

SUMMER 2017

BRIDGE

A PUBLICATION FOR OUR FRIENDS FROM PATHWAYS OF HOPE



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Grief Notes

Seasons of Grief

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The summer months in Ohio provide beauty, warmth, and time to quietly rest. We can spend time with friends and family and engage in a variety of pleasant outdoor activities. We hope that you have been enjoying this season, even as you grieve the loss of your loved one.

In this edition of Bridge, you will find information on when to expect the grief to become easier, coping with the loneliness that can accompany a significant loss, and growing through the grieving experience. There are several memorial service opportunities, including a popular river walk in Troy and a traditional service in Dayton. The fall months provide an opportunity to attend one of our 5K runs/walks to benefit Ohio's Hospice patients—these are always inspiring and uplifting celebrations of life! Finally, there are specifics about school-based support groups, an intergenerational art therapy support group, and many other support group offerings.

Thanks to the financial support of the local community, all our services are offered at no cost to you. You do not need to have had a family member or friend in our hospice program to receive grief counseling services. We look forward to the opportunity to speak with you about how we can help support your journey through grief. Please call us to speak with a counseling professional about how we can best serve you during this time.





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Grief FAQ's:

Frequently Asked Questions about Grief

Since my loved one died, I find myself having a hard time concentrating and remembering things. I'm worried that I am becoming more forgetful. Is this normal?



Concentration and memory difficulties are common among grieving people, especially in the early weeks and months following the death of a loved one. Some of this is related to the general stress and physical exhaustion common in the grief experience. The lack of energy that comes with being physically tired and poorly rested dulls our physical and mental abilities. Stress impacts our ability to process and retain information and grief certainly qualifies as a stressful experience. Active grief also consumes much of our attention, making it more difficult to focus our attention elsewhere. Pain, whether physical or emotional, can distract us from focusing on other important matters. As a result, it is very likely that we will find ourselves “forgetting” information that, under other circumstances, would have been easily recalled.

If memory difficulties persist or seem to be worsening, it is important to talk to your physician, as memory loss may also have causes other than grief.

A Time of Remembrance

Ohio's Hospice of Dayton will hold a **TIME OF REMEMBRANCE SERVICE** on Sunday, September 17, 2017 at 3 p.m. in the Ohio's Hospice of Dayton Community Room, Shaw Building. RSVPs are appreciated and can be made by calling 937-258-4991.

Remembrance services provide families with an opportunity to come together during the first year of loss to remember their loved ones in a non-denominational memorial service. Family members are asked to bring a single cut flower. The service will last less than one hour. Additional 2017 remembrance services will be scheduled and announced in future issues of *Bridge*.

The Benefit of Grief Support Groups

Having support during the grief process is one of the most important predictors of a healthy grief adjustment. For some people, the presence of supportive family and friends offers sufficient comfort. But many people find it helpful to gather with others who have also experienced the loss of a loved one. Support groups provide a setting for grievers to learn not only what is normal in the grief process but also to share new coping strategies. Groups provide the opportunity for members to give and receive emotional support through validation of shared grief experiences. And for many, new friendships are formed, extending even after the group has concluded.

Pathways of Hope grief support groups are led by trained bereavement professionals. A variety of groups is offered, including groups specifically focused on the loss of a spouse, parent, or adult child. Other groups, such as Coffee Connections and Art Forever After, are designed to serve any type of loss. Specific holiday support groups begin in November to help grievers cope during an especially difficult season. Contact your local Pathways of Hope office to learn more about our group offerings.

Pathways of Hope Grief Counseling Center

Pathways of Hope Grief Counseling Centers offer a variety of services to the community. A team of counselors, social workers, and an art therapist—with significant experience and expertise in assisting grieving children, adolescents, and adults—provides support and education.

Our philosophy is that, just as relationships between loved ones are unique, grief is a personalized experience for everyone. The Pathways staff seeks to understand what is needed for individuals to navigate the grief process and strives to assist with an effective plan to cope with this life change.

One-on-one counseling sessions for children, teens, and adults are available by appointment. Many times, a single session can provide adequate information for griever to feel they are processing grief normally. A bereavement counselor/social worker assesses the person's need and develops an individualized plan of care.

Grief support groups can provide a much-needed bridge over the difficult days, weeks, and months following a loss. Participants discover that the group meeting is a safe, caring place where understanding, encouragement, and practical suggestions can be readily found. Designed to meet different needs, all of our groups are open to anyone in the community who is coping with the loss of a loved one. Our groups typically meet on a rotating basis throughout the year. Contact your local Pathways of Hope office for the current schedule.

