

About Grief

Decisions...Decisions...Decisions?

By Tensie Holland, LSW

A loved one's death presents a multitude of changes for the bereaved. You may feel as though you are treading water...trying to stay afloat. Routines, old habits, and even your lifestyle change. You long for the way it was. It can be a struggle to find some level of comfort or peace. It is a natural instinct to want to make changes in your life to cope with your changing world.

Our society tends to send the message that you need to rush through your grieving. That prompts you to move faster than you should. As you look for ways to escape the pain that grief brings, making changes may seem to be the answer.

The National Institutes of Health; however, advises a grieving person *not to make any major changes for one year after the death of a loved one. Some bereavement professionals advise a two year wait.* Those are good guidelines, although there are always exceptions and each person must do what is best for him or her individually.

If possible, postpone major decisions such as moving, relocating, changing

jobs, spontaneous spending, big purchases, financial changes, dating and/or marriage. These decisions will have a long lasting impact on your life. Ask yourself—Can it wait?

But what about plans made or discussed prior to your loved one's death? What about financial limitations? There are many special considerations which you will need to take into account. Just remember that initially you may be reacting out of grief rather than making sound decisions. Sorrow magnifies your feelings.

As you go through your grieving, you may find that what was once so very painful may become comforting. Your thought process becomes clearer as you heal. Your feelings and your world tend to stabilize. It is important to be patient with yourself and with your grieving process. Take your time in making those very important decisions. Talk with a trusted friend or professional for additional perspective. Remember, we continue to be here with comfort and caring.

Volume 22 | Number 1 | Spring 2012

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EDITOR

Diane Snyder Cowan, MA, MT-BC
Director

VOLUNTEER EDITOR

Thelma Morris

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Felicia Dunlop-Stanley

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Tensie Holland, LSW
Bereavement Coordinator

Lisa Florjancic, MA, LSW
Bereavement Coordinator

Shavaun Jones, M.Ed., PC
Children's Bereavement Coordinator

Dominique Butler, MSSA, LSW
School Liaison



HOSPICE
OF THE
WESTERN
RESERVE

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss
Bereavement Center



Diane Snyder Cowan, MA, MT-BC

“What lies behind us and what lies ahead of us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”

– Oliver Wendall Holmes

From the Editor

Spring can be an unstable time in Northeast Ohio. Lake effect snows can occur, suddenly bringing life to a halt. Snow, rain and sunshine may appear on the same day. Just like the constant changes in weather, grief reactions can change rapidly. You may feel the torrents of grief come over you like an iceberg melting. Then the surges of grief abate and you find that you’ve weathered that storm.

At the other extreme, spring is a time to look forward with great optimism. The plants are coming back to life in the garden. The sun is shining longer every day. Animals come out of hibernation and birds’ songs fill the air.

Spring doesn’t happen overnight. We first see small signs – a flower here, a new leaf there, a robin or spring rain. Grief work doesn’t happen overnight either. There may be new experiences, less tears, or a new interest. Slowly the fog lifts and you feel more like yourself.

Although we never really “get over” our grief, we will bloom again. You may notice that you can focus more clearly, your feelings are more alive, you laugh more and your mood swings are not as wide.

Just remember -- spring is not eternal. Winter will return as will memories. Your loved one will always be a part of you. Some days will feel like winter and some will feel like spring.

Whatever the day brings, know that we are here with comfort, hope and healing.

