Family & Friends: 
How Grief Changes Relationships

Grief changes everything. One reason the loss of a loved one can be so hard to bear is that everyone and everything around you is different. Those you may have depended on for support in the past simply may not understand or be comfortable with your sadness and vulnerability. Grief can intensify stress in a relationship. All the changes that have happened with the global pandemic have further complicated matters and added even more changes. Everything may seem hard — even the simplest tasks can seem overwhelming. Believe it or not, you are making progress in this journey you are on, but you are probably the last person to realize this. Everyone needs to handle grief in their own way and this takes time to discern. Listening and extra patience often are most helpful.

It is important to honestly reflect on your needs. Pay attention to your feelings and listen—without judgment—to your heart. Spend time with people who can recognize, hear and support you. Ask them for what you need. Specific requests work best such as “I’d like to talk this out with you,” or “Just sit here quietly with me for a while.” You may ask them to visit more often, check in by phone or run an errand. Remember that many people care about you and want to help, but they may be unsure how to help you. Perhaps you feel your grief is too much for some of your friends or family members. This may be the time to explore a new source of support, such as a support group or an individual visit (virtually) with one of our bereavement counselors. Most of the services at the Pathways Center are free of charge and available to anyone, not just those whose loved ones received Hospice care. The Pathways Center grief counselors are here for you.

~Patti Anewalt, Director
Supporting Grieving Children

Grief is the internal response you experience when you lose someone you care about. As soon as a person is diagnosed with an illness or has died, you begin the grieving process. This happens just as often with children as it does with adults yet, with children, it’s often overlooked or misunderstood. The best way to help children during this time of change is to encourage them to express their feelings and ask questions. Children need reassurance that someone will be there to support them. They need to feel included in what is happening in the family. When children are not included in this process, they feel isolated and are more anxious. They may fill in the unanswered questions with their own misconceptions, which will also increase their level of fear and anxiety. Ideas that might be helpful include the following:

- **Maintain a routine**, as this promotes security and safety.
- Be aware that children **grieve intermittently**.
- **Expressive arts** such as drawing, writing, painting, or working with clay can be very helpful, especially with children who are very young or not comfortable with talking.
- **Gentle** discipline is as important as hugs and kisses.
- When children ask a question, be sure to understand what they are asking. Ask **“What do you think?”** which encourages children to clearly state their thoughts.
- Use children’s **natural curiosity** to help them deal realistically with death. The physical facts are of great interest to them so try not to perceive them as morbid or unusual.

Open, honest communication not only works to strengthen your relationship with your children, but it also enhances their ability to cope with difficult experiences in the future. Remember, grief expressed is grief diminished.

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. There is no charge for the Coping Kids & Teens program due to the generous support of the community. Services have been offered in the Bob & Joy Allen Coping Kids & Teens Wing of the Pathways Center for Grief & Loss. However, due to the current Coronavirus pandemic, individual and group services will be held via Zoom.

**Individual Grief Support**

The Coping Kids & Teens program provides individual or family sessions for children and teens impacted by the serious illness or death of a loved one. Call the Pathways Center for more information or to set up an appointment via Zoom.

**Family Support Series by Zoom**

**Thursdays, October 15–November 19 • 6:00–7:30 p.m.**

**Registration deadline: September 30**

Children and teens meet in peer support groups and participate in activities to help them cope with a death, while adults learn how to manage the challenges of supporting grieving teens and children. Families meet with a counselor to complete an assessment prior to attending to determine if the group will be helpful for your child(ren). Call the Pathways Center for more information or to set up an appointment via Zoom.

Call us at (717) 391-2413 or (800) 924-7610 with questions or if you would like more information.
**ASK THE GRIEF COUNSELOR**

**Q** Everything happened so quickly when my husband died. I feel guilty about a lot of things lately. I keep thinking about what I wish I had said and done differently. When people tell me I shouldn’t feel guilty, I wonder what’s wrong with me?

**A** Having regrets is common after someone dies. Many people struggle with thoughts such as “If only …” or “I should have …” This can lead to feelings of guilt that might, at times, be extreme. It is not wrong or bad to feel guilty. In reality, it may actually be speaking to the depth of the love you have for the person who died. Take a closer look at your thoughts about what you wish you had said and done differently. Guilty feelings will not change or disappear on their own. Over time, they can feel like a heavy burden. What can you do with these “if only” thoughts about the past? Consider the following suggestions to keep your feelings in perspective:

- Am I judging myself in the same way I would someone else? Would I tell someone else they should feel guilty?
- Were my actions intentional wrongdoing or, instead, were they the actions of anyone under stressful circumstances trying to make the best decisions and give the best possible care?
- Recognize your feelings of guilt as common and a sign of the love you will always have.
- Understand that many people experience conflicting feelings.
- Be accepting of yourself, your human errors or imperfections.
- Share your feelings with someone you trust or a Pathways counselor.
- Most importantly, allow your feelings to serve as a guide to what you need, rather than a burden you must bear.

