Grief and the Holidays

For those who have experienced the death of a loved one, the holidays can be a difficult time of year. Try to stay open to the possibility that there still can be peace, and perhaps even some joy, amidst your grief. It is important to avoid high expectations of yourself or others. Be gentle with yourself. Everyone copes with loss differently, which is why the Pathways Center offers such a wide variety of services. You may want to attend one or more of our Coping with the Holidays programs or try the suggestions offered below.

Plan ahead and prioritize. Whether it is greeting cards, holiday baking, decorating, or having a big family dinner, ask yourself the following questions before making any decisions or trying to go on as you always have: “Is this a task that someone else would be willing to do?” or “Would it still be a holiday without it?” Plan one small goal for each day and include those you care about in the planning.

Live in the moment. Anticipating a particular day can often be much worse than the actual day itself. Take one moment at a time and try not to look too far ahead. The season feels different because you are different—seek ways to help you get through each day. Take time to rest, refresh and renew.

Create rituals. Rituals affirm the connection between your life and others. They honor the memory and help you remember. Though your loved one is not present physically, that person remains in your heart and mind. Look for ways to remember your loved one. Buy an ornament or gift in their memory, or light a candle each night and incorporate the memory of your loved one in new ways this holiday season.

Moving forward. The year 2016 was life-changing for you. As you look ahead to 2017, consider what you plan to leave behind and what you want to carry forward. Decide what direction you want to move in as you look ahead to the coming year.

~Patti Anewalt, Director
Helping Grieving Children Cope With the Holidays

When you and your family are struggling to adjust to the emptiness left by a loved one who has died, remember that children are grieving too. It may be hard for you to make the holiday season a joyous one, but unlike you, most children still want to enjoy the holidays despite the loss. Be aware that in a season that focuses on wishes coming true, there can be magical thinking that includes the hope that their loved one will return.

Just as it would be at any other time during the year, it is important to let children see sadness and tears during the holidays. This sets an example for children and confirms that it is alright to express their feelings. When children see adults feel sad yet still function appropriately, they are more likely to share their own feelings as well as their fears.

Especially during the holiday season, grieving children may want more hugs. They need reassurance that you accept all they are feeling. These feelings of acceptance will strengthen the bond between you and is the greatest gift you have to offer. If you have a child who is grieving this holiday season, consider calling the Pathways Center to talk with a counselor.

Pathways Center counselors recognize that grief is experienced by the entire family – children, teens and adults. Amid serious illness and death, children and teens often are overlooked, yet their needs are significant. The Coping Kids & Teens program provides individual or family sessions for children impacted by the serious illness or death of a loved one. Peer support groups are also offered throughout the school year for children and teens who are grieving a significant death. There is no charge for the Coping Kids & Teen program due to the generous support of the community.

Loss Support Series:

**Pathways Center** counselors recognize that grief is experienced by the entire family – children, teens and adults. Amid serious illness and death, children and teens often are overlooked, yet their needs are significant. The Coping Kids & Teens program provides individual or family sessions for children impacted by the serious illness or death of a loved one. Peer support groups are also offered throughout the school year for children and teens who are grieving a significant death. There is no charge for the Coping Kids & Teen program due to the generous support of the community.

**Coping Kids & Teens**

**Loss Support Series:**

**Thursdays, January 12 – March 2, 6:00–7:30 p.m.**

*(Registration deadline: December 30)*

During this series, families gather for a light supper before each group session. Children and teens meet in support groups in the Bob & Joy Allen Wing of the Pathways Center for Grief & Loss. They participate in activities to help them cope with their grief, while adults learn how to manage the challenges of parenting grieving teens and children. Families meet with a Coping Kids & Teens counselor to complete an assessment prior to attending to determine if the group will be helpful for your grieving child(ren). Call the Pathways Center for more information or to set up an appointment.
**Ask the Grief Counselor**

**Q:** I look forward to receiving the Pathways newsletter and have been interested in going to some of your programs but I can’t bring myself to follow through and attend, even though I would like to. Since my wife died more than a year ago, I’m also not sure if I am still allowed to come to anything you offer. Do you have any suggestions?

