



Your Journey THROUGH GRIEF

"With open hearts and expertise, we serve the seriously ill and those touched by loss."

Grief in the New Year

A LETTER FROM THE BEREAVEMENT COORDINATOR

"Some people may not understand why those grieving are reluctant to move into a new year. For them, they see a fresh year; a new season. But for the bereaved it's moving into a new calendar year, which their loved one never lived in."

- Zoe Clark-Coats

Now that the holidays are behind us, we are faced with the new challenge of beginning a new year for the first time without our loved one. This challenge comes with many emotions. We may feel relief because we will not see our loved one suffer in this new year. The thought of peace now comforts us. Some emotions are more difficult. One thought is that our loved one will not get to experience all that 2018 had to offer. We will begin a full calendar year of life without them, and that is going to be really hard. Whether it has been 11 months or 11 days since our loss, this year's possibilities and challenges can feel daunting. We may find ourselves burrowing in our homes and shutting others out. While there are days when being alone can be very healing, we must remember that there are still people out there who love us, and are eager to bring us peace and comfort.

With thoughts of comfort,
Kaylee Kron, Bereavement Coordinator

Just for You

A NEW YOU IN THE NEW YEAR

BY KAYLEE KRON

Grief is often described as an incredibly painful, yet transformative experience. After the loss of someone we love, we will face many additional losses. First and foremost, we experience the loss of our own identity; who we were when the person we love was still alive. We do not realize before the death occurs how closely our identity was tied to those we love. We are who we are because of the relationships that we have. Who we were to a loved one who has died, dies too. Imagine a wife, who for the past 2 years was also a caregiver to her ill husband. Her daily life was consumed with tasks related to her husband, and she was happy to do it. However, when he died, she no longer knew what to do with her days, and she began to feel lost. Her identity as a wife and a caregiver, and tasks related to those identities, were gone, and she no longer knew who she was without those identities.

When a loved one dies, and our identity within that relationship is gone, we must take time to mourn all the losses. The loss of an incredibly important person is devastating, and deserves its own grief, and so do the other losses. Who we were before the death, and who we will be after, are very different. Therefore, who we are right after the death is somewhere in the middle.

Our identity and everything that ever mattered to us is making a huge transition in the realm of the unknown. It can feel like our identity has shattered. This explains why we no longer feel joy in things that used to make us so happy. We are not the same. We may feel empty, and worry that joy will never return to us.

The beautiful thing about going through a shattered time, is that we have a unique opportunity to start fresh. Once the intense grief has subsided, we can begin to get curious about what to do with the rest of our lives. When we get to look the shards, we can make a new decision about which ones to pick up, and which

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ones are better left right there on the ground. Everyday decisions are a step closer to the person we decide to be. Maybe cooking dinner every night was something done to make a spouse smile, but no longer seems worth it, so we buy microwavable dinners. Maybe the women who needed an absolutely spotless home, no longer feels like dusting every-other day.

The question is, who do we want to be? In the new year, beginning a new journey, who are we going to be? The possibilities are endless, if we are willing to look up from our daily grief and

see the beautiful world in front of us. There is a time for grief, and in many ways, that grief will never go away, but there is also a time for rebuilding and becoming who we are going to be for the rest of our lives.

Death often shapes the new person who emerges, but it does not have to define us. Think of the loss like a river flowing constantly over us, shaping us, smoothing our edges, and edging us to become something new. This new person is not better or worse than the one we were before, but through the grief, we naturally become more empathetic, grateful, and alive.

**“Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over,
it became a butterfly.”**

- Author Unknown



15 QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU GET TO KNOW THE NEW YOU

As we move into the new year following the death of a loved one, we may wonder who we are now. Our identity, for so long, was shaped by the relationship that existed between us, and the loved one who has died. It can be beneficial to do a little self-reflection in an effort to begin to draw a road map from who we were before our loved one died, to who we are choosing to be now. Whether using a journal, or answering silently, the following are 15 questions may help this process:

1. What are my strengths?
2. Who matters most to me?
3. What new activities am I interested in or willing to try?
4. What am I worried about?
5. What are my values?
6. Where do I feel safest?
7. Who or what gives me comfort?
8. If I wasn't afraid, what would I do?
9. What do I do to show myself self-compassion?
10. What have I always wished I could do?
11. What am I passionate about?
12. How do I relax?
13. What important lesson have I learned in my grief?
14. Who do I want my loved one to see when they look down on me?
15. How do I want to spend my day to day life?

ABOUT OUR JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Hospice of North Idaho is proud to offer a new, 8-week support group series for those who have experienced the loss of someone they love. Join Kaylee Kron, Bereavement Counselor for this structured, curriculum based group. Using the companioning model founded by Alan Wolfelt, PhD, and Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition, participants are guided in their journey through grief. This class will teach skills on how to manage grief far beyond the end of group.

Registration is required. Call (208) 772-7994. This group is offered three times per year.