**Spanish Support**

**Grief Support in Spanish**
The Pathways Center for Grief & Loss’ 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 or if you wish to receive our Spanish newsletter.

**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 o si desea recibir el bulletin Caminos Hacia La Esperanza.

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

Many people grieving 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 groups focus on grief education and support.

The Pathways Center for Grief & Loss and Hospice & Community Care are taking all necessary precautions for the health and safety of our patients and families, staff, volunteers and visitors related to the Coronavirus outbreak.

Support groups will be held via Zoom during September and October.

Contact the Pathways Center to request the log-in address or phone number. Since Zoom is not limited by geographical location, there are a variety of options to choose from.

Virtual Support Groups — Registration required

Groups are led by Master’s-level counselors and volunteers who have experienced the same type of loss. They provide time to share experiences and ask questions. Groups are designed for those within the first two years following the death of a loved one.

Coping with the Loss of a Spouse or Companion

Wednesday, SEPTEMBER 2, 6:30–8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 8, 6:30–8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 15, 2:00–3:30 p.m.
Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 22, 2:00–3:30 p.m.
Wednesday, OCTOBER 7, 6:30–8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, OCTOBER 13, 6:30–8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, OCTOBER 20, 2:00–3:30 p.m.
Tuesday, OCTOBER 27, 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Coping with the Loss of a Parent or Sibling

Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 1, 6:30–8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, OCTOBER 6, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Coping with the Loss of a Loved One Due to Coronavirus

Wednesday, Sept 16, 6:00–7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Oct 21, 6:00–7:30 p.m.

“What we have once enjoyed we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us.”
—Helen Keller

Call us at (717) 391-2413 or (800) 924-7610 with questions or if you would like more information.
We are Here for You

Many bereaved individuals know they “need something” but are uncertain what that is. Perhaps you have experienced several losses in a short period of time. Or, after the initial busy time of settling affairs ends a fresh wave of grief hits. Grief and loss are unpredictable so we encourage you to contact a Pathways grief counselor whenever needed, **Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.** to discuss support options. Pathways services are available regardless of the cause of death or whether Hospice was involved. After our grief counselors talk with someone on the phone or see them in a support group for the first time, they often say they wish they had reached out to us sooner. Support groups or individual consultation, regardless of whether by Zoom or face-to-face, provide a safe place to express emotions you may not have felt comfortable sharing with family or friends. Most people say they are glad they called because it helped them realize that they feel less alone.

Virtual Workshops
—Registration required

**Exploring New Relationships**

Wednesday, OCTOBER 14
6:30–8:00 p.m.
(Registration deadline: October 12)

Feelings of loneliness and the desire for social connections are common reactions after losing a spouse or companion. This healthy desire may be met by your own feelings of self-doubt or other’s advice. This workshop, held via Zoom, offers an opportunity for bereaved individuals to discuss this topic and hear from a small panel who will share different approaches to meeting the need for companionship. Space is limited and registration is required.

Social Dine-Out Options

Due to the Coronavirus outbreak, we have canceled all social dine-out options scheduled through the end of 2020.

**Call the Pathways Center at** (717) 391-2413 or (800) 924-7610 to request the log-in address or phone number to participate in a Zoom group or to schedule a private Zoom meeting with a Pathways counselor.


“... they often say they wish they had reached out to us sooner.”
Support Group Series — Registration required

**Newly Bereaved Program**  
(a 3-week series)  

**Wednesdays, SEPTEMBER 16, 23 & 30, 6:30–8:00 p.m.**

**Wednesdays, OCTOBER 14, 21 & 28, 10:00–11:30 a.m.**

Registration deadline: one week prior to the start of the group

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 required. Call to discuss with a bereavement counselor to determine if the group will meet your needs. These groups will be held via Zoom. Call for information about groups in November.

**Coping with the Loss of a Child**  
(of any age) (4-week series)  

**Tuesdays, OCTOBER 6, 13, 20 & 27 6:30–8:00 p.m.**

(Registration deadline: September 29)

This series, held via Zoom, will explore common reactions experienced by parents after the death of a child of any age. The group will also address coping strategies, self-care, and ways to commemorate their life. The series will be facilitated by a Master’s-level bereavement counselor along with two volunteers who are bereaved parents. Space is limited and registration is required. Call to discuss with a bereavement counselor to determine if the group will meet your needs.

