

Bereavement



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WITH SINCERE SYMPATHY

Golden Valley Memorial Healthcare would like to extend our deepest sympathy to you and your family in this time of loss. Losing a loved one can bring emotions you have never felt before, and it may be difficult to understand how to deal with these emotions. Please accept the resources within this packet, which hopefully will provide some comfort to you, as well as some emotional and spiritual support.

At some point you may be ready to connect with other people who are dealing with grief and loss. While your experiences may be very different, you will have an opportunity to have honest and realistic conversations that may help you know that you are not alone on this difficult grief journey.

We would like to extend an invitation to attend the GVMH Grief Group. This is a free service offered to the communities that we serve.

The Grief Group meets on the third Thursday of each month at 3 p.m.

GVMH Home Services Office
1703 N. Second Street
Clinton, MO 64735

You do not have to reserve a spot, but if you plan to attend, please let us know by calling 660.890.2014.

If we can provide further support to you, we encourage you to reach out to Alexis Delap, MSW, at alexis.delap@gvmh.org or 660.890.2014.

If you need to speak with our Chaplain, please call Derry Gibson, MA, BCC, at 660.890.8586 or email derry.gibson@gvmh.org.

Sincerely,

Alexis Delap, MSW
Bereavement Coordinator

AREA FUNERAL HOMES

Vasant-Mills

314 W. Jefferson
Clinton, MO 64735
660.885.2021

Consalus Funeral Home

209 S. 2nd Street
Clinton, MO 64735
660.885.3421

Bradley & Hadley Funeral Home

1410 Dzf Road
Clinton, MO 64735
660.885.2434

Hadley Funeral Home

405 E. Benton Street
Windsor, MO 65360
660.647.2125

Reser Funeral Home

101 E. Main Street
Warsaw, MO 65355
660.438.5151

Sheldon-Goodrich Funeral Home

3rd & Market Street
Osceola, MO 64776
417.646.8135

Dickey Funeral Home

711 Old Hwy. 7
Garden City, MO 64747

Fox Funeral Home

302 E. Butterfield Trail
Cole Camp, MO 65325

Hill & Son Funeral Home

213 W. 6th Street
Appleton City, MO 64724

GRIEF SUPPORT | LOCAL RESOURCES

GVMH Hospice Services

Alexis Delap, MSW
660.890.2014

GVMH Grief Support Group

Call 660.890.2014 and let us know you will be attending.

First Baptist Church Grief Share Group

Call 660.885.2211 or find a group on www.griefshare.org.

Compass Health Network

844.853.8937

National Suicide Hotline

988

Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Infant Loss

GVMH SHARE Support Group: SHARE meets the second Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. in the Medical Plaza Classroom. The group serves those whose lives are touched by the tragic death of a baby through pregnancy loss, stillbirth or in the first months of life. For more information, contact Kelsey Himes at kelseyhimes22@yahoo.com.

GRIEF SUPPORT | ONLINE RESOURCES

Adults

- **www.aftertalk.com:** AfterTalk was created as a place for comfort and sharing for those who have experienced loss or are supporting a loved one in hospice care. The Private Conversations space is a sanctuary where you can write to your loved one and save your writing, photos or videos. The Hospice Memory Archiving is your private space to document, share and preserve what you want your loved ones to know today and for the future. The AfterTalk Blog is home to articles and inspirational quotes and a safe place to share your feedback as well. Dr. Robert Neimeyer answers readers' questions about grieving as well as anticipatory grief in his column. This site also has a resource center, is nondenominational and free to all. It also is on Facebook.
- **www.griefnet.org:** An Internet community of persons dealing with grief, death and major loss. They have more than 50 email grief support groups and two websites. Their integrated approach to online grief support provides help to people working through loss and grief issues of many kinds.
- **www.webhealing.com:** Focuses on men in grief but also speaks to women. The site offers multiple resources, including articles, videos, honor pages, links and forums. This site is also on Facebook and other social media.

