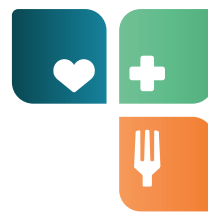


Sharing the Journey



Visiting Nurse Association

Meals on Wheels

Hospice & Palliative Care

A BEREAVEMENT PUBLICATION OF VNA HOSPICE CARE

Grief: What's Love Got To Do With It?

Kevin Moore, M. Div., Chaplain and Bereavement Coordinator, VNA Kaufman branch

So admit it. You read the title of this article, and you want to belt out some Tina Turner: "What's love got to do, got to do with it? What's love but a second hand emotion. What's love got to do, got to do with it? Who needs a heart when a heart can be broken?"

That is the chorus of that famous song. We live in a society that teaches us that love is nothing more than an emotion—a second hand one at that. We throw around the word love so often. We love beautiful weather, our favorite pair of blue jeans, ice cream, and our loved ones. Love is so much more than merely a second hand emotion, and therefore when we lose someone we love, grief is very challenging.

Every loss we experience brings about grief.

Whether we lose our glasses, our wallet, or our children or grandchildren at the store, we have a sense of grief. With each of these examples, the intensity is greater and greater. We grieve more when our children are missing than when we misplace our glasses. When we find them, relief sets in.

That leads us to the loss you are experiencing today. You are probably reading this because you have lost someone you love recently.

The difference with this loss is that it was not misplaced, or stolen. Your loved one has died. He or she is not coming back, and you know that. Your grieving is intense. Some of you are wondering if you will be able to survive the pain you are experiencing. First of all, let me assure you that you will survive the pain you are experiencing. The pain will lessen over time so long as you are willing to do the hard work of grieving. Just by reading a newsletter about grief you are doing some of that hard work. You are already making progress!



Danny Mack, a former chaplain with VNA Hospice, has a theory about grief and love. He says that love is something that lives inside of us. When we love someone, that love reaches out to the person that we love. When that person is alive, our love does not have to travel very far to reach that person. Think about that for a moment. How do

you feel when people you love are gone on a trip? You miss them. We hear love stories of couples separated by many miles talking about how their heart aches for their beloved. Perhaps that love inside of us is actually reaching out to "touch" those we love.

Now take that theory a step further. Your loved one has died. He or she is no longer next to you. He or she is no longer in the next room, across town in the nursing home, or

The Visiting Nurse Association Hospice Care Bereavement Staff hope the information in this quarterly newsletter will comfort, educate, and support you in your time of grief.

WINTER 2020

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at the hospital. You don't know where your loved one is. Of course you can point to the gravesite or the urn where your loved one's body now resides; but is that really where your loved one is? You say, well, I know my loved one is in heaven. Wonderful. That is something that gives you hope. That is important. But let me ask a follow up question. Where is heaven located? We don't know. We are at a loss. We truly have no idea where our loved one is anymore.



how question; I do believe whole heartedly that your love somehow, someday does find your loved one again. When that happens, your love works to find a new equilibrium.

Your love learns how to adjust to a new relationship with your loved one. Instead of the person being physically present to receive your love, your love learns how to “love” that person across the unseen divide. This is not something that happens all at once—it takes time to adjust.

So what happens to that love that is inside of us? Remember we said that our love reaches out for our loved one. Danny's theory is that the love inside of us is reaching out to find our loved one. Try to get this image in your mind: There is something very powerful inside of you (your love) that is fighting, clawing, and doing everything imaginable to get out and find your loved one who has died. I am not trying to paint the picture of an alien pushing out through your chest like in the movies, but that is kind of the idea.

Your love is so intense, that it will do everything in its power to “find” your loved one now. It pushes and prods, literally causing physical pain as it tries to reach for the one it seeks. Lack of appetite, nausea, dizziness, fatigue, constipation, chest pain, tension, headaches, uncontrollable crying are all symptoms of grief. Perhaps these are all symptoms of that deep love inside of you battling to get out and find the one you love. Perhaps it is because of your deep love for the one you lost, you are now experiencing so much pain.

If that is the case, how in the world will you ever feel better? If you don't know where your loved one is, how will your love ever find him or her? While I don't have an answer to the

That adjustment period takes place through grieving and healing. As you share memories of your loved one, your love is learning to adjust. As you acknowledge your emotions and connect them with your grief—and your love—your love learns to adjust. As you begin to reengage with society—participating in life again—your love is adjusting. Through your time of healing, you continue to love the one who is gone, but that love responds to your loved one differently. Your love learns that it no longer has to push and prod to get out and find your loved one. Your loved one is still with you—just in a different form. The physical and emotional pain that your grief—your love?—has inflicted on you will diminish, and eventually go away. The love remains.

