



Five Steps Toward Healing

Every human being experiences loss at some point in life, yet some losses impact us more than others. While loss and the accompanying grief are part of our human journey, they can be disruptive and create an overwhelming sense of sadness, loneliness and fear. The reminders below can assist through the grieving process.

STEP 1 — Remember there is no right or wrong way to grieve. Some people outwardly express grief, while others are private. Some people want a lot of support and comfort while others need to grieve alone. Grief takes as long as it takes. There are no time limits on how long one “should” grieve. Each person’s sadness and re-orientation to life after loss is different. No one should tell someone else, “Get over it, you have been sad long enough”.

STEP 2 — Grief “comes in waves and hides in pockets.” One moment a person may feel fine and happy, and the next moment they are overwhelmed by sadness and frustration at their loss. Unexpected waves of emotion may be confusing to those around a person who is grieving. They may start crying for no apparent reason. This is a normal part of the grieving process. The waves of sadness do get further apart and less intense over time, but for a long while they may seem to just appear.

STEP 3 — The shortest way to the other side of grief is through it. A person who tries to suppress their sadness about a loss will eventually have to

deal with the anger, sadness and unfairness of the loss. You can delay your grief, but you cannot avoid it. The more unresolved and suppressed grief is, the more a person’s life will be emotionally restricted, and their grief will come out in unconscious ways at those around them. It is important to honor and acknowledge grief and loss and the accompanying feelings so these feelings are not slipping out at unwanted times at others, or turned inward and causing physical distress.



STEP 4 — Spend time with long-term friends and caring relatives. Continuity in life is important. Being able to relive memories, reconnect with the past and have a sense that you are not all alone is important.

STEP 5 — Take advantage of the support resources available through Coastal Hospice’s Bereavement Program. We offer memorial celebrations, support groups, socials, and special opportunities. Please check the **calendar on page 3** for more information. These events are also on our website at www.coastalhospice.org.

Thanks for allowing us to connect and provide support on your grief journey.

You are likely receiving this newsletter following the death of a family member, friend or loved one who received care from Coastal Hospice. Bereavement support is a vital part of the hospice philosophy of care. We offer our services to those who have suffered a loss. This newsletter serves to share information you can use during this time and to highlight upcoming events.

Open Communication is Key to Helping Children Cope with Loss

The death of a family member or close family friend can be a traumatic experience for a child. Depending on the child's age, his or her reactions and how he or she copes with the loss can vary dramatically. Preschool children will frequently be unable to fully comprehend the permanence of death – often expecting and questioning the loved one's return. Preteens and teenagers will often withdraw and may have trouble communicating their sorrow – and even anger over the death. And, to compound the situation, parents and other adult family members may be so consumed by their own loss that they're not available to truly "be there" for the grieving child.



Parents should be aware of normal childhood responses to a death in the family, as well as danger signals. According to adolescent and child psychiatrists, it is normal during the weeks following a death for some children to feel immediate

grief or persist in the belief that the family member is still alive. But long-term denial of the death or avoidance of grief is unhealthy and can later surface in more severe problems.

Children will watch parents and other adults for guidance on how to cope. If a parent is able to grieve openly, express their sadness freely and talk lovingly about the deceased and their feelings in coping with the loss, the child will often do the same. Encouraging children to

freely express their sadness and openly talk about their loss can be keys to a healthy recovery.

Following the death of a loved one it, is typical for children to move between moments of joyful carefree play and moments of sadness. This may continue for what seems to be a long period of time. It's important, especially during this period, for surviving adults to take time to talk with the child and let them know that it's okay to show his or her feelings for the loss.

When the loss is a family member — particularly a parent or sibling — children will often react in anger. The anger may be revealed in boisterous play, nightmares, irritability or a variety of other behaviors. Often the child will show anger towards the surviving family members. When a parent has died, often the child will revert to acting younger than they are. They may use "baby talk" and be demanding – especially for cuddling or attention.

It's common for younger children to believe that they are the cause of what happens around them. A young child may believe a parent, grandparent, brother or sister died because he or she had once "wished" the person dead. The child feels guilty because the wish "came true."