Children and Teens

- **www.dougy.org:** Provides a safe place for children, teens, young adults and their families who are grieving a death to share their experiences. This site has grief resources, books, DVDs, online support groups for children and teens and developmental grief responses.
- **www.faithslodge.org:** Offers a beautiful lodge setting in Wisconsin where those coping with death or medically complex conditions of a child can find hope and strength for the future. Not to forget, but to reflect.

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING SERVICES

Local Resources

GVMH Behavioral and Mental Health

1602 N. Gaines Drive
Clinton, MO 64735
Victoria Zepp, PsyD
Mallory Worrel, LCSW
Schedule an appointment: 660.890.7300

Child's Play Therapy (Ages 3-18)

210 N 2nd Street
Clinton, MO 64735
660.885.2394

Compass Health Network

1800 N. Community Drive
Clinton, MO 64735
660.885.8131 or 844.853.8937

17571 N. Dam Access Rd
Warsaw, MO 65355
660.438.1280 or 660.619.0591

Mike Salinger

135 S. Washington
Clinton, MO 64735
660.885.7090

Fuelling & Associates

115 E. Grandriver Street
Clinton, MO 64735
660.429.6678

407 E. Russell Avenue, Suite 4A
Warrensburg, MO 64093
660.429.6678

204 Seminary St
Warsaw, MO 65355
660.438.3349

Country Crossroads Counseling

Kingsville and Warrensburg
816.308.0246
www.countrycrossroadscounseling.com

McGuire Christian Counseling

1531 N. Vansant Road
Clinton, MO 64735
417.866.7773

Katy Trails Community Health

Sedalia: 660.826.4774
Warsaw: 660.438.2717
After hours: 660.851.7765

Helplines

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Call or text 988 for 24/7 access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing mental health-related distress.

Veterans Crisis Line

Text 838255, or dial 988, then press 1 to get 24/7 confidential crisis support. Responders are real people, many of them veterans, who are specially trained to support veterans.

The Trevor Project

Text "Start" to 678678 or call 866.488.7386 for 24/7 access to trained counselors who can support those under 25 who are in crisis, feeling suicidal or in need of a safe and judgment-free place to talk. The Trevor Project specializes in supporting the LGBTQ+ community.

National Sexual Assault Hotline

Call 800.656.4673 (HOPE) for confidential support services for survivors, regardless of where you are in your recovery.

National Eating Disorders Helpline

Call or text 800.931.2237 for support, resources and treatment options for yourself or a loved one who may be experiencing an eating disorder.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

Call 800.799.7233. Multilingual assistance is available.

Compass Health Crisis Intervention Hotline

Call 888.237.4567.

Treatment Finders

Inpatient and outpatient treatment for mental health/substance use

- www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists
- www.findtreatment.gov

Call 911 if you or someone else appears at risk of self-harm.



COMMUNITY RESOURCE INFORMATION

“What do I do now?” – Basic Information for Survivors

- Obtain copies of the death certificate from the funeral home.
- Obtain a copy of the autopsy report from the county medical examiner.
- Obtain a copy of a police report from the agency investigating an accident or crime.
- Obtain medical records from the hospital or clinic where the deceased was taken. (Note that it takes varying amounts of time to obtain death certificates, medical records, autopsy and police reports. Ask officials when you can expect them.)
- File for social security benefits by contacting the Social Security Administration at 1.800.772.1213.
- If the person who died was a veteran, contact the VA Benefits Administration at 800.827.1000.
- Notify the insurance agent and the bank of the person who has died.
- If the person who died was murdered, killed by a drunk and reckless driver or a hit-and run driver, you may be eligible for Crime Victim Compensation for medical, funeral and counseling bills and for loss of wages.

Department of Public Safety
Crime Victims' Compensation
P.O. Box 1589
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1589
Phone: (573) 526-6006
Email: cvc@dps.mo.gov

TRAUMATIC AND UNEXPECTED DEATH

Something terrible and unexpected has happened to someone you care about. You may be thinking, “I just talked to him!” or “I just saw her! How can this be happening?” It’s very difficult to take in all the information you are being told, to answer questions and to make decisions.