**Your Journey After the Death of a Loved One**

3 week series for young adults, ages 19-30  

**Tuesdays, SEPTEMBER 15, 22 & 29 6:30–8:00 p.m.**

(Registration deadline: September 11)

As young adults, it can be difficult to meet others the same age who have experienced the death of a loved one. This series, held via Zoom, will offer an opportunity to not only meet others who are grieving, but also provide a safe environment to talk openly about your grief, your unique challenges and ways to find healing and growth. This group will be most helpful if it has been at least four months since the death. Space is limited and registration is required.

**Mindfulness and Grief: Practical Tools for Living** (a 3-week series)

**Mondays, OCTOBER 19, 26 and NOVEMBER 2, 6:30–8:30 p.m.**

(Registration deadline: October 12)

Grief over the death of a beloved person triggers many uncomfortable emotions and thoughts. Many people respond by avoiding these uncomfortable feelings. This series, held via Zoom, will address the benefits of practicing mindfulness as a tool for being present with your grief and improving your overall well-being. Mary Grace Lomboy, CRNP, Hospice & Community Care, will provide several forms of mindfulness to practice each week and help you connect mindfulness tools to common grief reactions. Space is limited and registration is required.

“Just being with other people who were also going through grief—hearing their coping strategies and the answers to their questions. We shared our grief but didn’t dwell on the death—we gained new ideas about how to cope”  

—Joan Dautrich

**Individual Consultations**

Sometimes it can be helpful to meet individually with a bereavement counselor. Call the Pathways Center to discuss this further or to set up an appointment in Mount Joy, Lancaster or York. Virtual sessions are also available.

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

### Support Group Series — Registration required

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| Growing Through Grief | **(a 6-week series)**  
**Wednesday, OCTOBER 7 — NOVEMBER 11**  
6:00–8:00 p.m. |  
This support series, held via Zoom, is for adults (age 18 or older) who are grieving a death that occurred at least nine months ago. The group provides a safe place to explore how you have been impacted by your loss, who you are apart from your loved one, and how you continue to reorganize your life. Space is limited. Interested individuals will first speak with a bereavement counselor to determine if the group will meet your needs. Call the Pathways Center to schedule an appointment. |
| GRASP (Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing) | **Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 8, 6:00–7:30 p.m.**  
**Tuesday, OCTOBER 13, 6:00–7:30 p.m.** |  
This monthly group helps provide sources of help, compassion, and understanding for families or individuals who have had a loved one die as a result of substance abuse or addiction. Pre-registration for new attendees is required. Due to the Coronavirus, all attendees should contact Marjorie Paradise at mparadise810@comcast.net or (717) 951-2720 in September and October to learn if the group will be held outdoors or via Zoom. |
| Intimacy and Sexuality During Illness and Loss | **(a pre-recorded webinar)**  
**Friday, NOVEMBER 6, 2:00–4:00 p.m.**  
(Registration deadline: November 5) |  
Hospice Foundation of America will identify barriers to intimacy and sexuality for terminally ill persons and the bereaved during this pre-recorded webinar. The program will emphasize the knowledge and skills that professionals must have to sensitively address intimacy and sexuality and suggest interventions that can help dying and bereaved persons address these elemental human needs. There is no cost to attend. CE credits (2) are available online for $9 through Hospice Foundation of America.  
**Tuesday, NOVEMBER 17, 8:30–10:30 a.m.**  
(Registration deadline: November 16) |  
Verify professional board approvals at hospicefoundation.org/hfa/media/Files/Board %20Lists/Board-Approvals_LWG20_Sept24.pdf.  
Register online for the November 6 event at https://bit.ly/2OMMKhY.  
Register online for the November 17 event at https://bit.ly/2CTWx3i. Space is limited.  
For more information, contact the Pathways Center for Grief & Loss at (717) 391-2413. |

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Call us at (717) 391-2413 or (800) 924-7610 with questions or if you would like more information.
The Pathways Center

You will 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

Also Available Through the Pathways Center

Workshops, in-services and trainings are available for those who support the bereaved. Are you seeking grief support outside of South Central Pennsylvania? Visit www.nhpco.org or call the Pathways Center to find support closer to your home. Contact the Pathways Center for more information about how we could be a resource to you, your organization or someone you know.