Diane Snyder Cowan

Diane Snyder Cowan, MA, MT-BC
216.486.6312
dscowan@hospicewr.org



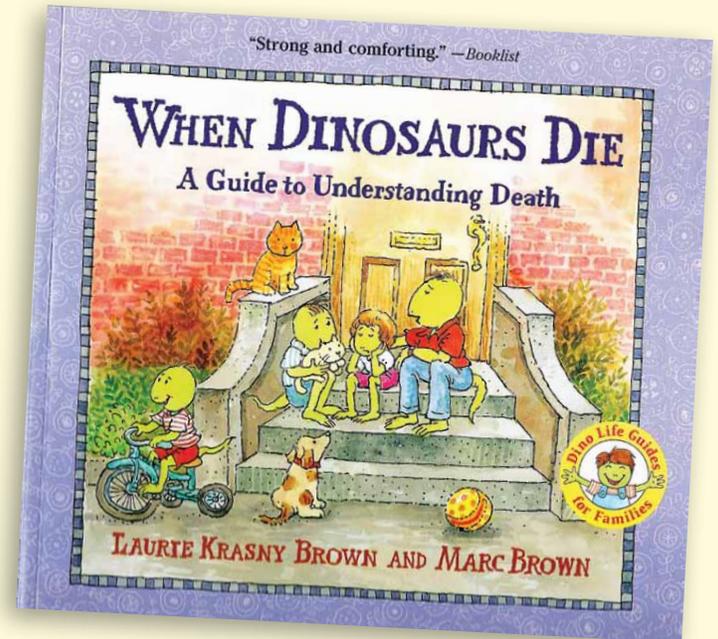
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The Bereavement Center’s
Blog at:
hospicewr.org/bereavement-center-blog

MEETING

Special Needs

Dominique Butler, MSSA, LSW

When a student, parent, faculty or community member dies, the bereavement center can respond within 24 hours to provide support through individual and group counseling, education and consultation. Our goal is to help students, staff and parents manage their grief. Each death presents itself with different obstacles, circumstances and emotional reactions. Here is a story about a student with special needs that gave me a greater appreciation for the unique and lasting bond created in the classroom.



Drew's Death

We received the call early Monday morning from the school's guidance counselor that one of their students died unexpectedly. The young man's name was Drew, a 13-year old teen who loved to listen to music and play games on the computer. Drew had autism and received instruction in a special needs classroom with other children who were developmentally delayed. He was non-verbal and had been with the same teacher, aides and classmates for two years. This class had become a family that shared every joy and sorrow together. The counselor called the bereavement center to help her colleagues through this difficult time. She had valid concerns about their emotional and mental well-being. They were a tight knit group and she knew that the adults' primary focus would be their students' needs and not their own emotional health. The counselor wanted the staff to have a safe environment to vent their feelings and receive grief support.

We arrived at the school within two hours of the call. While I provided individual grief support, two colleagues read *When Dinosaurs Die* to the class and completed an art project related to feelings. We were inspired as we watched the class memorialize Drew's life while expressing their feelings. *I am sad because Drew is not here.* Most of the students did not understand the finality of death but they did notice the empty chair that their friend once occupied. They knew that the culture and dynamics of their class would never be the same. As the children processed their feelings, the teachers congregated in the back of the class and hid their tears. They found comfort among each other and in participating in the group activity with their students.

Our presence was enough to initially foster the healing process. It was uplifting to see these students treated as equals and have the support of the entire school. This experience gave me an opportunity to witness the joy that can be found in memorializing the life of a loved one even in the midst of a tragedy.



**HOSPICE
OF THE
WESTERN
RESERVE**

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss
Bereavement Center

SPRING 2012 Community Support Groups & Activities

MASSAGE THERAPY

Providing Comfort Through Touch

Stress is a normal part of life. As you move along grief's journey, you may face many challenges. Massage therapy is a tool useful in helping to cope with stress, anxiety and fatigue. To schedule an appointment, call Felicia Dunlop-Stanley at 216.486.6335. All appointments will be held at The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center.

Basic Fees: \$25 for 30 minutes \$50 for 60 minutes

YOGA MATTERS

Give yourself the gift of time and attention. The practice of Yoga helps you tune into yourself and take care of your physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Classes held at Hospice of the Western Reserve Lakeshore Campus. For more information, call 216.486.6838.

On-going Yoga Class designed for caregivers and bereaved.

Wednesdays, 5:30 to 6:45 p.m.

Fee: \$40/month or \$12 drop-in (sliding scale fee available)

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Lakeshore Campus

Wednesdays, 12:45 p.m.

For more information, call 216.241.7387

Bereavement Support Groups

Unless otherwise noted, our support groups are open to anyone who has had a loved one die. Please note, the Westlake groups will be held at St. John Medical Center, Westshore Professional Building, 29160 Center Ridge Road, Suite R. Groups are subject to change. Call to verify time and location.

