thrive

You are not alone. There are resources and people to support you. There is no universal time frame for healing, but you will move forward from the place where you are now.

~ Excerpt from AFSP Surviving a Suicide Loss: Resource and Healing Guide

GRIEF SUPPORT HANDBOOK

We are so sorry for your loss.

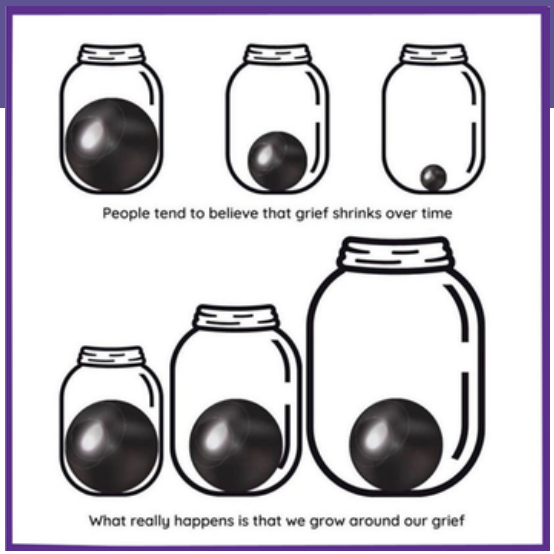
tchnetwork.org



WHAT NO ONE TELLS US ABOUT GRIEF

- Grief is isolating.
- There are often many secondary losses.
- The pain of grief can hit unexpectedly.
- Grief is exhausting.
- We may experience many feelings in one day: anger, shock, sadness, peace.
- Grief lasts longer than expected.
- Grief profoundly changes us.
- “Grief brain” is real.
- You may lose your patience.
- There may also be physical issues:
  - Confusion, difficulty speaking or focusing, shortness of breath, nausea, headache, etc.
- Connecting with others helps in healing.
- We don’t “get over” grief.
- It is important to grieve in your own way.

-David Kessler, grief.com



- Dr. Lois Tonkin

“Joy and grief do not average one another out. They exist fully, sometimes right next to each other.”

- Holly Whitaker

SELF-CARE STRATEGIES



Grieving bodies need extra rest.



Movement releases emotions & stress.



Fresh air, sunshine, and nature can be nourishing.



Creativity allows for expressing emotions that are hard to put into words.



Find a balance between self-reflection time alone & being with your support network.

Guided Journal Prompts

- **Where do you hold your grief in your body, and how does it affect you?**
- **Dear Grief, I'd really like you to know that...**
- **If you could say one more thing to your beloved, what would you say?**
- **Today, grief is... (a feeling, a place, an object, a person, an animal, an adjective...)**
- **What do you think healing looks like? What does it not look like?**

- CenterforLossandTrauma.com

Things to remember when writing to meet grief :

- *It doesn't have to be good; it just has to be true.*
- *Invite yourself to write "the next true thing."*
- *Allow questions to stay questions without feeling a need to answer them or be wise.*
- *Embrace paradox – notice how opposites can often be equally true.*

- wordwoman.com

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT & RESOURCES IN WESTERN COLORADO

Thrive Community Health Network

tchnetwork.org | 970.708.7096

- Help with finding a therapist & paying for therapy
- Grief support resources & events

Axis Health System

axishealthsystem.org | 970.252.3200

- Regional Crisis Center in Montrose, 300 N Cascade Ave
- **24/7 Axis Care Line | 970. 247.5245**

HopeWest

hopewestco.org | 970.240.7734

- Hybrid support groups for bereaved children & adults
- Montrose and Delta hospice facilities

Heartlight Center

heartlightcenter.org | 720.748.9908

- Virtual support groups, webinars, & events

CB State of Mind

cbstateofmind.org | 970.596.4698

- Scholarships for counseling in Crested Butte and Gunnison
- Resources and events

Grief Center of Southwest Colorado

griefcenterswco.org | 970.764.7142

- Bereavement services for adults, teens, children, & families
- Therapeutic groups and summer camps in Durango

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT & RESOURCES IN WESTERN COLORADO