Pathways of Hope services are open to the friends and family members of all Ohio's Hospice patients, as well as to the community. Services are free of charge, thanks to support from the communities we serve. Please call the location most convenient to you for additional information or to schedule an appointment.



Pathways of Hope Grief Counseling Centers

Community Care Hospice

Wilmington
(937) 382-5400

Ohio's Hospice of Dayton

Dayton
(937) 258-4991

Ohio's Community Mercy Hospice

Springfield
(937) 390-9665

Hospice of Central Ohio

Newark
(740) 788-1400

Ohio's Hospice of Miami County

Generations of Life Center
Troy
(937) 573-2103

Ohio's Hospice of Butler & Warren Counties

Franklin
(513) 422-0300

Ohio's Community Mercy Hospice is a Service of Ohio's Hospice of Dayton

Ohio's Hospice of Dayton 5K Remembrance Walk

Ohio's Hospice of Dayton 5K (3.1 miles) and 3K (1.86 miles) Remembrance Walk will start at the Ohio's Hospice of Dayton campus on Wilmington Avenue, proceed through the neighborhood, and lead back to the hospice campus.

- Shuttle buses will be available to shuttle walkers from offsite parking locations to the campus and also to pick up walkers along the way.
- This course is wheelchair and stroller accessible.
- For the safety of all participants, no roller blades, bicycles, or unleashed pets are allowed.
- Register by October 1, 2017 to receive a T-shirt.
- Team and individual trophies will be awarded before the walk for those who raise the most money in support of the hospice mission.
- Food trucks will be on site before, during (for those who wish to stay on campus during the walk), and after the walk, so bring some extra change!

Ohio's Hospice of Dayton is a not-for-profit hospice. With your support, Ohio's Hospice of Dayton can continue to provide such services as occupational, music and art therapy to improve patient quality of life. Community support also provides bereavement counseling at no cost to adults and children, including Camp Pathways.

Join us at this year's Remembrance Walk. With your support, WE can make a difference!

Dayton

Ohio's Hospice of Dayton

When: 10:00 am, Saturday, October 21, 2017

Where: Ohio's Hospice of Dayton
324 Wilmington Ave | Dayton, Ohio

Register: 937-222-WALK | www.hospiceofdayton.org
arobison@hospiceofdayton.org

Fall River Walk Memorial

On Sunday, September 17, 2017, Ohio's Hospice of Miami County Generations of Life Community Bereavement Resource Center will be offering a River Walk Memorial at The Stillwater Prairie Reserve in Covington, Ohio. We invite you, your friends, and your family to come and enjoy this beautiful fall walk in memory of your loved ones. We will honor each person being remembered by gently placing a flower in the Stillwater River during the reading of names. Attendees will enjoy Native American flute music by John DeBoer during the service. The River Walk stretches approximately one mile along a limestone gravel path, so appropriate walking shoes are necessary. Refreshments will be provided at the conclusion of our walk. Please contact Pathways of Hope at the Generations of Life Community Bereavement Resource Center at 937-573-2103 for registration information and questions. The registration deadline is September 13, 2017.

Troy

Ohio's Hospice of Miami County

When: 4:00 pm, Sunday, September 17, 2017
Where: The Stillwater Prairie Reserve
9750 OH-185 | Covington, OH 45318
RSVP: By Wednesday, September 13, 2017
Call 937-573-2103

Ohio's Hospice of Butler & Warren Counties' Sixth Annual 5K Remembrance Walk/Run

Please join us on Saturday, September 9, 2017 at Smith Park in Middletown for the 5K Remembrance Walk/Run benefitting Ohio's Hospice of Butler & Warren Counties! Walk or run in memory of a loved one. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., and the 5K begins at 10 a.m. Questions? Contact Ashley Robison at arobison@hospiceofdayton.org or 937-723-2899. We hope to see you there!

Middletown

Ohio's Hospice of Butler & Warren Counties

When: 10:00 am, Saturday, September 9, 2017
Where: Smith Park
500 Tytus Ave | Middletown, OH
Register: 937-222-WALK | www.hospiceofbwco.org

The Pathways of Hope Bereavement Counseling Professionals Team

Pathways of Hope Grief Counseling Program is a well-established (2002) service provider in the greater Dayton community and the Southwest region of Ohio. This knowledgeable, caring staff provides support or education when requested by an individual, family, group, or community organization. Our clinicians are licensed social workers or counselors and are seasoned professionals in grief and bereavement work

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Director, Patient and Family Support Services OHI Southwest Region

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Pathways of Hope Office Coordinator

Ohio's Hospice of Dayton

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Michelle Kessler, BSW, LSW
Bereavement Coordinator