ONLINE SUPPORT

For additional grief resources, please visit VNA's website at: vnatexas.org/griefhelp

Or scan QR code with your smartphone.



A QR reader can be installed from either Google or iTunes. Once installed simply scan the code and it will take you to the website.

Things to Keep in Mind about Grief

By Susan Bryan, MA, LPC, Bereavement Coordinator, VNA Collin Branch

Grief is the natural, normal & necessary reaction to a loss. Grief is not an illness or disorder.

There is no deadline to grieve. Grief is a journey, not a race. Grief takes as long as it takes.

The way out of grief is to go through it. Grief is exhausting and hard work.

Grief comes in waves – sometimes gentle and sometimes overwhelming.

Grief and mourning don't progress in predictable or orderly stages.

Grief is different and unique for every person. There is no one right way to grieve. You are the expert on your own grief.

During the first several months of grief, you will probably feel like you are in a fog and find it difficult to think straight, concentrate and/or make good decisions.

Most grief experts agree that, depending on the loss, it takes 1-3 years to adjust to the loss and find a “new normal” in life.

There is no such thing as “getting over” your grief. You will eventually learn to “live with” your loss and grief and begin to move forward in your life. .

There is no such thing as “getting complete closure”, or “complete recovery” or “being healed” of your grief. Healing and growth can come after time and work attending to your grief reactions, feelings and experiences.

When you grieve, you not only grieve the physical loss of the person, but also all the

hopes, dreams and goals you had with them, and all the roles that they played in your life.

You may experience many feelings in grief – disbelief, denial, sadness, anger, regret, fear, guilt, loneliness, and even relief - and these are all normal.

Grief and love are interrelated –The more you love the person who has died, the more you will grieve. You will never forget or stop loving the person – Love never dies.

You need the care and support from others to work through your grief – choose family,

friends, counselors or pastors understand some of the grief pain and process and will listen and be present with you in your grief.

*Remembering is an act of resurrection,
each repetition a vital layer of mourning, in
memory of those we are sure to meet again.
– Nancy Cobb, In Lieu of Flowers*

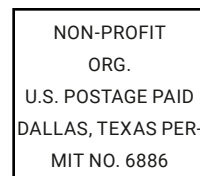
GRIEF RESOURCES

*Understanding Your Grief: Ten
Essential Touchstones for Finding
Hope and Healing Your Heart*
by Wolfelt, Alan, Ph. D.
ISBN: 978-1-879651-35-7

Please know that Visiting Nurse Association
Bereavement Coordinators are here
to support you in your grief. Please
contact us if you are having a difficult
time moving through your grief.

You may also follow us on Facebook
VNA Texas
For Grief Articles and Grief Group Information.

Texas' First & Most Experienced Hospice Provider



1420 W. Mockingbird Ln., Suite 700
Dallas, Texas 75247

vnatexas.org



For more information, email gethelp@vnatexas.org or contact your local VNA branch:

Visiting Nurse Association Locations

VNA Headquarters & Dallas Branch

1420 W. Mockingbird Lane, Suite 700
Dallas, TX 75247
(214) 689-0000

Sue Rafferty (214) 689-2922

rafferts@vnatexas.org

Counties Served: Dallas and Tarrant

Collin Branch

7290 Virginia Parkway, Suite 2300
McKinney, Texas 75071
(972) 562-0140

Susan Bryan (972) 562-0140

bryans@vnatexas.org

Counties Served: Collin, Fannin and Grayson

East Texas Branch

874 Ed Hall Drive, Suite 105
Kaufman, TX 75142
(972) 962-7500

Kevin Moore (972) 962-7500

moorek@vnatexas.org

Counties Served: Ellis, Henderson, Hunt, Kaufman, Rockwall & Van Zandt with parts of Johnson and Navarro

VNA Ann's Haven

2800 Shoreline Dr., Suite 250
Denton, TX 76210
(940) 349-5900

Kimberly Mackay-Pearson (940) 349-5900

Kimberly.mackaypearson@vnatexas.org

Counties Served: Denton, Tarrant, Wise and parts of Cooke

VNA encourages family members to wait a minimum of one year following the death of a loved one before serving as a hospice patient care volunteer or bereavement support volunteer.