Take Time to Understand How You Feel

When someone you love dies traumatically or unexpectedly, there’s no time to think about what you might feel or to begin making any type of arrangements. You did not have the chance to care for the person or perhaps say goodbye. Instead, you may be feeling confused, angry, heartbroken or wondering what could have been done to prevent this from happening. If you saw the event that led to the death or found your loved one’s body, this can even be more unsettling.

Grief alone leaves people exhausted – physically, emotionally and spiritually. In traumatic death, there’s a need to understand what has happened and to work through the trauma of the situation before you can begin your grief journey. It’s not unusual to need to talk about the situation that led to death and hear a different perspective to understand and to make meaningful the death for yourself. You might even find it helpful to talk with the hospital staff or primary care doctor several weeks after the death to hear the story again when you are less shocked and more able to take in information.

Certain types of traumatic death are reported by the media and may involve law enforcement, the coroner, an autopsy and the court system.

For surviving family members, turning on the TV and hearing their loved one’s name mentioned can be very alarming. There are times that information is reported incorrectly and this can cause more stress to the family members. If possible, avoid TV and newspapers during your time of grief. Ask a friend or family member who is not as emotionally invested to monitor the news for you and tell you details only when needed.

What You Can Do For Your Grief

- Tell your story to supportive family and friends as much as you need to do so.
- Seek out spiritual support.
- Eat and drink in a healthy manner.
- Avoid social media, if possible. Ask a friend or family to monitor the media for you.
- If you witnessed the event, talk about the trauma you experienced with a trusted friend or counselor. Work through your feelings of the traumatic experience first so you’ll be able to grieve naturally and as thoroughly as you need.
- Allow yourself to feel as you do.
- Know that there is not a right or wrong way to grieve, and you may grieve differently than your partner or family members. Talk about the ways you grieve to better understand each other.
- Make an appointment with the primary care provider to review the autopsy report and talk about any questions you still have about what happened.

WHEN SOMEONE YOU LOVE HAS DIED

“My mother had cancer for two years. I knew she was going to die, but when she took her last breath it was like someone punched me in the stomach. I was devastated.”

– An adult daughter

Someone you love has died. You may be feeling anything from sadness, disbelief, shock, confusion, anger, fear and even relief. These are all normal feelings at a time like this, but they also can be surprising to you and others who want to soothe you. Take some time to learn about grieving.

Is There a Right Way to Grieve?

Whether the death was sudden or expected, your feelings are valid. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Some people cry. Some do not. Some need to be with people. Some want to be alone. Some are just so mad. Some are so sad. However you feel is okay.

Some people may need to repeat the story of their loved one’s death over and over. This helps them integrate the story into the life of the person who has died and make what happened meaningful. If you feel this way, find a trusted person and ask him or her to simply sit and listen to you.

Some people may be asking, “Why did this happen?” They are working through creating a meaning for the death. They may not even be looking for a specific answer, but may just need to consider the question and possible answers. If you feel this way, find a trusted person and ask him or her to listen to you and allow you to express all emotion you feel without trying to give you any answers.

Some people want to sleep or stay in bed or perhaps not leave the house for several days. They feel exhausted – emotionally, physically and spiritually. If you feel this way, go ahead and stay in for a while. Do be sure to eat healthy foods and drink plenty of water. Try walking to the mailbox and back or just around the block when you can.

Some people grieve in what seems like a logical manner rather than an emotional manner. They may not show the common emotions we think about with death. They may go back to work quickly or work on a project at home soon after the death. If this is you, that is perfectly okay. You may be asked about it by your co-workers and others: just remind them that you are grieving and this is the best way for you right now. Remember, there is no right or wrong way to grieve.

What About Other Grieving Family Members?

If you are grieving differently than a family member, talk about your styles of grieving.

Communication leads to understanding that what one person needs may not be the same as another. Support each other in your own ways of grieving.

