

# See the Good in Grief

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Good Grief!

Hello,

Happy end of autumn everyone! Some people (including many grieving people) do not enjoy the change of season. Seasons mark time, just like birthdays and anniversary days. The marking of time reminds us of our losses, both new and old. But the shift in season also reminds us that in nature, too, all things must change. The trees drop their leaves to start over again in spring. We start over as well.

Imagine having to start over as a child – difficult right? November is Children’s Grief Awareness Month, and so we turn our attention to the oftentimes “forgotten” griever. They play and laugh and have fun, so everyone assumes they are unaffected. Children also struggle with change and the starting over that comes with a death in their lives. When a person they love dies, they grieve, and their grief deserves a voice too. We are honored to serve the children of the Mid-South and help them give a voice to their grief.

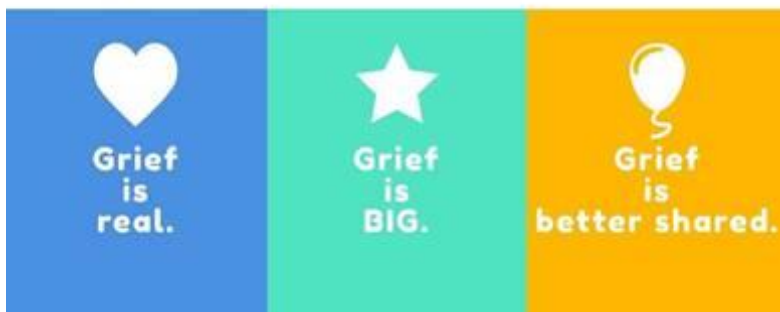
In addition to Children’s Grief Awareness Month, November begins the (sometimes dreaded for grieving people) holiday season. Consider listening to our podcast, *Grief is...Real. Big. Better Shared.* There you will hear a discussion regarding grieving during the holidays and concrete tips for how to cope during this time.

Peace,

Angela Hamblen Kelly, LCSW  
Administrator

& Lauren Strini, LPC/MHSP  
Clinical Director

**Baptist Centers for Good Grief**



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## Why Are the Holidays So Hard for Grievers?

As you are probably acutely aware, grief is difficult on an average, “normal” day. Special days tend to magnify and intensify those already difficult feelings – the weight of sadness feels heavier, the emptiness more acute, the anger more intense, and the joy and spirit of gratitude harder to access. Family is the central focus of the holiday season, and there is a key member of your family or friend group missing. Your loss is immediately highlighted. Past traditions cannot always carry on in the same way, and this is a loss in and of itself. Sometimes families disagree on how to get through the season without the beloved person, and that conflict can create tension that feels hard to manage.

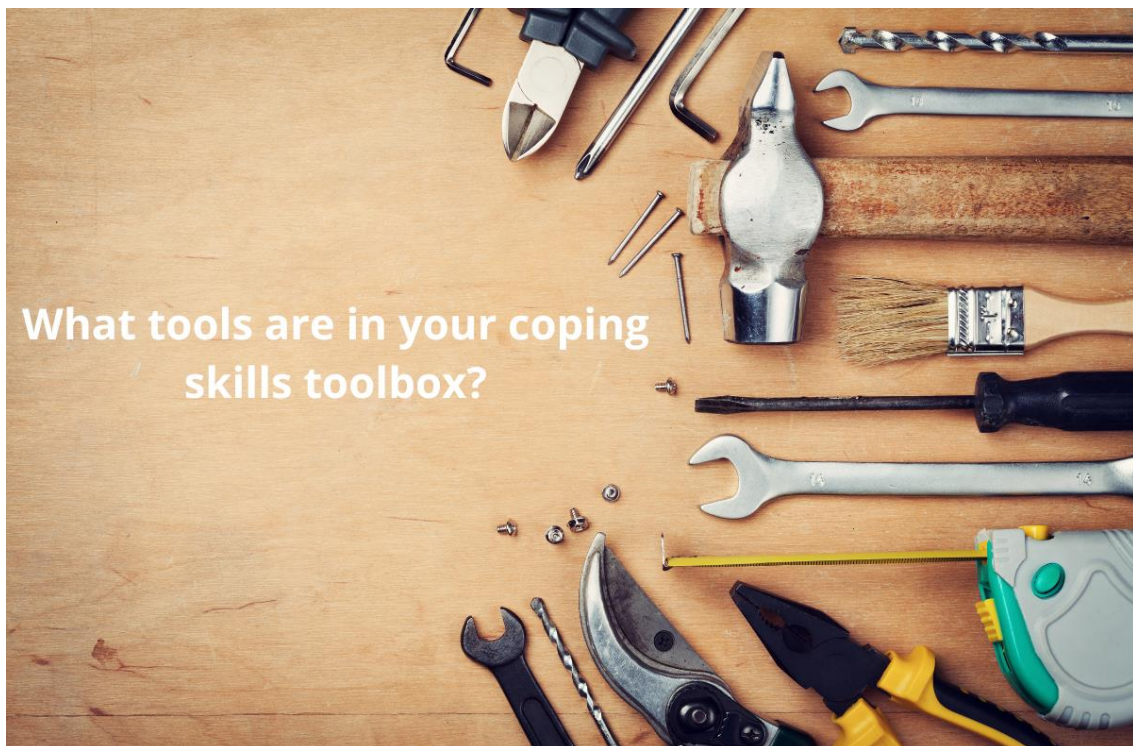
Have you noticed that the holiday season has become longer and more intense over the last several years? It creates added stress and requires so much energy. Often grieving people do not have energy to spare – they are doing their best just to get through each moment of each day. The season starts immediately after Halloween and feels like it goes on and on. The buildup lasts for many weeks, and the air of festivity can be elusive for the griever. For non-grieving people, this feels stressful; for the grieving person, it can feel unmanageable. Take heart and hold on to hope. The Baptist Centers for Good Grief is here for you and your family as you face the challenges of the holiday season.