Some danger signals to watch for:

- An extended period of depression in which the child loses interest in daily activities and events.
- Inability to sleep, loss of appetite, or prolonged fear of being alone.
- Acting much younger for an extended period.
- Excessively imitating the dead person.
- Repeated statements of wanting to join the dead person.
- Withdrawal from friends.
- Sharp drop in school performance or refusal to attend school.



Camp Safe Harbor
A Grief Camp for Children Ages 6-12
at Salisbury University
June 21 - 23, 2016
8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Open to children who have experienced a primary loss due to death in the past year (for example, a parent, grandparent, sibling or other closely connected person)

The week will be filled with fun activities that include opportunities to share about their loved one. Contact Sharon Hutchison @ 410-742-8732 ext. 619 or 443-614-3742 for more information. Limited spaces available.

May / June 2016
Bereavement Activities

These groups provide a time of respite and a safe place to express feelings in the grieving process. We offer these activities at no cost to any adult who has experienced the death of a loved one, even if they were not a patient of Coastal Hospice. For information, call **410-742-8732**.

Dorchester County

Dinner Social Group – Kay’s at the Airport, Cambridge
 May 2 & June 6 at 5 p.m.
RSVP ~ Emanuel Johnson 410-829-0051

Support Group – Dorchester County Library,
 303 Gay St., Cambridge
 Second & fourth Tuesdays at 6 p.m.
Information ~ Emanuel Johnson 410-829-0051

Memorial Service – St. Luke UM Church,
 712 Bradley Ave, Cambridge
 May 9 at 2 p.m.
RSVP ~ Melissa Dasher 443-944-5846

Worcester County

Lunch Social Group – All at 1 p.m.
 May 19 - BJ’s on the Water
 75th Street, Ocean City
 June 16 - Full Moon Saloon
 Old Bridge Road, West Ocean City
RSVP ~ Bob Carson 410-957-1133

Support Group – Ocean Pines Library, Ocean Pines
 Every Thursday at 11 a.m.
Information ~ Bob Miller 410-251-8163

Please note: Socials are “Dutch treat”

Somerset County

Support Group – Princess Anne Library,
 11767 Beechwood St, Princess Anne
 May 5 & June 2 at 12 noon.
Information ~ Howard Travers 443-783-1730

Wicomico County

Lunch Social Group – All at 1 p.m.
 May 11 - Adam’s Ribs, 219 N. Fruitland Blvd., Fruitland
 May 25 - Denny’s, 100 E. Cedar Lane, Fruitland
 June 8 - Fratelli’s, 925 Snow Hill Rd., Salisbury
 June 22 - Brew River, 502 W. Main St., Salisbury
RSVP ~ Lynette Chase 410-901-2292

Support Group – Community of Joy Church,
 302 South Blvd., Salisbury
 Second and fourth Tuesdays at 1 p.m.
Information ~ Sharon Hutchison 443-614-3742

Support Group – Coastal Hospice at the Lake,
 Deer’s Head Hospital, Salisbury
 First & third Mondays at 5:30 p.m.
Information ~ Arnold Bienstock 410-572-6166

Camp Safe Harbor

Bereavement Camp for Kids – all days 8:30 a.m.- 4p.m.
 June 21 - 23 - Salisbury University. **Must be registered to attend.** Call Sharon Hutchison 410-742-8732 ext 619 or 443-614-3742 for information.



Coastal Hospice, Inc.
P.O. Box 1733
Salisbury, Maryland 21802-1733

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Reach Coastal Hospice at 410-742-8732 or www.coastalhospice.org

Coastal Hospice & Palliative Care
invites you and your family to honor the life of your loved one
by attending one of our spring **Memorial Services**.

We look forward to seeing you and sharing together
this time of remembrance.

Monday, May 9, 2016

2:00 p.m.

St Luke U M Church

712 Bradley Avenue

Cambridge, MD

RSVP: 443-944-5846

Light refreshments will be served.