

# MAY 2019

## LifePath Hospice Bereavement and Support Group Programs



**LIFEPATH**  
HOSPICE  
A Chapters Health® Affiliate  
Licensed Since 1983

After the loss of a loved one, some survivors may find the pain associated with their loss doesn't lessen with time. Individual grief counseling and support groups provide a safe place to express feelings, share experiences, learn about grief and move ahead in the process. LifePath Hospice provides various support groups and individual counseling. It is our hope that you will take advantage of the programs that best suit your particular needs and circumstances.

You don't have to be the loved one of a LifePath Hospice patient to participate in these support services. We are pleased to offer our programs to anyone residing in Hillsborough County who has experienced the death of a loved one. Preregistration is required for all offerings. For more information and to register for support groups, please call 813-877-2200 or visit the calendar at [www.chaptershealth.org](http://www.chaptershealth.org).

### **New Beginnings Adult Grief Support Groups**

Eight-week support groups for adults grieving the loss of a loved one. For more information, visit the calendar at [www.chaptershealth.org](http://www.chaptershealth.org) or call 813-877-2200. We make every effort to accommodate your group preference, but please be aware that the group size is limited.

#### **Carrollwood**

Thursdays, May 30 – July 25, 2 – 3:30 p.m.\*  
*\*No meeting July 4 due to holiday*

#### **Temple Terrace**

Thursdays, May 30 – July 25, 6 – 7:30 p.m.\*  
*\*No meeting July 4 due to holiday*

#### **Sun City Center**

Mondays, June 3 – July 22, 1 – 2:30 p.m.

#### **Brandon**

Tuesdays, June 4 – July 23, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

#### **South Tampa**

Tuesdays, June 4 – July 23, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

#### **Plant City**

Call for more information. 10:30 a.m. – noon

### **Circle of Love Center**

Providing support for young grievers ages 3 to 18 and their families.

#### **Tampa**

*Second and fourth Tuesdays or Thursdays*  
May 14 or 16, 28 or 30  
6 – 7:30 p.m.

#### **Apollo Beach**

*Second and fourth Tuesdays*  
May 14 & 28  
6 – 7:30 p.m.

### **Ongoing Specialty Bereavement Support Groups**

These specialized support groups can be joined at any time. Please call with questions or to register.

#### **Young Adult Support Group**

Providing support in a social environment for young adults ages 18-30

##### **Tampa**

*First and third Tuesdays*  
May 7 & 21 and June 4 & 18, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

#### **Belvedere Commons Support Group**

Providing support to the community and residents  
**Belvedere Commons, Tampa/Lake Magdalene**

*First and third Tuesdays*  
May 7 & 21 and June 4 & 18, 2 – 3:30 p.m.

#### **Aston Gardens Support Group**

Providing support to Tampa community and residents  
**Aston Gardens of Tampa/Westchase**

*Second and fourth Mondays*  
May 13 and June 10 & 24, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

#### **New! Advent Hospital Support Group**

Providing support to the Tampa community  
**Advent Hospital – Carrollwood**

*Second and fourth Tuesdays*  
May 14 & 28 and June 11 & 25, 6:15 – 7:45 p.m.

#### **Suicide Loss Support Group**

Providing support to those who have lost a loved one to suicide

##### **South Tampa – Memorial Hospital**

*Second and fourth Mondays*  
May 13 and June 10 & 24, 6 – 7:30 p.m.

#### **Loss of a Child Support Group**

Providing support for the loss of minor and adult children  
**Temple Terrace** Call 813-877-2200 for details.

# Reaching Out for Help When You Are Grieving

By Alan D. Wolfelt, PhD

When someone you love dies, you must mourn if you are to renew your capacity for love. In other words, mourning brings healing. But healing also requires the support and understanding of those around you as you embrace the pain of your loss.

I've said that the wilderness of your grief is your wilderness and that it's up to you to find your way through it. That's true. But paradoxically, you also need companionship from time to time as you journey. You need people who will walk beside you and provide you with "divine momentum"—affirmations that what you are doing is right and necessary for you and will lead to your eventual healing. You do not need people who want to walk in front of you and lead you down the path they think is right, nor do you need people who want to walk behind you and not be present to your pain.

Sharing your pain with others won't make it disappear, but it will, over time, make it more bearable. Reaching out for help also connects you to other people and strengthens the bonds of love that make life seem worth living again.

## Where to Turn for Help

"There is strength in numbers," one saying goes. Another echoes, "United we stand, divided we fall." If you are grieving, you may indeed find strength and a sense of stability if you draw on an entire support system for help.

Friends and family members can often form the core of your support system. Seek out people who encourage you to be yourself and who acknowledge your many thoughts and feelings about the death. What you need most now are caring, non-judgmental listeners.

You may also find comfort in talking to a minister or other church leader. When someone loved dies, it is natural for you to feel ambivalent about your faith and question the very meaning of life. A clergy member who responds not with criticism but with empathy to all your feelings can be a valuable resource.

A professional counselor may also be a very helpful addition to your support system. In fact, a good counselor can be something friends and family members can't: an objective listener. A counselor's

office can be that safe haven where you can "let go" of those feelings you're afraid to express elsewhere. What's more, a good counselor will then help you constructively channel those emotions.

For many grieving people, support groups are one of the best helping resources. In a group, you can connect with others who have experienced similar thoughts and feelings. You will be allowed and gently encouraged to talk about the person who died as much and as often as you like.

Remember, help comes in different forms for different people. The trick is to find the combination that works best for you and then make use of it.

## The Rule of Thirds

In my own grief journeys and in the lives of the mourners I have been privileged to counsel, I have discovered that in general, you can take all the people in your life and divide them into thirds when it comes to grief support.

One-third of the people in your life will turn out to be truly empathetic helpers. They will have a desire to understand you and your unique thoughts and feelings about the death. They will demonstrate a willingness to be taught by you and a recognition that you are the expert of your experience, not them. They will be willing to be involved in your pain and suffering without feeling the need to take it away from you. They will believe in your capacity to heal.

Another third of the people in your life will turn out to be neutral in response to your grief. They will neither help nor hinder you in your journey.

And the final third of people in your life will turn out to be harmful to you in your efforts to mourn and heal. While they are usually not setting out intentionally to harm you, they will judge you, they will try to take your grief away from you, and they will pull you off the path to healing.

Seek out your friends and family members who fall into the first group. They will be your confidants and momentum-givers on your journey. When you are actively mourning, try to avoid the last group, for they will trip you up and cause you to fall.