Adult Support Groups

CIRCLE OF HOPE SERIES

A six-week educational support class **for adults who have had a loved one die**. Registration is required. Please call the facilitator listed below for more information or to register. **The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center Wednesdays, March 28 – May 2, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.**

Diana Battles 216.486.6364

Lakeshore Campus

Mondays, April 16 – May 21, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Tensie Holland 216.383.3741

Lakewood Office

Mondays, March 19 – April 23, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114

Mentor Office

Wednesdays, April 18 – May 23, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Lisa Florjancic 216.383.2222 ext. 1052

Warrensville Heights Office

Tuesdays, April 24 – May 29, 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Vicki Jackson 216.383.2222 ext. 1197

HOPE & HEALING

An on-going monthly support group **for grieving adults**. Registration is not required. Please call facilitator for more information.

Lakeshore Campus

3rd Monday of the month, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

April Ratcliffe 216.383.3782

Mentor Office

3rd Tuesday of the month, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Lisa Florjancic 216.383.2222 ext. 1052

University Hospitals, Geneva

Behm Funeral Home and Hospice of the Western Reserve Support Group

2nd Monday of the month, 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Marti Dixon 440.997.6619

FOR THE YOUNG ADULT (20'S)

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Diana Battles 216.486.6364

PARENT LOSS

A monthly support group for adults adjusting to life after the death of a parent.

Lakewood Office

2nd Tuesday of the month, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114

PARENTS TOGETHER

A support group for parents coping with the death of an adult child. Registration is required.

Warrensville Heights Office

Thursdays, April 5 – April 26, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Vicki Jackson 216.383.2222 ext. 1197

Spousal Loss Groups

NEW BEGINNINGS

A monthly support group **for young widows and widowers** (ages 55 and younger). This group is open-ended and on-going. Registration is not required.

Westlake

St. John Medical Center, Westshore Professional Building 29160 Center Ridge Road, Suite R

2nd Wednesday of the month, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

JoDee Coulter 216.383.2222 ext. 1301

Warrensville Heights Office

2nd Monday of the month, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Vicki Jackson 216.383.2222 ext. 1197



NEW JOURNEY

A support group for widows and widowers of any age, adjusting to life without their spouse. This group is open ended and on-going. Registration is not required.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
2nd Thursday of the month, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Diana Battles 216.486.6364

Ashtabula Office

2nd Thursday of the month, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Marti Dixon 440.997.6619

HORIZONS

A monthly support group for the older adult widow and widower. This group is open ended and on-going.

Mayfield Village Baptist Church

6500 Highland Road, Mayfield

2nd Tuesday of the month, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

Kathryn Harrison Brown 216.486.6331

LOSS OF A FRIEND

A four-week support group for adults who have experienced the death of a friend. Registration is required.

Lorain Office

Mondays, February 6 - February 27, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Laurie Mason 440.787.2080

HOPEFUL HEARTS

Grief support for anyone age 60 and over who has experienced the death of someone special.

Holy Spirit Family Center

410 Lear Road, Avon Lake

4th Tuesday of the month, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

JoDee Coulter (216) 383-2222 ext. 1301

WOMEN'S WORKSHOP "New Group"

A bereavement workshop for women who have lost a partner/spouse. Come for support, discussion, and coping tools. Light refreshments served. Register by Friday, April 20.

Lakewood Office

Tuesday, April 24, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114

BEREAVEMENT AND RECOVERY "New Group"

An 8 week support group exclusively for those in recovery from an addiction who have experienced the loss of a loved one and would feel more comfortable with others who are in recovery. Register by Thursday, April 26. *Requirements:* 1. At least six months or more in recovery. 2. Able to commit to all eight sessions.

Lakewood Office

Wednesdays, May 2 - June 20, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114

SPECIAL EVENT

Mother's Day Tea

For those who have experienced the death of their mother or mother figure, and for mothers who have experienced the death of a child, please join us for a Mother's Day tea where we will honor the memory of those relationships.