## Coping Skills Toolbox Series –Tips for Managing the Holiday Season

There is no magical recipe for coping with grief. In general, it takes a lot of time, patience, and all the coping skills you can muster. We here at the Center spend a lot of time talking about coping skills in general and about coping with the holidays specifically. Here are some practical tips that we've come up with in order to cope. It is by no means exhaustive, but we know it has helped a lot of our clients over the years.

1. Expect to feel your grief in spite of the “Happy Holidays.”
2. Feel whatever you feel – it’s ok to feel sad, good or both.
3. Make a plan for yourself, but also be flexible.
4. Accept your limits.
5. Take care of your physical, spiritual and emotional needs.
6. Manage your expectations and those others have of you – do the best that you can, no judgements.
7. Welcome your loved one to the holiday – engage in deliberate remembering.
8. Extend a helping hand to others in need.
9. Never lose hope – your holiday may look and feel different, but (even if not this year) it can be good again.





## Be the Good in Grief

November is National Children's Grief Awareness Month. If you have heard the story about how the Centers for Good Grief came to be, you know it all started with a dream and a small grant from the Baptist Memorial Health Care Foundation to help children who had lost special people in their lives. Camp Good Grief began in 1999, and our staff was so responsible with the initial grant, they made it last multiple years. Because of the overwhelming number of applicants, the success of Camp Good Grief programming, and continued vast community need, we added a camp for teens and, eventually, a camp for adults. We like to say we added "walls" around our camp programming to begin providing year-round services in 2005 when we opened our first Center for Good Grief. Through the years since that first space opened, we have continued to expand.

We are only able to continue serving our Mid-South community because of generous financial donations. We are so grateful for our donors who understand how valuable it is to provide safe environments for children, teens and adults to explore and express their feelings after the death of a loved one and to learn to thrive in a world without that special person.

We strive to be good stewards of every dollar we receive, and we hope you see the true measure of our thanksgiving in how we use our resources and blessings the best way possible. It costs \$130 to fund a counseling session, \$500 to provide a set of art therapy supplies, and \$1,500 to send a child to Camp Good Grief. You can always make your gift in honor of someone walking beside you in this season of life, and if you are able, include a name and address so we can notify them of your thanksgiving for their blessings!



**Be the  
GOOD  
in grief**

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!



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## It's Groundbreaking News



We have broken ground for The Cottage, our new addition to the Kemmons Wilson Family Center for Good Grief.

The Cottage adds 4,100 square feet of space to our campus, which is adjacent to Baptist Memorial Hospital in Collierville, Tennessee. It will include a large multipurpose room, two breakout meeting rooms, two private counseling rooms and an outdoor reflective space. Nestled against our original facility in a welcoming pastoral setting, The Cottage significantly increases our ability to serve more children and families. Construction is expected to be completed by early 2023.

We are already making plans to host a grand opening celebration to commemorate this wonderful testimony to your ongoing support of the Kemmons Wilson Family Center for Good Grief. We will be sending out details in the coming months, and we'll look forward to seeing you there.