Ohio's Community Mercy Hospice: Clark and Champaign Counties

Monica DuShane, MSW, LISW, ACHP-SW
Bereavement Counseling Professional



The Drawn Together Art Program

The goal of Drawn Together is to support patients and families through life-enhancing art making. Another goal is to encourage the effective expression of grief through art. Participants do not have to be artistically gifted to create art or to benefit from it. Art activities are designed to provide a creative distraction from the stress of illness, to honor and cherish loved ones, or to encourage the expression of grief. Drawn Together provides the following options:*

Drawn Together Open Studio

This art-making opportunity is designed especially for children and family members visiting patients at the Dayton Hospice House. The open art studio format meets at The William and Dorothy Yeck Family Grief Counseling Art Center on the hospice campus. People of all ages may come to make art. A flyer, delivered to all patient rooms in the Hospice House, informs patients and families when the open studio is offered—typically, Wednesdays from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the months of September through November and February through April.



Art Cart

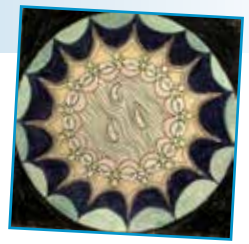
The Art Cart is a free service to all patients and family members who would like a creative distraction while visiting a patient. No artistic talent is required. The Art Cart runs throughout the Colp/Shaw patient unit on various days and times. Calling all volunteers! We are looking for individuals (age 18 or older) to help run our Mobile Art Cart throughout the week. Volunteer training is required through Volunteer Services, if you are not currently a volunteer.

For more information:

Call: Annette Burckart, (937) 260-6971

Email: aburckart@hospiceofdayton.org

*art therapy programs are available at limited Pathways locations. Please call for information.



Individual Art Therapy Sessions

Since 2002, Pathways of Hope has offered art therapy support to grieving children, teens, and adults of Ohio's Hospice of Dayton families and throughout the community. These sessions are a creative way for people of all ages to express grief in a way that doesn't rely on "talking about it," which is often quite difficult. Individual art therapy sessions enable therapists to pay attention to a specific aspect of grief that seems especially painful to the individual.

The Art Forever After Group

This multi-generational, art-based grief support group provides the opportunity for individuals, friends, and family members to make art with others. Art Forever After meets at The William and Dorothy Yeck Family Grief Counseling Art Center on the Hospice of Dayton campus. This group is offered in 3-month segments Thursday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. during the months of September through November and February through April. Contact Pathways of Hope to register for this art-based grief support group.



Book Reviews

Finding Peace When Your Heart Is In Pieces: A Step-by-Step Guide to the Other Side of Grief, Loss, and Pain

by Paul Coleman, PsyD

The premise of this book is that, after a loss, we can achieve transcendence from pain to peace. Dr. Coleman provides a simple step-by-step guide to empower grievers on their journey to healing. We do not ask to participate on this journey, yet we invariably find ourselves on it after we experience a significant loss, whether it's the death of a loved one or another kind of loss (e.g., job, financial, health).

Instead of becoming a victim of the tragedy, we can find true peace using the Four Paths of Transformation: acceptance, inspiration, release, and compassion. This book is a “keeper,” which means it is a reference that provides encouragement and inspiration when the journey leaves us feeling overwhelmed and hopeless. This book reminds us that “the hero’s journey is always a journey forward to self-awareness. You cannot find peace *without* until you find peace *within*.”

Till We Meet Again

Written by Julie Muller

Illustrated by Camryn Cox

This book is recommended for beginning readers. It will bring comfort to young children (ages 2–5) who are grieving. It is especially comforting as bedtime reading, as the poetry is soothing, hopeful, and inspirational. Written from the point of view of a deceased loved one, the author makes young readers feel that their special person still cares for them. She helps readers understand ways to feel close to loved ones even after death. This, in turn, offers hope for the future and provides a faith that the child and loved one will be together again, in a new way. The illustrations throughout the story underscore the idea of continued togetherness, with beautifully simple silhouettes that encourage readers to imagine themselves in the story.

Website Resources

For the college student who is away from home and family, grieving the death of a loved one can present difficult challenges. Actively Moving Forward is an online organization whose purpose is to provide bereavement support and resources to young adults struggling with the serious illness or death of a loved one. The website is www.studentsofAMF.org.



School-based Grief Support for Children

Every day, many children who come to school after the loss of a loved one find it difficult to concentrate and perform academically. They likely have little understanding of how loss is affecting their ability to learn. They may feel overwhelmed by their grief, wondering silently whether what they are experiencing is normal and what to do with their feelings.