General Grief Websites

- dougy.org
- judishouse.org
- grievewell.com
- whatsyourgrief.com

Suicide Specific Websites

- afsp.org
- suicidepreventioncolorado.org
- save.org
- lossteam.com

Survivors of Outdoor Adventures & Recovery (SOAR)

soar4life.org | info@soar4life.org

- Outdoor adventure grief & trauma therapy
- Virtual support groups and monthly workshops

Pathfinders

pathfindersforyou.org | 970.925.1226

- Grief and cancer counseling based in Aspen
- Grief & Honor summer raft trips on the Colorado River

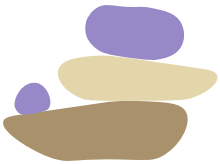
Selah Carefarm

missfoundation.org/selah-carefarm | 602.279.6477

- Traumatic grief retreats and therapy held at a sanctuary for abused & neglected animals in Sedona, Arizona

Regional Groups & Supports

- Equine Therapy at Grace Reins | Placerville | gracereins.org | 860.857.1095
- Gather & Grieve at Telluride Library | telluridelibrary.org | 970.728.4519
- Faith-based Griefshare groups in Montrose | griefshare.org
- Gunnison Valley Health Hospice/Palliative Care Groups | 970.641.4254
- Grief Writing Workshops with Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer | evermore.org



"It's okay that you're not OK.
It's also not OK that you're not OK.
Grief is rarely either/or, its often both/and."

-WhatsYourGrief.com

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS & BOOKS

Recommended Grief Authors

- Joanne Cacciatore, PhD
  - *Bearing the Unbearable: Love, Loss, and the Heartbreaking Path of Grief*

- Alan Wolfelt, PhD
  - *Grief One Day at a Time: 365 Meditations to Help You Heal After Loss*
  - *The Wilderness of Suicide Grief: Finding Your Way*

- David Kessler
- Elizabeth Kubler-Ross
- Megan Devine
- Stephen Jenkinson
- Francis Weller

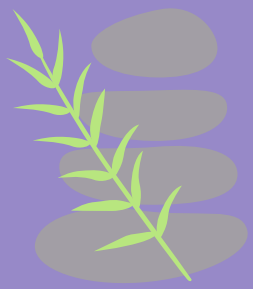


Available Online

- Grief and Honor Toolkits
  - griefandhonor.org/the-tools

- Coping With Traumatic Death Flipbook
  - flippingbook.com/view/863149/

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
  - afsp.org/ive-lost-someone
  - Surviving a Suicide Loss: Resource and Healing Guide



"I carry you with me into the world,
into the smell of rain
& the words that dance between people
& for me, it will always be this way,
walking in the light,
remembering being alive together"
— Brian Andreas

CONVERSATION GUIDES

These are merely suggestions. Don't let the fear of saying something wrong discourage you from reaching out.

Instead of...

"Let me know if there is anything I can do."

Try...

"I'm on my way to the grocery store. Can I pick something up for you?"

Instead of...

"How are you?"

Try...

"How is your grief today?"

"How are you doing today?"

Instead of...

"You are so strong."

Try...

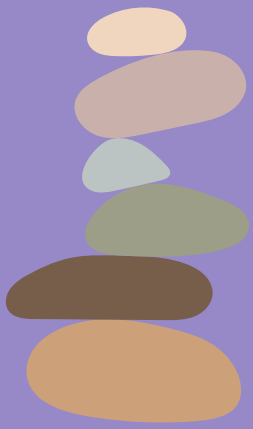
"It seems like a lot of people in your family turn to you for help. Who do you go to for support?"

Adapted from The Dougy Center "What to Say Instead"

"Grief is like carrying a rock in your pocket. At first, you notice how heavy it is all the time, and the weight is a constant burden. But after a time- while you still feel the rock is there- it stops feeling so heavy."

-Jessica Watson

Please find a touch stone in your grief kit to keep in your pocket. May you feel it and smile at its unwavering presence.



If any feelings become too much and you find yourself having thoughts of suicide, support is available by calling/texting/chatting 988 or the Colorado Crisis Line at 844.493.8255

thrive

Building healthy communities. Together

tchnetwork.org