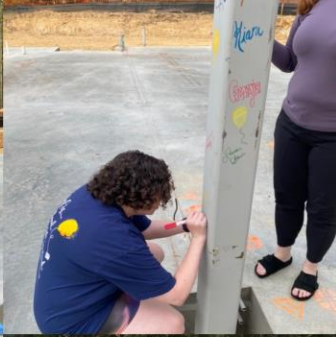
The Kemmons Wilson Family Center for Good Grief provides a safe environment for hundreds of grieving children, teens and adults to explore and express their feelings related to the death of a loved one and to learn to thrive in a world without that special person. Your generous support has made it possible for us to serve many more Mid-South families. Additional gifts of support for The Cottage can be made by visiting [www.baptistgriefcenters.org](http://www.baptistgriefcenters.org).

Buddy, our future facility dog is growing too! Buddy is a Bernedoodle who is 6 months old. He'll have a special job here at the Baptist Centers for Good Grief (once he's passed his therapy dog exams): he's going to be a greeter at The Cottage and a supporter of our grieving teens and children at various group events. Buddy lives with Angela, and he comes to work too! Why is his name Buddy? At Camp Good Grief, our trained volunteers are called Buddies. Buddies are

very important, and they have provided great care and fun to our grieving children for over 24 years. We've learned everyone needs a good buddy sometimes. Buddy met some clients and volunteers when we signed the beams for The Cottage, and he looks forward to meeting all of you very soon!

Here are some pictures for you to see the growth of The Cottage and Buddy. We also added some pictures from our recent beam signing.





## **Duck Classic - NEA Center for Good Grief – December 13 & 14**

Duck Classic is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year!

This event raises funds for the NEA Baptist Charitable Foundation and the NEA Baptist Center for Good Grief. Hunters from around the Mid-South attend the event, which includes dinner, raffle drawings, and a silent and live auction. Teams gather the next morning to take part in a duck hunting competition. Only one team walks away with the grand prize.

Tickets to the event are \$50 each and can be purchased in advance or at the door. You can access the silent auction online after Thanksgiving day by visiting <https://one.bidpal.net/duckclassic22>. For more information, please follow the Duck Classic Facebook page.



## **NEA Center for Good Grief Celebrates Five Years**

The NEA Baptist Center for Good Grief in Jonesboro, Arkansas celebrated its fifth anniversary in October! Since opening the doors to the center in 2017, the NEA Baptist Center for Good Grief has served nearly a thousand grieving individuals. The staff of the center marked the occasion with an open house for members of the community.







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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  
November 8 & December 13 from 5:00 – 6:30pm



- **Homicide Grief Support Group**– monthly virtual support group - November 15 & December 20 from 5:00 – 6:30pm
- **Suicide Loss Support Group**– monthly virtual support group November 17 & December 15 from 4:00 – 5:30pm

**Screening and 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. “Understanding Childhood Grief” - National Alliance for Children’s Grief — <https://nacg.org/understanding-childhood-grief/#1658164568725-10a27256-45c6>
2. “Talking to Children When Scary Things Happen” - The National Child Traumatic Stress Network — <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/talking-to-children-when-scary-things-happen> (they have lots of other resources for grieving children, teens and caregivers as well)
3. “For That I Am Thankful” – poem by Darcie Sims - <https://www.compassionatefriends.org/blog/for-that-i-am-thankful/>
4. “How to Support Bereaved Children Over the Holidays: A Tip Sheet for Parents and Caregivers” - <https://www.newyorklife.com/foundation/taking-action/stories-to-inspire/tip-sheet-for-parents-and-caregivers>
5. “Holiday Journal Prompts” - [https://www.theandrewproject.online/\\_files/ugd/55a8c3\\_925c11e8146f42d78e3e60433921f17c.pdf?index=true](https://www.theandrewproject.online/_files/ugd/55a8c3_925c11e8146f42d78e3e60433921f17c.pdf?index=true)



## 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.

Episode 10 will be available November 1.

Episode 11 Part 1 will be available November 4.

Episode 11 Part 2 will be available November 28.



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.



## The Next Step

### The Next Step – Reflection

As an act of memorialization this holiday season, write down a favorite memory of your loved one on a slip of paper. Put it somewhere meaningful for you – in a special bowl or jar or something that belonged to your loved one. Have others in your family or friend group do the same, and then share those memories on or around the holiday. Laugh, cry – all feelings are allowed.



CENTERS FOR  
GOOD GRIEF

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

**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