**A:** Your problem is not unique. In fact, almost everyone who attends one of our programs or groups for the first time does so with a degree of uncertainty and anxiety. For some who have gotten through the first year after the death, they begin to grasp more of the reality of how much their life has changed. People know they “need something” but are uncertain where to turn. Call the Pathways Center to ask about the particular program you might be interested in. As you talk with one of our counselors, you will feel more comfortable taking the next step. Some people are afraid they will break down and cry in the group, but soon realize the support group is a safe place to express emotions they can’t share anywhere else. You may also invite a friend or family member to attend one of our drop-in groups with you for support. If you think you may not feel comfortable talking in a group, you are welcome to attend to just listen to others’ stories. People continually comment on how they wish they had come to us sooner. After attending the first time, they usually say they are glad they did because they realize that, although everyone handles grief differently, they are less alone than they thought.

**New Online Grief Education and Support is Here For You!**

Many grieving people find evenings and weekends to be particularly difficult times to cope after a loss. The Pathways Center now offers online grief education 24/7. Explore our Composing Life out of Loss videos.

Simply go to [www.pathwaysthroughgrief.org](http://www.pathwaysthroughgrief.org), click on “Grief Support” and select “Online Grief Education and Support.” You will find a series of 10 videos that help you better understand your grief, 24/7. Just in time. What you need. When you need it. There for you.

Want to meet with a Pathways counselor, but your schedule or distance is a challenge?

The Pathways Center now offers Virtual Meetings. Use your computer, tablet/iPad, or smartphone/iPhone to connect with a counselor from the convenience of your home, office, or most anywhere. All you need is an internet connection and a webcam (usually built into your device). Your privacy is ensured with our HIPAA compliant technology. Pre-scheduled options are Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m. EST.

With 24/7 access via your computer or mobile device you can also have your own private account for in-depth learning and to connect with others who are grieving. To arrange for a private account or schedule a Virtual meeting with our counselor, contact us at (717) 391-2413 or [Pathways@hospicecommunity.org](mailto:Pathways@hospicecommunity.org).
Calendar of Events

Many bereaved find it helpful to hear others’ experiences with a loss after death. It is reassuring to realize what you are going through is shared by others. Our support groups focus on grief education and support. Call us at (717) 391-2413 or (800) 924-7610 if you have questions or would like more information. If you do not see a grief support option that appeals to you, please call the Pathways Center to let us know how we can best help you.

Are you seeking bereavement support outside of South Central Pennsylvania? Visit www.nhpco.org, email pathways@hospicecommunity.org or call (800) 924-7610. The Pathways Center also offers online support and virtual counseling for those who cannot physically attend our groups. See page 3 for more information.

Drop-In Support Groups — No registration required

Groups are led by Masters level counselors and volunteers who have experienced the same type of loss. They focus on grief education and support as well as time to share experiences and questions. You are welcome to bring a supportive person with you.

Mount Joy
Pathways Center for Grief & Loss, 4075 Old Harrisburg Pike, Mount Joy

Coping with the Loss of a Spouse or Companion
DEC. 27, Tuesday afternoon, 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Coping with the Loss of a Parent or Sibling
NOV. 1, Tuesday evening, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Coping with the Loss of a Child (of any age)
NOV. 22, Tuesday evening, 6:30–8:00 p.m.
DEC. 27, Tuesday evening, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

York
Luther Memorial Church, 1907 Hollywood Drive, York

Coping with the Loss of a Spouse or Companion
NOV. 1, Tuesday afternoon, 2:00–3:30 p.m.
OR evening, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Coping with the Loss of a Parent or Sibling
NOV. 8, Tuesday evening, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