How Will You Go On?

In time, you will begin to have better days. The loss of someone special never goes away. You will begin to integrate your loved one into your new normal. For example, maybe you will light a candle on special days in memory. You may decide to celebrate holidays by sharing special memories of the person you cared about or create new traditions.

There will be moments that bring you back to your grief – a song comes on the radio, you pass someone who reminds you of your loved one, or you see a family together and wonder what that would be like if your loved one had not died. These things are all normal parts of grief. Allow yourself to feel as you do.

“I had taken care of my ailing wife for eight years. She hadn’t recognized me for a couple years. I mourned the loss of her before she actually died. Many people did not understand why I wasn’t crying at her funeral. For me, I had grieved for years at that point and now I was relieved that she was no longer suffering and I could begin rebuilding my own life.” – A husband

What Can You Do While You Are Grieving?

Here are some things to do, if you feel it might be helpful:

- Write down your feelings and memories of your loved one
- Allow yourself to feel as you do
- Eat and drink in a healthy manner
- Go outside and be in nature
- Look for support groups, if you feel that would be helpful
- Talk about your loved one
- Seek out spiritual care and support

Perhaps most of all, tell others what you need. They want to help you, but may be afraid to say anything for fear of upsetting you. You might say, “I need you to share your memories of _____. I may cry, but this shows me you have not forgotten him and I need to know that.” Or, “For me, crying is not helpful. I think about_____ when I am cutting the grass or fixing the roof, so let’s talk about something else for now and I will be sure to let you know if I need to talk with you some more about this.” Or even, “I really just need someone to clean out my refrigerator and organize everything.” Be specific and ask for what you need and want.

TIPS FOR COPING WITH THE HOLIDAYS

Grief can rob you of emotional and physical energy. Give yourself permission to cut back on holiday tasks if they feel like chores. Focus on what is important, like sharing connections with people you care about.

- Have a backup plan: Let the host or hostess of the event know that you may need to leave early or desire a private place to go if you become overwhelmed with emotion. Identify someone who understands how you are feeling that is willing to take you home or be with you privately if needed.
- Ask others to do your shopping, shop online or give gift cards.
- Lower your expectations and stress of the holiday. If writing out cards is too much, skip this year or ask someone else to do it for you. If you cannot make the family's favorite dish, then pass this year.
- Plan ahead: decide if you want to celebrate as you have in the past, knowing someone will be missing or consider changing traditions. Some prefer to avoid the holidays all together.
- Ask others ahead of time or during the get-together to include your loved one's name and memories in the conversation.
- Acknowledge how you feel to others and that you are missing your loved one. Use their name.
- Carry a linking object with you: Something that connects you with your loved one; for example, a piece of jewelry, small keepsake or piece of fabric from a favorite article of clothing.
- Do not feel guilty about having a good time: This doesn't mean that you have forgotten or are being disrespectful to those who are not with you.

WHAT TO SAY AND DO FOR SOMEONE WHO IS GRIEVING

"The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing ... not healing, not curing ... that is a friend who cares."

– Harriet Nouwen

Your friend or perhaps a member of your family has just lost someone close to them. You want to help ease their sorrow. It is a natural reaction.

What To Say

Research shows that saying kind words to someone who is grieving can really help.

- "I am sorry that _____ has passed away."
- "If you want to talk, I am here to listen."
- "I liked" or "I loved" statements. For example:
 - "I liked Sarah's sense of humor so much."
 - "I liked the way John lit up whenever he talked about his kids."
 - "I loved how Elena always brought her delicious green-bean casserole to potlucks."
- "I remember" statements. For example:
 - "I remember when Marie brought me a bottle of wine the day I got my big promotion."
 - "I have such a good memory of Jared scoring that goal in the game against East High."
 - "I remember how much Marcus loved to eat corn on the cob and tomatoes in the summer."
- "I am here to help in any way I can."
- "You and your loved one will be in my thoughts and prayers."
- "I am just a phone call away."
- "We all need help at times like this. I am here for you."
- Offer a hug.
- Sit in silence with the person who is grieving. Just being present can be helpful.