Wednesdays from 5:30 - 7:00 PM

February 21 - April 11

May 2 - June 20

September 5 - October 24

***"Until you are broken, you don't
know what you're made of.
It gives you the ability to build
yourself all over again,
but stronger than ever."***

- Author Unknown

Spiritual Care

SELF-CARE IN GRIEF

BY REV JENNIFER HACKENBRUCH
SPIRITUAL CARE COORDINATOR

As the new year approaches life continues and moves on whether we want it to or not. During our time of grief and loss, we don't want life to continue and move on. When my mother died, I did not want the new year to happen. I did not want to leave the year in which she died behind. By beginning a new year it felt like I was leaving my loved one further behind. Yet, the truth is our loved ones will never be further behind. They will always be with us, just not in the way we are used to. With a thought, a memory, they are with us, and always will be.

During this time of the new year and new beginnings allow yourself to grieve and mourn. Allow yourself to be with your pain and your loss. Allow those who are celebrating, to celebrate. And let yourself mourn, for one day you will be ready to celebrate once again.

Until then pray for renewal, be thankful for who you are, read for grief understanding and spiritual enrichment, journal to see what is in your heart, smile and laugh when you can, connect to God/Spirit, yourself, and others, relax, and reach out to your family and friends. Most importantly, breathe. Breathe with your moments, your grief, and your pain. Allow yourself to be in this moment and the next. I invite you to take a deep breath all the way into your body. Breathing in through your nose, and out through your nose. And breathe, centering yourself into this moment.

As I breathe in

I allow myself to be, just as I am

As I breathe out

I allow myself to be, just as I am.

"I will tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world

rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy."

~ John 16:20.

Kids In Grief

KIDS AND FUNERALS

GUEST CONTENT FROM *THE DOUGY CENTER*



Too often, kids feel like the “forgotten mourners.” They are seen but not heard or spoken to at a funeral. Often what they get is a pat on the head, or hugs from adults they don’t even know. Many adults still wonder if it’s a good idea to include children in funerals at all. While every family has its own traditions and beliefs, and these will play a strong role in funeral and memorial service planning and decisions, parents may not be aware that one of the most helpful things they can do for their children during this time is to give them choices. Children appreciate having choices as much as adults do. They have opinions, and want to be valued enough to be allowed to offer them. And they don’t like to be left out of anything, even a

funeral. It is a meaningful and important experience for children to have the opportunity to say goodbye to the person who died in a way that feels right to them. Saying goodbye is never easy, but it helps bring a sense of finality to the death that is helpful in the healing process. People often wonder at what age a child should attend a funeral. Age is not the most important consideration. Generally speaking, young children don’t seem to have the fear of the deceased or dead bodies adults think they do. What works well is to invite children or teenagers to the funeral, without forcing them to make a particular decision. Children who are not allowed to attend a funeral may feel they didn’t get their chance to say goodbye. On the other hand, children who were forced to attend a funeral may feel resentful. Children should not be criticized if they don’t want to attend the funeral. They may regret the decisions they make, but they won’t have the added issue of resentment for not being allowed to make their own choice.

In order to make their choice, children need explanations and information about what a funeral is and what is going to happen. After a death, the world as they know it is completely changed. Additional surprises and unfamiliar situations can complicate the grieving process.

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Not unlike adults, kids like to be filled in on the basics of who, what, where, when and why. Kids also expect us to be clear, direct and concrete in our explanations.

Teenagers appreciate this too. They are experts at discerning when adults are beating around the bush. When explaining the events of a funeral to child, it's best to "tell it like it is."

Typical aspects of the funeral that may be discussed include:

Who... will be at the funeral or memorial service?

What... is going to happen?

Where... will the service take place?

When... will the funeral happen?

Why... are we doing this?

What happens, or doesn't happen, at a funeral will be remembered forever by a child. Parents and other caregivers have the opportunity to influence a child's experience by including children in the one way they most deserve and request: informed choice.

The Dougy Center (2018). "Kids and Funerals" [web page content]. Retrieved from <https://www.dougy.org/grief-resources/kids-and-funerals/>



WE'RE MOVING!

We have built Idaho's first Hospice Campus on the Schneidmiller House property located at 2290 West Prairie Avenue.

In late February, the Bereavement Department Headquarters will be in the new Community Building beside the Schneidmiller House!



HOSPICE
OF NORTH IDAHO

HOSPICE OF NORTH IDAHO
9493 N Government Way
Hayden ID 83835

Upcoming Events

HOSPICE OF NORTH IDAHO IS HERE FOR YOU

**ON-
GOING
SUPPORT**

JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF GROUP

Beginning February 21st, learn skills to help manage your grief. Wednesdays 5:30-7:00PM. Call to register (208) 772-7994

TEENS IN GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

6-week afterschool group for ages 13-17. Find a community of peers and realize you are not alone in grief. Call to register (208) 772-7994

WE'RE MOVING TO 2290 W PRAIRIE AVE

Come and see our new Community Building on the Schneidmiller House property! Call to verify meeting locations in February.

Share this newsletter and check meeting locations at www.hospiceofnorthidaho.org