

# See the Good in Grief

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Good Grief!

Hello,

Part of the purpose of our newsletter is to get the word out, not just about activities and services at the Baptist Centers for Good Grief, but about grief itself. In our culture and society, “grief” can be a taboo word. People associate it with funeral homes and hushed tones, as if they can catch grief by talking about it. We’ve got to put an end to this way of thinking.

We can say with almost complete certainty that every person will be bereaved at some point in time. This experience is a universal one. That being said, what if we shared our grief? What if we acknowledged that people die in all different stages and phases of life and all different ways? What if we talked about what it looks and feels like to be grieving and what we need and don’t need? It certainly couldn’t make things any worse. In fact, we know that it helps. Exposing the pain helps to heal the pain, just like exposing a physical wound to air helps it mend.

Tune in to our podcast, *Grief is... Real. Big. Better shared.* There you will hear brave people sharing their grief in order to work toward healing and to support one another. You can find our podcast wherever you get your podcasts. We also have a YouTube channel, *Baptist Centers for Good Grief*. Here you can find a variety of “Coping Skills Toolbox” segments, which offer practical tips for coping with grief. Don’t forget to follow us on Facebook for the latest news, updates, and education about grief, mourning, and coping. Please like and share our posts so that others can find support in their grief.

Sincerely,

Angela Hamblen Kelly, LCSW & Lauren Strini, LPC/MHSP

Executive Director

Clinical Director



## Grief - Better Shared.

Historically, death and grief were a part of everyday life. If there was a death in the family, the entire community knew and came to support that family. The deceased may have been laid out in the home so that people could come to pay their respects. Children experienced this as normative behavior. In addition, the family wore black so that everyone in the community knew that they were grieving and needed to be treated gently. Over time, funeral practices changed, communities narrowed, and extended families stopped living together. With this move toward the individual rather than the collective, our society lost the ability to honor people's grief openly.

We aren't sharing this with you because we think that there should be a return to laying out bodies in the home. We recognize and accept that some of these practices have changed, but we also challenge the idea that the needs of the mourner are fundamentally different. What we can learn from history is that sharing grief openly helps to promote greater community understanding as well as individual healing.

"Grief shared is grief reduced."

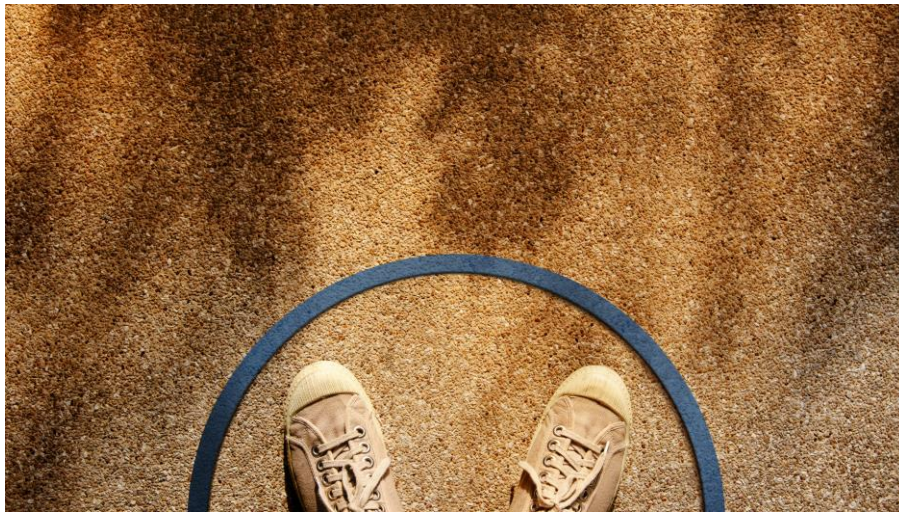
You may have heard some variation of that quote. At the Baptist Centers for Good Grief, we utilize it regularly in group and individual sessions to encourage expression. We are of the mindset that when people talk about their loved one and their grief, they start to heal a little bit. When they open themselves to the stories of others, they heal a little more. Grief needs a voice – it needs to get out from inside the mourner. In addition, sharing openly helps the greater community to learn that grief is real, big and better shared.



## Coping Skills Toolbox Series – Setting Boundaries

Boundary setting is a great skill for all people to have, not just those who are grieving. In the presence of grief, it can become an absolute necessity for day-to-day functioning. Let's look at what it means for a grieving person to set physical, emotional, and time boundaries.

A grieving person may need to set some physical boundaries. It is a natural inclination for those trying to comfort the griever to get close. People may want to hug you or hold your hand in order to convey that you are loved. However, sometimes this has the propensity to make the griever uncomfortable – maybe these are unwelcome hugs, or you are experiencing physical pain and the touch hurts rather than comforts. Set a physical boundary by telling those trying to comfort you that you appreciate the gesture but are uncomfortable with that type of contact right now. Your body is your own and it is all right to express that openly.