“The pain passes but the beauty remains.”
~Author Unknown

Support Group Series — Registration required

Ephrata & Mount Joy
Newly Bereaved Program (a 3–week series)

EPHRATA: NOV. 8, 15 & 22,
Tuesday evenings, 6:30–8:00 p.m.
(Registration deadline: October 31)
WellSpan Ephrata Community Hospital
169 Martin Avenue, Ephrata

MOUNT JOY: NOV. 1, 8 & 15,
Tuesday evenings, 6:30–8:00 p.m.
—and—

MOUNT JOY: DEC. 8, 15 & 22,
Thursday afternoons, 2:00–3:30 p.m.
(Registration prior to start date required)
Pathways Center for Grief & Loss,
4075 Old Harrisburg Pike, Mount Joy

If your loss was recent, this series provides an overview of common grief responses and will help you to begin to identify coping tools. Space is limited; registration is required. Call to discuss with a bereavement counselor.

Call us at (717) 391-2413 or (800) 924-7610 with questions or if you would like more information.
# Calendar of Events

## Coping with the Holidays

After a loss, many find it helpful to meet with others and talk about how to get through the holidays. Weekly opportunities to connect with others are available throughout the holiday season. Attend one group or attend them all. Call the Pathways Center to register.

### Ephrata
WellSpan Ephrata Community Hospital, 
169 Martin Avenue, Ephrata

- **DEC. 6**, Tuesday evening, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

### Lancaster
Hospice & Community Care, 
685 Good Drive, Lancaster

- **NOV. 15**, Tuesday evening, 7:00–8:30 p.m.  
  (Topic: Where to Begin)
- **NOV. 22**, Tuesday evening, 7:00–8:30 p.m.  
  (Topic: Planning Ahead)
- **NOV. 29**, Tuesday evening, 7:00–8:30 p.m.  
  (Topic: Living for Today)
- **DEC. 13**, Tuesday evening, 7:00–8:30 p.m.  
  (Topic: Ways to Remember)
- **DEC. 20**, Tuesday evening, 7:00–8:30 p.m.  
  (Topic: What are the Gifts?)

### Mount Joy
Pathways Center for Grief & Loss, 
4075 Old Harrisburg Pike, Mount Joy

- **NOV. 22**, Tuesday afternoon, 2:00–3:30 p.m.

### York
Luther Memorial Church, 
1907 Hollywood Drive, York

- **NOV. 29**, Tuesday evening, 6:30–8:00 p.m.  
  (Topic: Where to Begin)
- **DEC. 6**, Tuesday afternoon, 2:00–3:30 p.m.  
  (Topic: Coping with the Holidays)
- **DEC. 6**, Tuesday evening, 6:30–8:30 p.m.  
  (Topic: My Holiday Plan)
- **DEC. 13**, Tuesday evening, 6:30–8:00 p.m.  
  (Topic: Ways to Remember & Noticing Gifts)

## Spanish Support

### Grief Support in Spanish

The Pathways Center for Grief & Loss’s bilingual Bereavement Counselor, Deborah Gonzalez, MSW, is available to any bereaved individuals who speak Spanish. Call **(717) 391-2440** to leave a confidential message in Spanish and she will return your call.

### Consejería de Duelo en Español

El Centro De Pathways para Duelo y Pérdidas cuenta con una Consejera de Duelo bilingüe, Deborah Gonzalez, MSW, quien está disponible para reunirse con personas que están sufriendo la pérdida de un ser querido. Puede llamar al **(717) 391-2440** y dejar un mensaje confidencial en Español y se le devolverá la llamada.

Call us at (717) 391-2413 or (800) 924-7610 with questions or if you would like more information.
Calendar of Events

Events

Children’s Grief Awareness Day

THURSDAY, NOV. 17

Children’s Grief Awareness Day provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the painful impact the death of a loved one has on the life of a child. Show your support by wearing blue. Learn more by visiting www.childrensgriefawarenessday.org.

