone needs to hear, but nobody wants to hear. It will be released monthly along with a YouTube segment called “Coping Skills Toolbox.” We say that this is the podcast no one wants to hear because grief is not exactly a fun topic. Grief is hard, and people tend to avoid talking about it. But this is also the podcast everyone needs to hear because grief is one of the most universal experiences there is. Everyone is touched by loss in some way at some point in their life. Those who are grieving can benefit from this opportunity to better understand their grief and to hear that they aren’t alone. Others can use this podcast to learn how they can give support to the people in their lives who are grieving.

Sincerely,

Angela Hamblen Kelly, LCSW & Lauren Strini, LPC/MHSP  
Executive Director                      Clinical Director



## What Is Grief?

“Grieving is a whole body experience – like wearing tight shoes.” – Pat Schwiebert, RN

If you are new to our newsletter, this month’s edition will provide you with a basic framework for understanding grief. If you have been with us for a while, the articles can reinforce what you already know and give you some language to use when discussing grief with others.

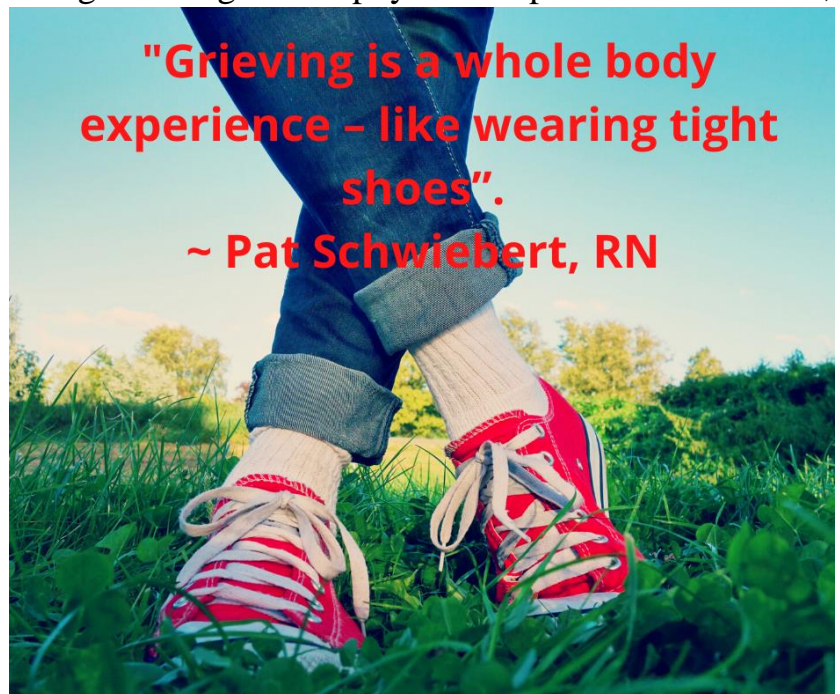
So let’s dive into some of the basics. At its simplest, grief is all of the thoughts and feelings that run around inside our bodies when someone we love dies. However, we know it’s far from simple, so let’s dig a little deeper.

What we know is that people grieve in five different ways that cover most of the facets of a person’s life. Grievers are affected emotionally, spiritually, physically, behaviorally, and psychologically. The type of reaction that most people are familiar with is the emotional reaction – sadness, anger, anxiety, guilt, loneliness. These are probably the things that the world most expects to see from the griever. It’s important to remember that while emotional response is part of grief, it is not the whole.

People respond to grief on a spiritual level. The relationship between the griever and the person who died is not gone. It’s shifted to something abstract, ethereal. This brings up questions of meaning, belief, and sometimes faith.

Don’t forget that, like tight shoes, sometimes grief brings about physical responses – headaches, poor appetite, sleep problems, real physical pain. Behaviorally, sometimes the griever finds themselves doing things “out of the ordinary,” such as screaming at people who frustrate them or crying in the grocery store.

Psychologically, the griever might be preoccupied, not able to process information in the same way, not able to retain the unimportant (or sometimes even the important). Be aware that these are just a few examples of the ways that grief affects people. There are many more



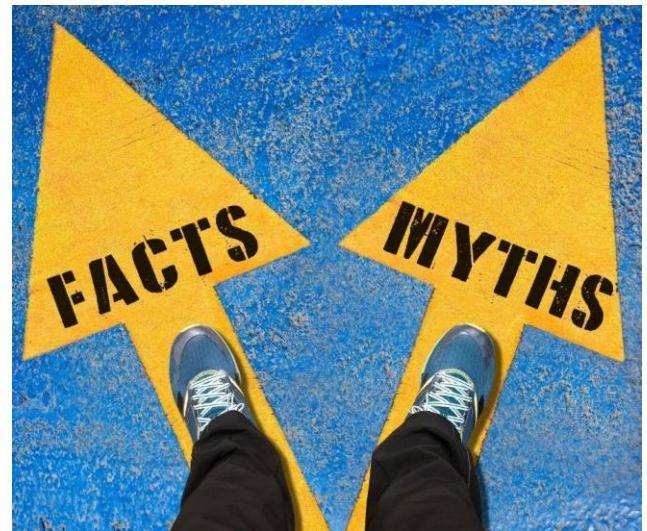
reactions in each category/facet of grief.

Part of what makes this so challenging is that there are few parts of life that are untouched by intense grief. In understanding how grief affects the griever, it is possible to figure out the tools needed to help with coping.

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## Coping Skills Toolbox Series – Common Myths & Facts

This particular article could probably be pages long. It is a reflection of what society does not understand (and does not really want to understand) about the experience of loss. These myths have emerged out of our own cultural discomfort with the subject matter, as if putting some arbitrary constraints on grief makes it easier for society to stomach. Let's deconstruct a few of these right here and now.



