

# THE IMPORTANCE OF GRIEF

Though it's a natural part of life, we know that losing a loved one can be very challenging. Our special bereavement programs can help those who need emotional support or just need a little extra help coping. We can also help family members understand each other's feelings and share their thoughts, wishes, and concerns. Hospice of Lenawee supports those who have lost a loved one by helping them adjust, begin to heal, and ultimately regaining the ability to re-invest in life and relationships.

Re-investing in life and the ones you love does not mean neglecting or abandoning your feelings, it simply means that you can validate and accept them in a healthy way. At Hospice of Lenawee we also understand that experiencing the grief of a lost relationship is a completely natural feeling, though it may not feel that way at the time. Grief can be painful and often confusing, but without it we would not be able to fully understand the beauty of what it means to be fully human.

We know that you are experiencing a very difficult time, and although you may feel that no one truly knows what you're going through, it's important to remember that we are here if you need someone to talk to, or if you just want someone that will listen.

# BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

Hospice of Lenawee's Bereavement Center is an extension of the total care we provide. It is an outgrowth of our concern for any person who has suffered a loss. Hospice of Lenawee's Bereavement Center is open to anyone in our community who has suffered a loss. Due to generous community support, there are no fees associated with bereavement care. Hospice of Lenawee's Bereavement services include:

- Bereavement Counseling for Adults and Children
- Community Education
- Referral Services
- Reference Library and Resource Materials
- Memorial Services
- Support Groups for Adults, Teens, and Children
- Workshops and Seminars
- Trauma Intervention
- Workplace Grief Assistance

For more information or to obtain additional resources, please contact the Bereavement Department at Hospice of Lenawee.



HOSPICE *of* LENAWEЕ

[www.hospiceoflenawee.org](http://www.hospiceoflenawee.org)

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# BEREAVEMENT



HOSPICE *of* LENAWEЕ

*We Carry Your Heart in Our Heart*

**A JOURNEY  
THROUGH GRIEF**



# HOW TO HELP YOURSELF IN GRIEF

**FIND SUPPORT.** You need warmth and caring. Friends and relatives can help—let them.

**ACCEPT YOUR GRIEF.** It is a natural healing process. Roll with its tides.

**LOOK FOR MODELS.** Grief is painful. It helps to know that others have coped with it. Books and support groups can help.

**LEARN ABOUT GRIEF.** Understanding grief can make it safer and more predictable. It gives hope.

**EXPRESS IT.** Without release, grief can leave you frozen and stoic. Journaling, writing poetry, drawing, physical activities, music and talking are all ways to let it out. You may need to do it again, and again.

**ACCEPT YOUR FEELINGS.** They may be very intense. Looking at them can help you learn about yourself and the meaning of your loss.

**PACE YOURSELF.** Grief takes energy. A slower pace with times of diversion and mild exercise will aid the healing process. Be sure to eat properly.

**TRUST YOURSELF.** Friends' advice often helps, but you know your needs best.

**DON'T BE AFRAID TO HAVE FUN.** Laughter is good medicine. Children and pets can help. SMILE!

**MAINTAIN HOPE.** Faith is not the absence of fear, but the willingness to go on when fear is present. Healing will come eventually.

# COMMON GRIEF REACTIONS

## PHYSICAL REACTIONS

- Deep Sighing
- Rapid Heartbeat
- Weakness/Fatigue
- Muscle Tension
- Sleep Disturbances
- Decreased Resistance to Illness
- Increased Blood Pressure
- Weight and Appetite Change

## BEHAVIORAL REACTIONS

- Detached from Surroundings
- Disoriented to Time and Place
- Lack of Concentration
- Blameful of Others
- Change in Decision Making Abilities
- Seeking Solitude
- Apathetic – Preoccupied
- Increase or Decrease in Activity
- Finishing “Unfinished Business”
- Seeking and Providing Forgiveness
- Numbness
- Sadness

## EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

- Confusion
- Yearning
- Anger, Guilt, Euphoria
- Peacefulness
- Feeling of Being Lost
- Bitterness – Vengefulness
- Hopelessness – Helplessness

# HOSPICE

## HOW TO HELP OTHERS

- **Be there.** People in grief need support and presence much more than advice. Be available.
- **Initiate contact.** The person often wants help, but can't ask.
- **Listen.** Listening without judgment or interruption can be the most important gift you can give.
- **Touch.** It can be healing. Pay attention to the other person's comfort. A hand on the shoulder, a hug, or a neck rub feels good.
- **Silence is golden.** Sometimes there are no words for grief and no words to take away the pain. Silence can show your trust and acceptance.
- **Be patient.** With yourself and with your friend—you may need to give more of yourself than you ever imagined.
- **Have fun.** Laughter and diversions are wonderful ways to regain energy.
- **Help your friend find support.** Assist them in expanding their support group.
- **Call Hospice of Lenawee, your church, or other friends for resources.**
- **Be yourself.** Show your feelings and your natural concerns. Be a friend who shares.
- **Believe in the person's ability to recover and grow.** Your hope and faith may be needed when their's fails.

