



Your Journey

THROUGH GRIEF

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

Accepting Support

A LETTER FROM THE BEREAVEMENT COORDINATOR

One of the most difficult things to say when we are in grief is "I need help". So often, when a well-meaning friend or relative asks, "what can I do to help?", we honestly do not know the answer. Almost by accident, we isolate ourselves with the belief that no one can help, because no one can understand what we are going through. In some ways, we are right. Grief is so incredibly unique, that no one can truly understand what we are going through. However, if we only function on the idea that in order to accept support from someone, they would have had to go through the same situation, we significantly reduce the number of individuals who can support us from everyone in our circle, to no one. The truth is, for someone to support us, they don't really need to understand exactly how we feel. What we do need is someone who is willing to listen and unconditionally accept how we feel without attempting to change it. Truly, the most healing form of support often comes from someone who recognizes that they can never truly understand, and shows up anyway. This support is rare, but oh so very invaluable.

With thoughts of comfort,
Kaylee Kron, Bereavement Coordinator

Accepting Support

REACHING OUT

BY KAYLEE KRON, LMSW

When we are grieving, we can often feel incredibly alienated from our loved ones. This may occur for many reasons. Maybe we don't want to be a burden, or we don't feel like those closest to us would understand what we are going through. Maybe we feel that we will be judged by others for not being "over the loss by now." We build so many reasons to not reach out, that it becomes something we tell others we will do but never get around to doing it.

Across the board, so many of us grieve in silence and suffer alone. Unfortunately, even though grief is a deeply personal journey, we cannot do it alone. Reaching out for support, while often uncomfortable, is one of the best things you can do for ourselves in grief. Possibly, one of the most difficult statements when going through grief is saying "I need support." It is important to remember that in order to work through our grief, it needs to be seen.

This doesn't necessarily mean that we need to burst out in tears in the middle of the grocery store. What it does mean is that all of those very personal conversations about our grief that we often have in our head, in the privacy of our own home, is simply not enough. We have to say all of those things out loud in order for it to

truly be processed. The question is, how do we do that and still feel safe and supported? The answer to this, is to pay close attention to who we choose to whom we show our grief.

Unfortunately, sometimes we opened up to wrong person. Sometimes, we thought we chose right person, only to find out that they cannot sit with us in our grief like we needed. There are many reasons that this may happen, but the most prevalent is that we have chosen someone who has never experienced a deep loss, and for this reason, they are unable to even try to empathize with our situation.

As we consider which individuals in our circle to



open up to, it helps to recognize that not everyone that loves us will be able to walk with us on this journey. Some people are genuinely uncomfortable with putting themselves in our shoes. For example, it is very difficult for a woman who has not lost her husband to imagine the pain that a new widow must feel after such a significant loss. In this, and similar situations, the griever will often be met with well-intentioned platitudes like “he’s in a better place” or “at least you had a chance to say goodbye”. These comments are meant to comfort the griever, but also help the supporter maintain a safe distance from the pain. Give those who cannot hold space with our grief a little grace and allow them to be there when we are ready for a much-needed break from grief. Those who are less able to hold space with

our grief are often excellent brunch companions. As we seek a good “grief companion” we sometimes think that there are not many people that we want to share with. In this case, it is important to consider going to see a grief counselor or join a support group. By reaching out in this more formal setting, we are opening ourselves up to grow our grief support system in a way that benefits us best.

When we sit with a counselor, attend a support group, or even talk over a cup of coffee with a friend who has had a similar experience, our grief becomes visible. When our grief is visible, healing can begin. Accepting support from others is one of the most helpful ways to practice self-care during this difficult time.



For Your Journey

POEM

"MY FRIEND, I CARE"

BY : J. HENDEL

Don't tell me that you know. Don't tell me that I will survive. How I will surely grow.

Don't tell me this is just a test,
that I am truly blessed.

That I am chosen for this task,
apart from all the rest.

Don't come at me with answers that can only
come from me.

Don't tell me that my grief will pass,
that I will soon be free.

Don't stand in pious judgment of the bonds I
must untie.

Don't tell me how to suffer,
and don't tell me how to cry.

My life is filled with selfishness.

My pain is all I see.

But I need you,
and I need your love unconditionally.

Accept me in my ups and downs,
I need someone to share.

Just hold my hand and let me cry,
and say "My friend, I care."

RECOMMENDED READING

"A GRIEF OBSERVED" BY

C.S. LEWIS

Following the death of his beloved wife, author C.S. Lewis allowed us a unique glimpse into his journey through grief. In this a relatable and eye-opening story, those in grief who read his words will feel a deep sense of understanding and comfort.

