Shepherd's Cove Hospice

SPRING-SUMMER BEREAVEMENT NEWSLETTER

THAT FIRST SUMMER VACATION

Summertime is near and you may be planning a vacation. If this is your first since your loved one's death it might be quite difficult. Here are some suggestions that could help.

Be gentle with yourself. Don't expect too much on your first vacation. The first time we do anything without our loved one is hard.

Plan to do some grief work, because you will. Allow time enough on the trip to cope with possible bad days by doing just what you feel like doing.

Be aware your loved one will be on your mind day and night, just as he/she is at home. Our grief goes with us.

Plan a vacation that is restful. You need all the rest you can get at this time. If you plan to visit relatives for the first time since your loved one's death, remember they mean well even if their remarks seem insensitive. Before you leave, talk with your traveling companions. Even if they are family, they may not understand why you aren't "your old self". Explain that you may cry at odd moments or you may not have your usual interest or energy. Assure them your behavior is because you miss your loved one, rather than a reaction to something they said or did.

If you have been maintaining your loved one's grave, let a friend or family member do it while you're away. This way you need not feel guilty and the family member or friend will have an opportunity to help you.

~You can have a memorable vacation even though it may be difficult. You will look back on it as another growing experience in you grief journey. ~

(Excerpted from an article by Diana Hammock – Reprint permission from The Chrysalis Newsletter)

The Mourner's Bill of Rights

1. You have the right to experience your own unique grief.
2. You have the right to talk about your grief.
3. You have the right to feel a multitude of emotions.
4. You have the right to be tolerant of your physical and emotional limits.
5. You have the right to experience "griefbursts."
6. You have the right to make use of ritual.
7. You have the right to embrace your spirituality.
8. You have the right to search for meaning.
9. You have the right to treasure your memories.
10. You have the right to move toward your grief and heal.

By Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D, Center for Loss & Life Transition

RULES for FAMILY HEALING

It's ok to talk about feelings, even bad feelings. Talking will help the pain go away.

Feeling guilty or angry is normal. We all do or say things we later regret, but none of us are to blame for _____death.

It's ok to cry or feel sad or lonely. Tears help us to heal and feel better. We all miss_____ very much.

It's okay to laugh. This doesn't mean we love _____ any less. Laughter is God's way of helping us to connect to each other.

It's ok to share a memory and mention _____name, even if it brings tears, for memories are gifts that are meant to be opened and shared with each other.

~Most important: Don't forget to ask for extra hugs whenever you are feeling sad, lonely, or confused (and be prepared to give lots of hugs back). ~ (Grieving God's Way by Margaret Brownley)

MOTHER'S DAY FATHER'S DAY MEMORIAL DAY

Mother's Day and Father's Day have been set aside to honor our parents. It is a beautiful idea as is Memorial Day. But when a child, parent or even a spouse has died, these holidays fill us with dread and loom ahead of us as one more hurdle to get over. Those of us who are no longer bereaved remember how painful it was the first year, or even the second year when the "shock" was not there to protect us. But be assured that it does get easier, and eventually the pain subsides. As these special days approach, we offer these suggestions and reminders to help you cope:

- Remember the anticipation can be worse than the actual day.
- Accept the pain. Because you loved deeply, you must also grieve deeply.
- Realize the day may be difficult; try not to expect too much of yourself, of others, or of the day.
- Don't be surprised by tears—and don't try to suppress them.
- Consider going away for the weekend if possible.
- Be aware of how these holidays are affecting other family members. Be open and discuss the holiday(s) as a family.
- It may help to do something different that day. Go for a ride, out to dinner, have a pot-luck meal with other people who are grieving, lonely, or struggling.
- Reach out to others who may also be dreading the day. Help each other.

HOLD on to HOPE, that in time these holidays will become special again.

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP FOR ADULTS

Grief support services are available for adults. Contact SCH to request meeting dates and times at 256-891-7724 or 1-888-334-9336 or Stacey Johnson, LBSW (sjohnson@shepherdscove.org) for further information.

MAKE A DONATION

Hospice care is covered in part by Medicare, Medicaid and some private insurance carriers. Each year Shepherd's Cove Hospice also provides care for patients who are not covered by any medical insurance plan. The cost of providing this un-reimbursed care is rising each year. Shepherd's Cove Hospice has never turned any one away that qualified for hospice services based on their inability to pay, but to continue to meet the needs of the community, as a non-profit agency, we need your help! You can make a donation by mail:

Shepherd's Cove Hospice
408 Martling Road
Albertville, Al 35951

Offering grief support to children ages 4-18 FREE of charge.
Contact
Stacey Johnson, LBSW
(256)891-7724
sjohnson@shepherdscove.org

Shepherd's Cove Hospice offers an in-school grief support program to children who attend Albertville City, Arab City, Boaz City, Guntersville City, Marshall County, Scottsboro City and portions of DeKalb County, Etowah County, and Jackson County school systems.

