



901 Jones Road
Springdale, AR 72762



Transitions Newsletter

Summer 2015

CARE GIVER'S REMORSE

"A NORMAL GRIEF RESPONSE"

I have the privilege of facilitating many of the grief classes and support groups that Circle of Life offers the bereaved. Although each group differs by the number of people, gender of attendees and the type of death each individual has experienced, there are always common themes that come up among those attending

One theme that I have heard repeatedly is what I will designate as "the caregivers remorse". Many of our bereaved come to a class or support group following the death of someone who they have cared for over a long period of time. Patients, who are diagnosed with Alzheimer, COPD, diabetes, and other diseases which may go on for a period of years, may require round the clock caregivers for much of this time. In most cases I see the caregiving fall to the spouse or a close family member.

Once the patient dies, many times the care giver experiences some guilt or remorse. "I wish I could have done more, he/she may have lived longer" or "I did all I could, I wanted them to stay at home and not go to a nursing home". I sometimes refer to these as the "would ofs, could ofs" of grief and loss. If only I would have, or if only we could have done something differently; the outcome might have changed. As we process these feelings and emotions with the bereaved; many times they come to recognize they provided the best care they could under the circumstances, with the information and tools they were provided by the professionals who had oversight to their family members care.

Additionally, I sometimes hear someone say "you know, I spent so much time caring for my family member, I put my life on hold" and "I cared for my spouse, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and many times I was resentful that I was the one who had to care for them".

These are valid and normal responses following the death of someone who has been ill for a long period of time. During the patient's illness or in their final decline, many times the caregiver "circles the wagons", not allowing assistance from others. Conversely, many times there does not seem to be support available. Following the death, the caregiver is aware that over the long course of the illness and caregiving life has gone on for others around them.

Both of these scenarios are common responses to loss and grief following the extended illness of a loved one or family member. I would encourage you; after you have had time to mourn your loss, to begin to gradually engage in activities that you enjoyed participating in prior to the illness of your family member. Remember, gradually, make sure your energy level is up and you are up to it emotionally as well. Re-connect with friends, join a new club, where you might meet new people: this is a time of renewal and re-charging of your emotional and physical energy

This journey may take time, but you will get there!

Best to you, *Cristie Ginther, Bereavement Coordinator*



**THE GRIEF
CENTER**
at Circle of Life
NWA's Resource for Grief and Loss

SUPPORT GROUPS AND CLASSES

Springdale location : 901 Jones Road
Bentonville location: Legacy Village 1201 N.E. Legacy Parkway

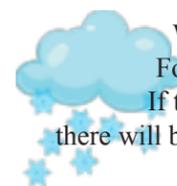
2015 GRIEF CLASS SCHEDULE

June 30, 2015 through August 4, 2015
October 6, 2015 through November 10, 2015
"Hope for the Holidays" workshop: November 19, 2015

All classes and support groups are free of charge.

For additional information please call 479-872-3338
To Register: 479-872-3338 or email jneidholdt@nwacircleoflife.org

Grieving Parent Support Group 6:00 PM
Rolling Hills Baptist Church Fayetteville, AR 72703 479-521-2660



WEATHER CANCELLATION

For all support groups and classes.
If the Springdale Schools are closed
there will be **no** support group or class held that day.

Help Stop Duplicate or unwanted Mailings To update your information or to be removed from our mailing list
contact Jeannie at jneidholdt@nwacircleoflife.org or 479-872-3338

**"Memory is a way of holding onto
the things you love, the things
you are, the things you never want to lose.
~From the television show
the Wonder Years.**

CIRCLE OF LIFE BEREAVEMENT AND SPIRITUAL CARE TEAM

Bereavement & Spiritual Care Coordinator
Cristie Ginther, MA, CT

Chaplains

Chuck Bengtson, M.Div
Audie Long, M.Div
Jim Moore, D.Min
John Pate, BCCC

Bereavement Counselor
Angela Kathman LMSW

Bereavement Assistant
Jeannie Neidholdt

HOW TO REACH US

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Bereavement services
are underwritten by:

Nadine Baum Foundation

Giving Back

Our Mission at Circle of Life is to provide compassionate end-of-life care for a person's mind, body, spirit, and family when there is no longer a cure. Many of you have asked how you can "give back" to Circle of Life as a way of thanking the doctors, nurses, social workers, chaplains, and volunteers who helped your loved one.

1. Thank you notes are deeply appreciated by staff and are shared with whole teams.
2. Financial support is always welcome. We are a nonprofit organization and many of our services are supported by donations from our friends.
3. And you can give of your time. Circle of Life has more than 170 volunteers who help with patient visits, administrative duties, and staffing the greeter desk at both inpatient homes. The volunteer program staff will be happy to visit with you about the next training program.
4. You can help Circle of Life by telling your story to other people and encouraging them to consider hospice care when the time comes.

FROM YOUR BEREAVEMENT LIBRARY: ADULT BOOKS

Grief is a universal response to the death of a loved one, but continues to be an emotion not openly discussed. Death, dying, and grief seem to be considered taboo topics in our everyday lives. Fortunately, there exists a wide variety of literature focused on grief, loss, and end of life. I have provided below a brief selection of non-fiction literature for adults which center on grief and loss; all of which are available for checkout at our Grief Centers (at Earlene Howard Hospice Home and Legacy Village).