What Not To Say

An individual who is grieving may need to express whatever emotions they are feeling at the moment. Listen rather than respond.

You may want to avoid some of the following phrases:

- “He is in a better place.”
- “This was God’s will.”
- “At least” statements. For example:
 - “At least he is not suffering anymore.”
 - “At least you had him for 20 years.”
 - “At least you have your children.”
 - “At least you have your other children.”
- “You are strong – you will get through this.”
- “You are young – you will have other children.”

What You Can Do

Your actions can be very meaningful to the friends and families of those who have died. Here are some ways you can help:

- Attend the funeral services.
- Drive the people who are grieving home from the hospital or funeral services.
- Bring them a meal.
- Offer to clean their house or take their children out for some fun.
- Check on them regularly.
- Understand that grief is physically and emotionally exhausting; offer to help them do chores or necessary work that just may be too tiring for them.
- Know that grief takes time – continue to support your friend through the months and years by acknowledging holidays and anniversaries, talking about the person who died and using the person’s name.
- Send notes and cards through the mail.
- Listen without speaking; be present for your friend’s grief and do not be afraid of tears.
- Allow grieving people to feel as they do.

What Not To Do

- Do not expect the bereaved to “get over” their grief. They will learn to live without their loved one in time, but they will not “get over” the death.
- Do not judge a person’s grief. Research shows the grief journey is different for everyone.
- Do not remove the belongings of the person who died without permission, including baby items after a miscarriage or stillbirth.
- Try not to tell the person who is grieving how to behave, for example:
 - “You should not cry.”
 - “You need to be strong for your mother.”
 - “You need to let it all out.”



SPIRITUAL CARE

“We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience.”
– Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

What is Spirituality?

In general, spirituality refers to a sense of connection to something bigger than one’s individual self. For many, it can be a connection to God, humanity, nature or a combination of them all. It usually involves a search for meaning in life and is often linked to the big questions of life: What is the purpose of my life? What is the meaning of my suffering? What is my connection to those around me? As part of your healthcare team, the Spiritual Care Chaplain is here to assist you in finding spiritual wellness and strength on the journey of life.

Our Spiritual Needs

- Forgiveness: Am I forgiven? Am I forgiving?
- Hope: What gives me hope?
- Love and acceptance: Who loves me? Am I accepted? Whom do I love and accept?
- Peace: Where do I find peace?
- Purpose: What is the purpose to my life?
- Values: What do I value and where are my priorities?

Symptoms of Spiritual Distress

- Abandonment
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Apathy
- Depression
- Guilt
- Helplessness
- Hopelessness
- Resentment
- Shame

Spiritual Health

The journey to spiritual wellness is a process in which we move from:

- Addiction to freedom
- Brokenness to wholeness
- Chaos to peace
- Despair to hope
- Fear to trust
- Guilt to forgiveness
- Isolation to connection
- Misery to joy

How a Chaplain Can Respond to Your Spiritual Needs

- Being fully present
- Listening without judgment
- Assessing your spiritual needs within your spiritual belief system
- Providing emotional support
- Encouraging the grief process
- Equipping and empowering your spiritual healing
- Assisting in your spiritual growth
- Offering words of encouragement and prayer

Spiritual Needs Self-Assessment

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do I fully understand my purpose and meaning in life?
- Do I understand how my specific beliefs influence my decisions in life?
- Do I feel connected to the people in my life whom I love and who are important to me?
- Do I make choices every day that affect my life in a positive way?
- Have I been forgiven of my mistakes?
- Am I able to forgive others who make mistakes?

If you answered no to one or more of these questions, we encourage you to contact the Chaplain at 660.890.8586.

“No matter how much we try to run away from this thirst for the answer to life, the intensity only gets stronger and stronger. We cannot escape these spiritual hungers.” – Ravi Zacharias

