

# See the Good in Grief

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Good Grief!

Hello,

We have been very excited to write to you this month because there has been a lot going on at the Baptist Centers for Good Grief! We broke ground on The Cottage in Collierville, Buddy is training to be our snuggliest helper, renovations are underway at Milla's House to provide two new counseling rooms and an outdoor space called Elle's Garden, and we've hired additional counselors at all three locations.

In the midst of all of this growth and excitement, we have continued to grieve with our community, particularly in response to recent events in Memphis. Those of us at the Baptist Centers for Good Grief are not strangers to the grief of homicide, and we are trained to help others navigate the steep slopes and hairpin turns of traumatic grief. We consider it a privilege to be able to do this. However, don't think for a minute that we are unaffected or unchanged by these experiences. We are tired of it too and look to our leaders and change-makers to help. We will continue to do everything in our power to try to help families heal, but hear us when we say that we cannot do this alone.

With hearts full of love and longing for peace,

Angela Hamblen Kelly, LCSW  
Administrator

& Lauren Strini, LPC/MHSP  
Clinical Director



# You are invited!

We invite you to share in the building of The Cottage by joining us to sign the beams that will support the building.

We will fill the beams with the names of those we remember and our hopes for continued healing.

October 10 from 3-6pm

October 14 from 9-11am & 1-3pm

1520 West Poplar Ave, Collierville, TN, 38017

Questions? Call us at 901-861-5656 or email [angela.kelly@bmhcc.org](mailto:angela.kelly@bmhcc.org)



## “Grief Brain”: The Fog of Grief

“At other times it feels like being mildly drunk, or concussed. There is a sort of invisible blanket between the world and me. I find it hard to take in what anyone says. Or perhaps, hard to want to take it in. It is so uninteresting. Yet I want the others to be about me. I dread the moments when the house is empty. If only they would talk to one another and not to me.” C.S. Lewis from *A Grief Observed*.

C.S. Lewis wrote *A Grief Observed* during his bereavement following the death of his wife. He zeros in on a lot of the signs and symptoms that we talk about with our clients every day.

The above quote addresses what we also call the fog of grief or “grief brain.” We’ve talked at length before about the ways that grief affects us physically and emotionally. Grief brain refers to common cognitive grief reactions. It includes feeling confused, finding yourself unable to retain thoughts, being forgetful, and just feeling generally discombobulated. Maybe you’ve heard of pregnancy brain? Same idea, just with grief.

Many of the people whom we have worked with over the years describe these experiences with a horrified “this isn’t me - I don’t know what’s going on?” They miss important appointments or forget why they went to the store. They explode things in the microwave or turn the car around when they forget why they are driving somewhere. It sounds annoying and uncomfortable, but there are ways to cope with it. We can reframe how we think because the fog of grief is normal and common. When your grief does not occupy the majority of your time, effort, and thought, your grief brain will ease. In the meantime, see the Coping Skills Toolbox for other strategies to help you with the fog of grief.



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## Coping Skills Toolbox Series – All the Small Things

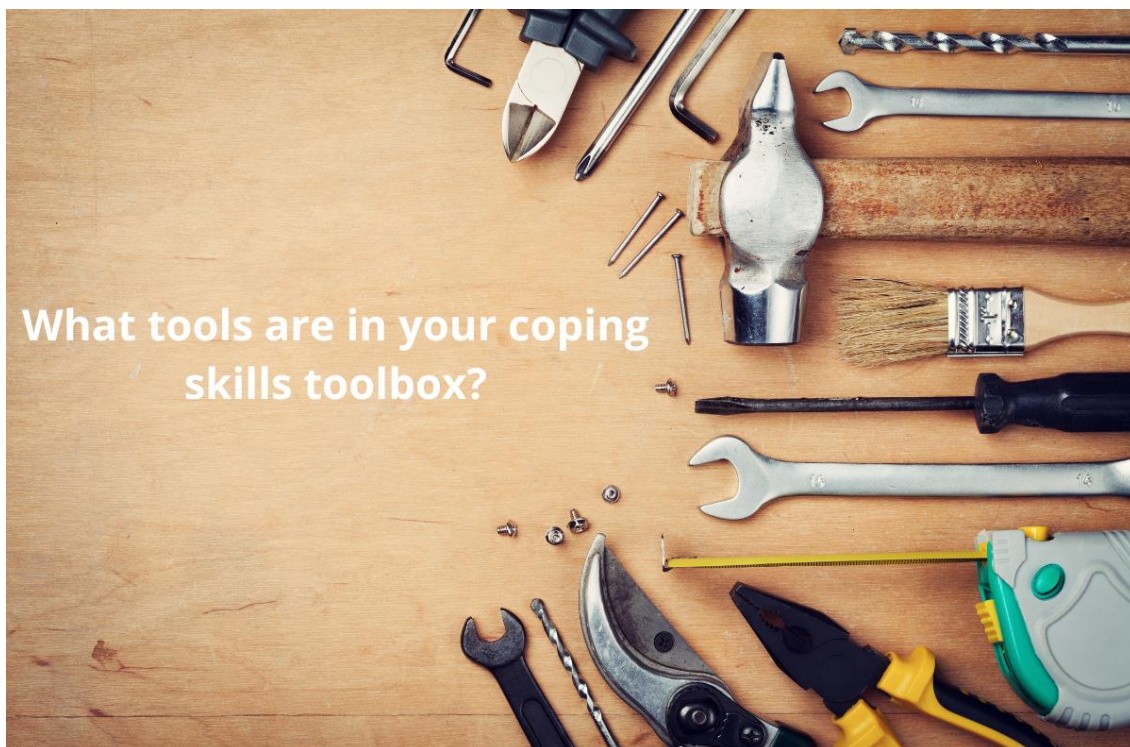
The fog of grief calls for lots of small-scale coping skills along with some patience. Here are a few examples of skills that help:


Adjust your expectations. Grieving people (while still wonderful people) are not really at their best. Do not expect yourself to be able to do and accomplish all of the same things that you did prior to your bereavement. Instead, adjust your expectations. Make small daily (or weekly or monthly) goals for yourself and be grateful to reach them. For example, “I’m going to do one load of laundry today – I can fold it tomorrow.”

Facilitate your own organization. Make lists, write yourself notes, put alarms on your phone. You will still forget things, and that is all right. This helps in the short-term. Once your grief brain eases, you won’t have to write yourself a note to eat dinner.

Talk it out. Share what’s inside with someone you trust. Sometimes this will clear out the space a little and allow you to better organize your thoughts.

Relax. It’s all right if you are not all right. Acknowledge when you need a break, a time out. If you can’t keep things straight, check out for a minute. Breathe deeply and count to a hundred. Then try again. If that still doesn’t help, take a longer break and try to complete the task at another time. Practice self-compassion.





## Be the Good in Grief

A few years ago, Milla's House, our midtown Memphis grief center, made some new friends at Palladio Memphis. They were so touched by the story of how Milla's House came to be, and they wanted to help. This year, they want to continue spreading the word and raising money to fund grief sessions at Milla's House. During the month of October and through their Christmas Open House on November 4-5, Palladio will be featuring Milla's House and selling Baptist Centers for Good Grief merchandise. Items included are Vineyard Vines ties, mugs, packs of greeting cards designed by local artist Richard Fudge, and copies of *Voyage to the Star Kingdom*. Everything will be sold at \$25, and all proceeds will go to Milla's House. For each item you purchase, your name will be entered to win an original painting by local artist Amy Carlisle. She tells beautiful stories through her art and is connected to the mission of Milla's House as well. We are so grateful for friends and community partners like Palladio Memphis. For more information, you can find them on Facebook at Palladio Home & Garden and on Instagram @palladiomemphis.

We hope you might want to pay it forward to help someone else on their grief journey. Be the good in grief today: scan the QR code, visit <https://baptistgriefcenters.org/give/>, or call 901-227-7123 to make a gift!

**During the month of October and through their Christmas Open House on November 4-5, Palladio will be featuring Milla's House and selling Baptist Centers for Good Grief merchandise.**

**For each item you purchase, your name will be entered to win an original painting by local artist Amy Carlisle.**

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

##### Screening and registration required:

TN/MS call 901-861-5656

AR/MO call 870-936-7719

- **Alcohol or Drug Related Death Support Group**– monthly virtual support group  
October 11 & November 8 from 5:00 – 6:30pm
- **Homicide Grief Support Group**– monthly virtual support group - October 18 &  
November 15 from 5:00 – 6:30pm
- **Suicide Loss Support Group**– monthly  
virtual support group October 20 &  
November 17 from 4:00 – 5:30pm

#### Series Groups

**Grief Support Group for Grieving Parents**–  
weekly virtual support group series

November 7, 14, 21, 28, December 5 & 12 from  
5:30-7:00pm

**6-week Grief Group**- weekly virtual group for grieving adults – November 7, 14, 21, 28,  
December 5 & 12 from 10:30-12:00pm

##### 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.

### *Coping with Grief During The Holidays* – choose one

Grief is difficult on an average, “normal” day. Special days tend to magnify and intensify those already difficult feelings. This workshop will help you prepare for the holidays while also remembering to care for your grief.

November 1 – 12:00-1:30pm or 3:30-5:00pm  
November 2 – 9:00-10:30am or 4:00-5:30pm  
November 3 – 6:00-7:30pm  
November 4 – 9:00-10:30am or 12:00-1:30pm

**KALEIDOSCOPE SERIES**



**GRIEF SUPPORT SEMINARS**

### **Registration required:**

TN/MS call 901-861-5656  
AR/MO call 870-936-7719

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## Take Five!

Here are five resources to help you along your journey:

1. *A Grief Observed* – C.S. Lewis
2. *It's OK That You're Not OK: Meeting Grief and Loss in a Culture That Doesn't Understand*– Megan Devine
3. *After a Murder: A Workbook for Grieving Kids* – The Dougy Center
4. “Healing Your Brain After Loss: How Grief Rewires the Brain” – <https://www.americanbrainfoundation.org/how-tragedy-affects-the-brain/>
5. “‘Grief Brain’ – What’s Going On?” – <https://www.hospicewr.org/Western-Reserve-CareLink/February-2018/Grief-Brain-What-s-Going-On>



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## Podcast & YouTube Channel

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.



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## The Next Step

### The Next Step – Reflection

Make a list of 10 small things that you would like to accomplish in the next month (and I do mean small). Keep your list somewhere you will not misplace it – like taped to your bathroom mirror. Do your best to meet these small goals over the course of the month. IF YOU DON'T – let yourself off the hook and try again another time. Be gentle with yourself. You are grieving.



**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

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