Pathways of Hope offers school-based support groups to area schools at all grade levels to help children cope with their loss and to heal. Children are offered a safe space, where they can express their feelings and discover that they are not alone in grief. This free service includes support groups and individual counseling as well as grief response to students and faculty immediately after a sudden, collective loss affecting an entire school community. Schools interested in these services should contact Lisa Conn, MSW, LISW-S, at Pathways of Hope, 937-258-4991.

The Loneliness of Loss

Loneliness is an integral part of grief. Someone very precious has been lost, and the companionship, comfort, and purpose provided to you is suddenly gone, replaced by a sense of emptiness and aloneness. In the beginning, the loneliness may not be quite so noticeable, as supporters are still providing the “Three C’s”: calls, cards, and casseroles. But as time goes on, longing for your loved one and the resulting loneliness may grow very heavy indeed.

Loneliness is part of the transition of grief. The ending of the previous life with your loved one forces you into a “new normal” as well as new beginnings. But until that new life fully develops, clinging to endings is natural and will be filled with loneliness.

How does one cope with the loneliness? In learning to be alone, there is not one “right” plan. However, there are several guidelines that might prove helpful.



A first step is accepting that you will feel lonely. You miss your loved one and long for things to be the same once again. Acknowledge the loneliness as being a natural part of the grief process.

A second step is to reach out. Reaching out is a good cure for loneliness. It will probably be difficult, as the loss of a loved one leaves us drained and often feeling insecure about ourselves. Many bereaved individuals report great satisfaction in volunteering, taking classes, or renewing old or starting new friendships.



Grief often makes one feel alienated from others, as grievers often feel that “no one could possibly feel as I do.” Joining a grief support group is a great way to connect with others in a meaningful way. Gathering with others experiencing similar losses provides a wonderfully safe environment to express the deepest feelings and concerns. It also gives a griever the opportunity to comfort others. Pathways of Hope offers a variety of groups tailored to address individual needs.

Growing Through Grief

The grief that follows when someone close and beloved dies is the most profound of all emotional experiences. Early in the grief process, the mourner may believe that the intense suffering will never end, that all that lies ahead is languishing indefinitely in the pain of loss. The changes in oneself—and in life itself—seem overwhelmingly negative. However, as mourners travel the journey of grief, most eventually recognize that they have also grown in ways they never had imagined. Like any growth process, growing through grief takes time. It doesn't happen overnight. It's hard work, and it's painful, but it can also be rewarding.

Grievers have shared the following ways in which they have grown through grief, including:

- *“I realized I’ve done many things I wasn’t sure I’d be able to do. I’ve learned I am capable.”*
- *“I used to be ashamed of my feelings, but I have learned to accept and express them.”*
- *“I’ve learned to reach out to people with far more compassion and understanding.”*
- *“I have become more independent and learned I can build a new life with new interests.”*
- *“I am learning new priorities and how to live in the moment.”*

Growth takes place by keeping an open mind and a positive attitude toward change, having a willingness to learn new tasks and take risks, and being very mindful and affirming of personal progress throughout the journey of grief. Joining a grief support group can also facilitate growth, as fellow grievers encourage one another in the difficult changes of life and loss.

When Will the Grief Get Easier?

In the early days of grief, many people think there will never be relief from the intense feelings of sadness. Grief may cause you to lose energy, motivation, and desire. You may experience sleepless nights. You may be unable to concentrate on the simplest of tasks. You may feel a crushing longing, loneliness, and sadness. As the days go by, other people in your life may express concern over your grief. They may suggest it is time to “move on.” You may begin to wonder if your grief is normal.

It is important to understand that what is normal varies widely from one person to another. Strong emotional, physical, and mental reactions are very normal in the early stages of grief. As time goes on, these reactions decrease in intensity and frequency. Grief is often most intense within two to three months after the loss and again before the first anniversary of the loss. Special days and events can continue to trigger grief for years to come. Sudden, unexpected grief may occur at unpredictable times, such as hearing a special song or spotting a favorite restaurant. With time, you will gain experience in dealing with grief in healthy ways that allow the activities of daily life to go on without too much disruption.

Look for small signs of healing. Perhaps you find yourself laughing more, or you begin looking forward to and making plans for future events. For most grieving people, healing occurs eventually. Hold on to that hope, and watch for signs that you are healing. This can bring comfort during the heaviest days of grief.





Pathways of Hope
324 Wilmington Avenue
Dayton, Ohio 45420

Community Care Hospice
Hospice of Central Ohio
Ohio's Community Mercy Hospice
Ohio's Hospice of Butler & Warren Counties
Ohio's Hospice of Dayton
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