International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day

SATURDAY, NOV. 19, 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 NOON
(Registration deadline: Nov. 18)

Pathways Center for Grief & Loss

A DVD produced by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention will be shown. Opportunities to hear from others about their experiences and several discussion groups will be offered. For more information, visit www.survivorday.org or contact Elaine Ostrum at the Pathways Center for Grief & Loss. Sponsored by Lancaster County Suicide Prevention Coalition.

Light Up a Life Tree Lighting Ceremony

SUNDAY, DEC. 4, 5:30 P.M.
(Snow date: Sunday, Dec. 11)

Country Club of York,
1400 Country Club Rd, York

— and —

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 7, 7:00 P.M.
Music begins at 6:30 p.m.

The Essa Flory Center,
685 Good Drive, Lancaster

For a gift of $20, we will place a light on an evergreen tree in memory of a loved one during this annual ceremony. To order, call (717) 295-3900 or visit www.hospiceconnect.org/lights. By purchasing a light, you are also providing the gift of care for patients and families facing end of life.

Presenting Sponsor:

That Their Light May Always Shine:
A Worldwide Candle-Lighting Event

SUNDAY, DEC. 11, 7:00 P.M.

The Compassionate Friends, an international support group for bereaved parents and siblings, invites you to light a candle to honor all children who have died. As candles burn down in one time zone, they will be lit in the next. For more information, call (877) 969-0010 or visit www.compassionatefriends.org.

Call us at (717) 391-2413 or (800) 924-7610 with questions or if you would like more information.
Many grieving people tell us how much they enjoy opportunities to socialize with others who “get it.” Do you feel as though your social environment has changed? Does it seem as though the only people who truly understand what you are going through are others who are also bereaved? The Pathways Center offers a variety of social options to choose from. Each participant pays for their own meal. These gatherings are facilitated by trained bereavement volunteers who have also experienced loss in the past.

**Ladies Lunch — Lancaster**

- **NOV. 16, Wednesday,** 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
- **DEC. 21, Wednesday,** 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Mick’s All American Pub, 
2201 Strickler Road, Mount Joy
No registration needed.

**Ladies Lunch — York**

- **NOV. 8, Tuesday,** 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
- **DEC. 13, Tuesday,** 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Hoss’s Steak & Sea House, 
3604 E. Market, Street, York
No registration needed.

**Men’s Breakfast**

- **NOV. 22, Tuesday,** 8:00–9:30 a.m.
- **DEC. 27, Tuesday,** 8:00–9:30 a.m.

The Centerville Diner, 
100 S. Centerville Road, Lancaster
No registration needed.

**First Steps — Lancaster and York**

(for men and women)

- **DEC. 10, Saturday,** 4:00 p.m.

Dinner at John Wright Restaurant, 
234 N. Front Street, Wrightsville
RSVP to Karen Bobetsky at (717) 682-1199 or klbobetsy@gmail.com at least five days prior to the event.

“Grieving is a process of moving from losing what you have to having what you lost.”

~Edna St. Vincent Millay

**Individual Consultations**

Sometimes it can be helpful to meet individually with a bereavement counselor. Call the Pathways Center for more information or to set up an appointment in Mount Joy, Lancaster or York.

Call us at (717) 391-2413 or (800) 924-7610 with questions or if you would like more information.
You receive the Pathways newsletter free of charge for 16 months. If you would like to continue to receive this newsletter, call the Pathways Center.

The Pathways Center for Grief & Loss is a program of Hospice & Community Care. The Pathways Center offers the area’s most comprehensive programs and services for individuals in the community affected by the serious illness or death of someone significant in their lives.

Pathways Center for Grief & Loss
4075 Old Harrisburg Pike
Mount Joy, PA 17552
(717) 391-2413 or (800) 924-7610
www.pathwaysthroughgrief.org