Setting emotional boundaries can help to protect the griever's heart from further pain. If every time you speak with a certain family member or friend you end up feeling anxious, angry, hurt, sad, belittled, or overall bruised, it may be time to set an emotional boundary. You might tell the person that you cannot talk as often or that there are certain things that you cannot talk about with them because it makes things too difficult for you. You can even set that boundary without telling them that is exactly what you are doing – just talk less often or share less openly when you do.

Time boundaries simply refer to how the grieving person spends their days. We know that, naturally, grief and mourning take up a lot of a person's time, especially in the early days of bereavement. As time moves forward, though, the grieving person can better learn to manage this and be more intentional about it. For example, the griever can set aside 20 minutes to work on their grief daily – that is a time boundary. This type of boundary can also be used with well-meaning others. For example, the griever may say they can have lunch with a friend but can only stay for 90 minutes. See "The Next Step" for a boundary-setting activity.



## Be the Good in Grief

The sun has been shining intensely on us this summer.

When we get hot, it can feel like our emotions rise to the surface, and we may lose the ability to restrain them. We can go from normal to NOT okay in a matter of minutes.

We think it is a good idea to feel your feelings – all of them. We also think it is a really good idea to work on developing or fine-tuning coping skills to help you stay cool under the pressure of grief. We know that grief complicates pretty much every aspect of life, and so it makes the need for coping skills that much greater. The Baptist Centers for Good Grief have a myriad of resources for people grieving the loss of a special person, and we hope you have benefited from the specially trained counselors who encourage us to share all our feelings in a safe environment.

We appreciate all the work our staff does to provide necessary resources and opportunities for our community in so many ways. Would you consider making a donation of \$50 to help us continue to serve others and help them develop and fine-tune their coping skills? We want to teach others about how to stay cool, even when it doesn't feel so cool.



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**

#### **Monthly Groups**

**Homicide Grief Support Group**– monthly virtual support group - July 19 & August 16 from 5:00 – 6:30pm

**Alcohol or Drug Related Death Support Group**– monthly virtual support group July 12 & August 9 from 5:00 – 6:30pm

**Pregnancy & Infant Loss Support Group**– monthly virtual support group July 26 & August 23 from 5:00 – 6:30pm

**Suicide Loss Support Group**– monthly virtual support group July 21 & August 18 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



## **Dates to Remember: Kaleidoscope Series**

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

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

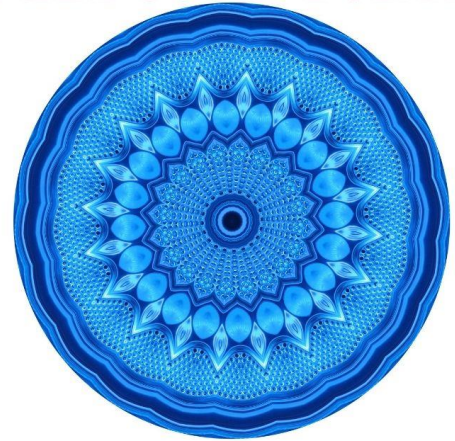
**September: Journaling & Grief – September 29 from 5:30-7:00pm**

### **Registration required:**

TN/MS call 901-861-5656

AR/MO call 870-936-7719

## **KALEIDOSCOPE SERIES**



## **GRIEF SUPPORT SEMINARS**

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### **Take Five!**

Here are five resources to help you along your journey:

1. “*Grief is... Real. Big. Better shared.*” – found wherever you get your podcasts
2. Consider finding a support group. The Baptist Centers for Good Grief offer many that are detailed in this very newsletter. You can also check out GriefShare at <http://griefshare.org>
3. “The Gift of Shared Grief” – *The New York Times* – <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/04/opinion/death-grief-condolences.html>
4. “How to Set Healthy Boundaries: 10 Examples + PDF Worksheets” - <https://positivepsychology.com/great-self-care-setting-healthy-boundaries/>
5. “Teaching Kids About Boundaries” - <https://childmind.org/article/teaching-kids-boundaries-empathy/>



## The Next Step

### The Next Step – Just Say No

This “Next Step” activity requires a little more commitment from you than usual. Normally the activities are quick (though not necessarily easy) things for you to do to address your grief. This activity is a little more longitudinal. You have to wait for the next time that someone is pushing you to do something you don’t want to do. It doesn’t even really matter if it is something that you “should” do or “should want to do” – for whatever reason, you don’t want to do it. This activity necessitates that you say “no.” You can choose to share your reason for saying no (or make one up), but you don’t have to. This is you setting a boundary and listening to your needs.



CENTERS FOR  
GOOD GRIEF

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

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