On Grief and Grieving

by **Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and David Kessler**

A pioneer in the field of Death and Dying, Dr. Kübler-Ross' Five Stages of Grief (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance) are well-known. Dr. Kübler-Ross and David Kessler delve further in the Five Stages and expand on them, including information on both the internal and external experiences of grief as well as reflections on their own experiences with death, dying, and grief. The authors make an important caveat that the Five Stages are merely a point of reference; no two people grieve the same way, and there is no right or wrong way to feel or to grieve.

The Year of Magical Thinking

by **Joan Didion**

A finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 2005, Joan Didion's seminal work reflects on her experience with grief after the death of her husband in 2003. Didion carefully analyzes her thoughts, emotions, and behaviors during the year following her husband's death and daughter's serious illness, and provides the reader with examples of "magical thinking" often present in grief- believing that if we can just do the right action or utter the right word, our loved ones will return to us.

Paula

by **Isabel Allende**

In December of 1991, Isabel Allende's daughter, Paula, became severely ill and fell into a coma. During the ensuing months in the hospital, Allende began a letter to her daughter explaining her family history, what she was missing while unconscious, and her own thoughts and feelings. What began as a simple letter became a profound reflection on life, loss, and the many kinds of grief - including the slow process of letting go of a terminally ill child.

Living When a Loved One Has Died

by **Earl Grollman**

"A life has ended," begins Rabbi Grollman's unique book on grief, "living goes on." Living When a Loved One Has Died is a series of short poems on the multi-faceted experience of grief and is intended to be read in several sittings. With sections such as "Shock," "Suffering," "Recovery," and "A New Life," the reader is invited to choose a section they feel drawn towards and apply the enclosed writings to their own experience.

"Books are like mirrors," writes author Carlos Ruiz Zafón, as we "see in them what [we] already have inside [ourselves]." Just as Mr. Zafón postulates, it is my hope that in choosing one of these works, you will find a word, phrase, paragraph, or emotion which resonates with you. Grief can be an isolating emotion, but it does not have to be. Please know that you are not alone, and can reach out to a book, a support group at Circle of Life, or our Grief Center for any emotional support you may need.



Angela Kathman LMSW, Bereavement Counselor

5 MYTHS ABOUT GRIEF AND MOURNING

Grief "myths" are prevalent in our society. Recognizing the myths and more importantly the truths behind them is the first step in embracing grief as a natural experience.

Grief Myth #1: Grief and Mourning are the same experiences

- Truth: Although people will often use the words to describe the same thing, there is a very important distinction. Grief is the composition of thoughts and feelings that one feels after sustaining a loss while mourning is the process one takes of moving towards healing. Grief happens within the person while mourning happens externally.

Grief Myth #2: The Stages of grief and mourning happen in a progressive, predictable order.

- Truth: Grief and Mourning are as unique as the individual itself. Everyone will feel different emotions and express them in a way that is uniquely their own.

Grief Myth #3: One should move away from grief, not towards it

- Truth: Often time's grief is viewed as something one needs to overcome or avoid, not experience. Someone who shows outward signs of grief can be perceived as self-pitying or weak. The truth is that grief needs to be experienced, not repressed, for healing to ever take place.

Grief Myth #4: The goal is to get over your grief as soon as possible.

- Truth: A person mourning the loss of a loved one needs to mourn at their own pace. Instead of focusing on getting over the grief, one could focus on growing through it. The truth is, we never "get over" our grief. We only become reconciled to it.

Grief Myth #5: Tears of grief are a sign of weakness

- Truth: Crying is a way of releasing tension and emotion. It also communicates to others the need to be comforted. One who expresses tears shows their willingness to work through their grief.

Source: Alan Wolfelt: Dispelling 5 Common Myths about Grief



GRIEF CLASSES AND SUPPORT GROUPS

Please take time to look at our
Bereavement Calendar

There are opportunities for support groups,
6 week classes and workshops to help support you on your
journey.

Grief Classes Tuesdays, June 30th - Aug 4th 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Series of 6 classes at Circle of Life Hospice
901 Jones Road
Springdale, AR

Adult Grief Classes

For adults who have experienced the loss of a
family member, friend or loved one.

Pre-registration is required and due June 23rd
Please call 479.872.3338 for more information

Art Workshop for Children

Taking a Summer break will resume in the Fall

Please call 479.872.3338 for more information



2015 MEMORIAL SERVICE

Date: Sunday, October 5th, 2:00 PM
Location: Center for Non-Profits in Rogers

SCRAP BOOK PAGES FOR OUR 2015 MEMORIAL

You will receive information on how to submit
pictures for the scrapbook pages, approximately 3
months following the loss of your loved one, friend
or family member.

Invitations to the Memorial Service will be sent out
in September.

"You are not lost. You continue in every hearty laugh,
in every nice surprise and in every moment of my life."

~Molly Fuima