For more information on the In-School Bereavement Program please contact Stacey Johnson, LBSW at (256)891-7724 or speak with your child's school counselor.

CHILDREN AND GRIEF
Special Celebrations and Holidays ~ Helping Bereaved Children

For bereaved children and families, traditional events or holidays may be difficult. They may trigger a re-experiencing of feelings that have begun to subside or bring new feelings or anger. Some of these occasions are obvious; Christmas, Mother's Day, Father's Day, birthdays, graduations, weddings without their loved one. Throughout life there are many situations and occasions that have deep personal meaning which may make the loss of a loved one more difficult.

In Coping With These Events, It May Be Helpful To Keep In Mind:

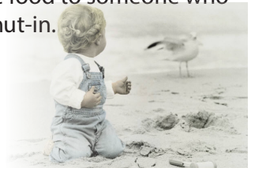
- Anticipation of the holiday or event causes as much, if not more, stress than the event itself.
- A family may feel pressured to celebrate the event in a certain way.
- Getting through the "first" - Thanksgiving, Father's Day, etc. - often brings relief.
- There is no right or wrong way to handle different events.

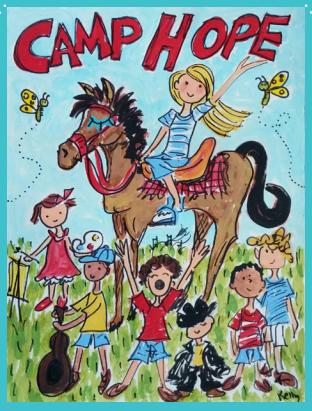
The Following Are Suggestions To Help Children Deal With Celebrations Or Holidays:

- Plan ahead as a family for the event.
- Respect everyone's individual feelings and wishes as much as possible.
- Be open to finding and developing new traditions for the event.
- Understand that plans do not have to be perfect; they can be changed over time as feelings and situations may change over time.
- Prepare children for questions and comments from others by role playing possible answers that make them feel comfortable.
- Get specific information about events and inquire about alternatives—e.g. are only fathers invited, can a close friend step in.

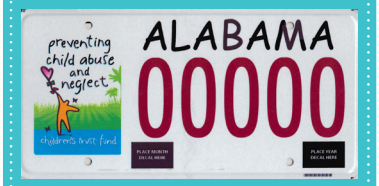
There Are A Variety Of Ways To Mark Significant Events. The Following Are Some Suggested Activities That Might Help In Different Situations:

- Continue the same family or religious ritual while acknowledging the changes.
- Visit the cemetery or a favorite spot the family had enjoyed.
- Identify a new place to serve as a special memorial site.
- Start a new traditional activity.
- Write a letter or an essay to include the favorite things about the day or person that made the occasion special.
- Make the person's favorite foods or meal in their honor.
- Diagram the family tree.
- Review or make a new scrapbook with stories, drawings, and photos.
- Do something in honor of the person who has died: Volunteer, make a donation, take food to someone who is shut-in.





For information about Community Camp HOPE, for families of children in grief, call 256-891-7724.



Purchase a preventing child abuse and neglect license plate

When you buy a Children's Trust Fund speciality license plate or a Realtor specialty license plate, approximately 92% of the purchase price goes directly to fund community-based prevention programs in Alabama. These tags are available at every County Probate Office and are tax-deductible.

Information in this packet is from the **Center For Loss & Life Transition.** Visit ***www.centerforloss.com*** to find helpful books and tools for coping with grief. Email ***info@centerforloss.com*** **or call (970) 226-6050.**

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- Check out our blog at shepherdscovehospice.org/our-blog

MY GRIEF RIGHTS for Kids

1. I have the right to have my own unique feelings about death.
2. I have the right to talk about my grief whenever I feel like talking.
3. I have the right to show my feelings of grief in my own way.
4. I have the right to need other people to help me with my grief, especially grown-ups who care about me.
5. I have the right to get upset about normal, everyday problems.
6. I have the right to have "griefbursts."
7. I have the right to use my beliefs about God to help me deal with my feelings of grief.
8. I have the right to try to figure out why the person I loved died.
9. I have the right to think and talk about my memories of the person who died.
10. I have the right to move toward and feel my grief and, over time, to heal.

By Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D
Center for Loss & Life Transition

Draw a picture or write a letter to your loved one here:

Smoking Cessation

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States. Quitting can help you add years to your life. Excellent information and resources on how to quit smoking can be found at https://smokefree.gov.

This program is funded in part through the a partnership with the Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and the Children's Trust Fund of Alabama.