"No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear. I am not afraid, but the sensation is like being afraid. The same fluttering stomach, the same restlessness, the yawning." -C.S. Lewis

Spiritual Care

ACCEPTING SUPPORT

BY REV JENNIFER HACKENBRUCH
SPIRITUAL CARE COORDINATOR

Support comes to us in many different forms and in many different ways. Some of it is expected and some of it is unexpected. What support do you accept? What support do you decline? How do you support yourself during your time of loss, grief, and mourning? Mourning can be a time of looking within, or a time of connecting to your Source, Creator, God. It is personal journey that is yours, and yours alone. Even though many people offer support, it may not be what you need. Only you will know what support is needed. It may change moment to moment. That is okay! If you do not know, ask yourself what it is you need during this time. Go within and ask. Ask God, ask yourself, however that may look for you, and wait for the answer. It is okay not to get an answer right away. If you do not know, a good gauge is to notice how you feel and how your body feels when the support is offered. Does your heart open and feel light? Does it close down and tighten? Let go of all judgment and preconceived ideas on what all

this "should" look like and trust what your body is showing you.

Trust what you receive from the Divine and based on what you receive, accept or decline the support being offered.

Take a deep breath into your body, breathing in through your nose, and breathing out through you nose. Inhale all the way into your belly and fully exhale. Become aware of your breath and allow yourself to breathe. Take a few moments and just breathe, following your breath in through your nose, and out through your nose.

As I breathe in

I accept support which feels good for me in the moment

As I breathe out

I let go of support which does not feel good for me in the moment

As I breathe in

I trust in my knowing

As I breathe out

I trust in my knowing.

"Anyone who is old enough to love,
is old enough to grieve."

-Alan Wolfelt

Kids In Grief

GRIEF AND DEVELOPMENT

Hospice of North Idaho's "Kids in Grief Support Group" will begin its second session in January 2018. There have been many questions related to the purpose of a support group for grieving children. For this reason, I'd like to take this opportunity to supply information about our group, as well as why we feel such a strong need to provide this group to our community's children.

We all know the common saying, "kids are resilient" and due to that saying, all too often, we find that kids are left out of the loop when a death occurs in the hope that they will naturally be able to side-step the pain of the loss.

Unfortunately, many times, due to this lack of communication, kids are left feeling confused, different from their peers, and as if they are not allowed to ask questions. Of course, this is not the goal. Additionally, when a death occurs, it is very seldom that it is only the child who is experiencing grief. It is often the family as a whole. What we know about people in grief is that everyone's needs are very different. In families with people at different developmental stages and with different relationships to the deceased, this is especially true.

The Kids in Grief Support Group was developed for kids ages 6 - 12 to alleviate some of the stress for parents and caregivers who may not know what to say or how to say it, due to their own grief. This group has grief related goals, which are covered over the course of 6 weeks,

including building trust between group members which promotes a feeling of community, preserving memories that are important to each child related to the loved one who has died, and learning how to identify and honor strong emotions as they come up.

Group members are also given the ability to say goodbye to their loved one or update them on their lives since they have died, through letter writing. A favorite activity from our Fall 2017 Session included painting a feeling word related to their grief on a horse at the K-2 Equestrian Center. After painting a grief word on the horse, each child is then given an opportunity to wash the word off the horse in a symbolic gesture of letting that feeling go.

At the conclusion of group, kids leave with an understanding that they are not alone in their grief. Through group, they have built relationships and connections with other kids who can relate to their experience, which is invaluable to a child. Additionally, they have learned skills that will help them cope with losses as they occur throughout their lives.

Truly, we are proud to provide this service to our community's children free of charge, regardless of their affiliation with Hospice of North Idaho. This group is offered twice a year, once in the winter, and again in the fall.

For more information, or to register your child for our upcoming session, please call (208) 772-7994.

Camp Kaniksu

REGISTER NOW!

Camp Kaniksu is a 3-day, 2-night, free, grief camp for kids and teens, ages 6 -15.

Sign your child up to join Hospice of North Idaho grief counselor, trained volunteers, and other kids and teens who can relate to their experience for a weekend of fun and skill building. Through this camp, kids will learn that they are not alone, and that having fun is a part of healing.





HOSPICE
OF NORTH IDAHO

New Location!

2290 W Prairie Avenue
Coeur d'Alene ID 83815

Upcoming Events

HOSPICE OF NORTH IDAHO IS HERE FOR YOU

**ON-
GOING
SUPPORT**

SPRING MEMORIAL - BRUNCH

"A day of hope and remembrance"

May 19, 2018, 11:00AM-1:00PM

At our new location, 2290 W Prairie Avenue, Coeur d'Alene

CAMP KANIKSU

"Free grief camp for kids"

July 13-15, 2018, Camp Lutherhaven

Apply on our website.

REACH OUT, FIND RESOURCES, SHARE STORIES
(208) 772-7994 | WWW.HOSPICEOFNORTHIDAHO.ORG