VNA Grief Care Calendar for Winter 2021

VNA bereavement events provide an opportunity for bereaved individuals to meet with others who understand loss and learn more about helping themselves. We will resume our in-person grief events when our medical staff deems it safe to do so. We are holding some on-line Zoom Grief Groups. **Please reach out to your Bereavement Coordinator for more information or support.**

Dallas County

All of the groups are currently the Zoom platform

Lunchtime Grief Support

4th Thursdays, January 28, February 25,
March 25, April 22
Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Sharing the Journey: Coping With Grief

6 Week group – Wednesdays
Starting January 8 to February 10
1:00p.m. to 2:30p.m.

Sharing the Journey: Coping With Grief

6 Week group – Fridays
Starting February 19 to March 26
9:30a.m. to 11:00a.m.

Contact Sue Rafferty to sign up and get the zoom link, (972) 215-6128 or rafferts@vnatexas.org

Collin County

All of the groups are currently the Zoom platform

Lunchtime Grief Support

4th Tuesdays, January 26, February 23, March 23
Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Grieving Hearts Group (loss of spouse)

2nd Tuesdays, January 12, February 9, March 9
10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Sharing the Journey: Coping with Grief - 6 Weeks session, Starting January 27, Wednesdays
10:00a.m. – 11:30a.m.

Contact Susan Bryan to sign up and get zoom link, (214) 733-5543 or bryans@vnatexas.org

Denton County

All of the groups are currently the Zoom platform

Lunchtime Grief Support

Tuesdays, Jan. 12, Feb. 9, March 9 & April 13
Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Monthly Bereavement Support Group

Wednesdays, Jan. 13, Feb. 10, March 10 & April 14
1:00p.m. – 3:00p.m.

Sharing the Journey: Coping with Grief

6 Weeks each sessions
Starting January 11, March 1 & April 19
Mondays 1:00p.m. – 3:00p.m.
OR Starting January 14, March 4 & April 22
Thursdays 6:00p.m. – 8:00p.m.

Care Givers Get Together

Wednesdays, Jan. 20, Feb. 17, March 17 & April 21
5:30p.m. – 6:30p.m.

Grieving Hearts

Tuesdays, Feb. 23, March 23 & April 27
1:00p.m. – 3:00p.m.

Contact Kim Mackay-Pearson to sign up and get the zoom link, (214) 263-1916 or Kimberly.mackaypearson@vnatexas.org

Kaufman County

No events planned at this time. Please see information about Zoom grief groups being held in Dallas, Denton and Collin that you are welcome to attend.

Contact Kevin Moore for information in the Kaufman area (972) 962-7500 or moorek@vnatexas.org

Grief Resources for Winter 2021

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Dallas: Sue Rafferty – 214-689-2922 | rafferts@vnatexas.org

Collin: Susan Bryan – 214-733-5543 | bryans@vnatexas.org

Denton: Kimberly Mackay-Pearson – 214-263-1916 | Kimberly.mackaypearson@vnatexas.org

Kaufman: Kevin Moore – 972-962-7500 | moorek@vnatexas.org

Online Grief Support Groups

www.faithandgrief.org/gatherings – A local faith-based organization that is currently holding online grief meetings.

www.griefshare.org – A faith-based grief program that uses video lessons and discussion groups. Many of its groups are being done online; check their website to find ones near you.

<https://www.thewidowsjourney.org/> – Dallas organization for widows that holds support meetings online.

Helpful Websites for Loss and Grief

www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/grief – Listing of private practice counselors and therapists in your area who specialize in grief and loss (VNA doesn't endorse these, but is only sharing this website info if it is helpful to you)

www.aftertalk.com – Website with articles, blog, resource center, and an "ask Dr. Robert Niemeyer" column, with space for writing private conversations to loved ones and archiving memories

www.centerforloss.com – Links to books and articles by grief counselor and educator Alan Wolfelt, PhD.

www.grief.com – Website with videos and info from grief expert and educator Dr. David Kessler.

www.thegrieftoolbox.com – A place for grief tools, where people can find the grief resources they need. Includes links to articles, videos, support group finder.

www.whatsyourgrief.com – Website about many aspects of coping with grief

www.widownet.org – Information and self-help resources for widows and widowers, discussion boards.

www.griefhealing.com – Website with extensive quotes/poems section, articles on loss and pet loss, discussion groups.

www.healgrief.org – Social support network providing resources and support for coping with grief.

www.opentohope.com – Online resource center that includes community forums and articles, podcasts, and videos on a wide variety of grief-related topics.

www.ourhouse-grief.org/grief-pages (has Spanish resources) – Grief articles in English and Spanish

www.connect.legacy.com – Online support groups, articles, blogs, resources, and more.

www.forums.grieving.com – Forums for different kinds of losses and grief issues.

www.hubpages.com/health/grief-loss-bereavement – Extensive website about grief and loss with many links to grief-related articles.