### **Myth or fact? “Time heals all wounds.” – MYTH**

Time itself does not fix this particular problem. If the griever just sits and waits for things to get better, they will not (in fact, this can cause more complications and extend the process). Instead healing starts to happen as grief is acknowledged and externalized. That externalization is what we call mourning.

### **Myth or fact? “There is no specific timeline for grief and no specific end point.” – FACT**

If only there was a nice little road map to help people find their way and know what to experience and when. Grievers could tell the people who say, “you should be over your grief by now,” that they don't know what they are talking about. Instead, people muddle their way through, learning how to cope as they go forward. Grief never truly ends, but the intensity of acute grief fades to the background while memory and love remain.



## **Myth or fact? “Tears and other expressions of emotion are signs of weakness or loss of control.” – MYTH**

Grief is intense and needs a voice. Tears and emotional expression are ways of giving your grief a voice. Those of us that work at the Center know how brave that expression can be. Showing your true feelings can help others who are grieving the same loss understand that this is normal and appropriate. It can help others who are not grieving understand that this is what the process looks like.

These are just a few of the common facts and myths – see the Take 5 section for more information.

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### **Be the Good in Grief**

Inhale.

Exhale.

Here we are already in June. The days are getting longer and warmer. Flowers are blooming and plants are needing water. The days pass by and the Earth continues to spin. Grief has a way of keeping us busy. Distracted. Forgetful. Overwhelmed by the variety of emotions that run through us in an hour, let alone an entire day. Just keeping our feet on the ground and our head above water seems the most we can do sometimes.

And that is okay.

So let this be another reminder to inhale. And, exhale.

We are glad you found us, and we are grateful to continue walking this grief journey beside you. It helps when someone can remind you to do important things like taking a deep breath, and I would imagine you are that someone to so many others in your world.

We know just how important our programs and services are for people experiencing grief, and we have always felt called to deliver these resources to anyone, free of charge. If you find yourself breathing a little easier today because of our Centers for Good Grief, we would love for you to consider sharing a gift with us to continue offering these services to others.



Can you make a \$25 gift today to support the important work we do each day at our Baptist Centers for Good Grief? 100% of your dollars are used to support the programming, counseling, and grief resources we share with anyone in our community who has lost a loved one.

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*.

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



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## **Dates to Remember: Grief Support Groups**

### **Adult Grief Groups**

#### **Monthly Groups**

**Homicide Grief Support Group**– monthly virtual support group - June 21 & July 19 from 5:00 – 6:30pm

**Alcohol or Drug Related Death Support Group**– monthly virtual support group June 14 & July 12 from 5:00 – 6:30pm

**Pregnancy & Infant Loss Support Group**– monthly virtual support group June 28 & July 26 from 5:00 – 6:30pm

**Suicide Loss Support Group**– monthly virtual support group June 16 & July 21 from 4:00 – 5:30pm

## **Series Groups**

**6 week Spouse Loss Group**- weekly group for grieving spouses – August 4, 11, 17, 25, September 1 & 8 from 4:00-5:30pm

### **Screening and registration required:**

TN/MS call 901-861-5656

AR/MO call 870-936-7719

## **Teen Groups**

**Teen Support Group**– monthly in-person support group in Collierville

June 14 & July 12 from 5:30-7:00pm

## **Children's Groups**

**Putting Emotions Into Motion** - in-person support group in Collierville for grieving children

June 22, July 13, 20 & 27 from 4:00-5:30pm

### **Screening and 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.

### **KALEIDOSCOPE SERIES**

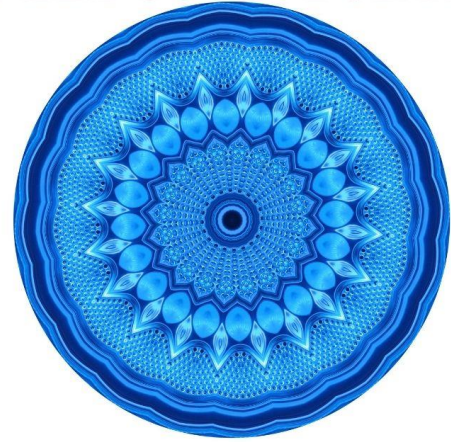
**June: Parenting While Grieving – June 23 from 12:00-1:30pm**

**August: Coping with Guilt in Grief – August 11 from 4:00-5:30pm**

### **Registration required:**

TN/MS call 901-861-5656

AR/MO call 870-936-7719



### **GRIEF SUPPORT SEMINARS**

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## **Take Five!**

Here are five resources to help you along your journey:

1. *Grief Sole Work* – Baptist Centers for Good Grief – call our offices for a copy
2. “Helping Dispel 5 Common Misconceptions About Grief” - Dr. Alan Wolfelt - <https://www.centerforloss.com/2016/12/helping-dispel-5-common-misconceptions-grief/>
3. “64 Myths About Grief That Just Need to STOP” - <https://whatsyourgrief.com/64-myths-about-grief-that-just-need-to-stop/>
4. “Surviving Father’s Day Grief: When Sadness Meets Storytelling” - <https://whatsyourgrief.com/fathers-day-grief-storytelling/>
5. *Coping with Grief During Special Occasions* - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aj3\\_MhzIEGw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aj3_MhzIEGw)







## The Next Step

### A 3-Minute Write

When you engage in our “next steps,” you are actively practicing expression toward healing. Choose your “favorite” grief myth. Which one have you heard the most? Which one gives you the most visceral reaction? Which one did you subscribe to prior to your loss? Take 3 minutes and reflect on dispelling the myth from your own experience.



CENTERS FOR  
GOOD GRIEF

[baptistgriefcenters.org](http://baptistgriefcenters.org)

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