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss
Bereavement Center**

Saturday, May 12, 2012

2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Call Felicia Dunlop-Stanley at
216.486.6335 to register by May 1.

Children & Family Support Groups

S.T.A.R.S. (*Supporting Tears, Anger, Remembrance & Sadness*)

A six-week support group for grieving children ages 6-12. While the children are meeting, there is an adult support group to assist parents and family members in dealing with their own grief. The groups are free and open to the public. Registration is required.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
May 30 - July 11, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. (no group July 4)

Shavaun Jones 216.486.6319

HELPING HANDS/HEALING HEARTS

A monthly support group for children ages 6-13 and adults, who have experienced the death of a loved one. While the adults are meeting, there is a co-existing support group for the children. Registration is not required.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
3rd Tuesday of each month, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Colleen Thompson 216.486.6316

FABRIC AND FEELINGS

A weekly group where participants use fabric techniques such as quilting (sometimes involving clothing from loved ones) or photo transfer to create quilts, pillows, dolls and other types of lasting memories. Sewing expertise is not necessary.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Thursdays, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Mollie Postotnik 216.486.6544

Healing Arts Workshops, Spring 2012

Healing Arts Workshops provide grieving people with a creative outlet for their grief and are open to all grieving people. No art experience is necessary. **Call Mollie Postotnik at 216.486.6544 or email mpostotnik@hospicewr.org to register no later than four days in advance of workshop date. Suggested \$5.00 donation for supplies.**

POETRY SPOONS



This workshop offers a unique way to remember your loved one while creating a meaningful keepsake using old silver or silver plated spoons. Bring poetry or a favorite phrase or quote from your loved one to incorporate into the artwork. If you wish, tiny photocopied photos can also be included (no bigger than 1/2" square). **Spoons will be provided**

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Thursday, April 12, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

**St. John Medical Center, Westshore Professional Building
29160 Center Ridge Road, Suite R, Group Room D
Tuesday, April 17, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

**Warrensville Heights Office
Wednesday, April 25, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**



WIND CHIMES



Attend this two-part workshop to create a ceramic wind chime to honor a loved one. The first session will consist of painting clay shapes for the wind chime. At the second session, we will assemble them.

St. John Medical Center

Westshore Professional Building

29160 Center Ridge Road, Suite R, Group Room D
Must attend both Tuesdays, May 8 and 15, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Warrensville Heights Office

Must attend both Wednesdays, May 9 and 16, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center

Must attend both Thursdays, May 10 and 17, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

ART FOR RELAXATION: *Painting on Velour*



Participants will use soft pastels to "paint" a picture on velour paper. The velour surface holds the color so that the pastel dust is kept to a minimum. Whether you like working with pastels or not, you are in for an enjoyable experience!

Warrensville Heights Office

Wednesday, June 13, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center

Thursday, June 14, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

St. John Medical Center, Westshore Professional Building

29160 Center Ridge Road, Suite R, Group Room D

Tuesday, June 19, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

MONTHLY SCRAPBOOK NIGHT "New Group"



Remember that scrapbook of your loved one(s) you never got around to finishing? No matter where you are in the process or if you haven't yet begun, come join us! Bring your photos (copies of originals is recommended), handwritten notes, poetry, etc. Scrapbooks and some embellishments provided.

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
1st Thursday of the month, beginning March 1, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

LGBT ART THERAPY GROUP "New Group"



This is a new group for members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual or Transgender Community. Whether you have lost a partner or other family member, you are welcome in this group. We will explore a variety of art media and techniques.

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Last Tuesday of the month, beginning March 27, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE OFFICE LOCATIONS

Lakeshore Campus

300 East 185th Street
Cleveland, OH 44119-1330
216.383.2222

Headquarters

17876 St. Clair Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44110-2602
800.707.8922

Ashtabula Office

1166 Lake Avenue
Ashtabula, OH 44004-2930
440.997.6619

Hospice Care Center

26376 John Road
Olmsted Township, OH 44138
440.235.3134

Lakewood Office

14601 Detroit Avenue, Suite 100
Lakewood, OH 44107-4212
216.227.9048

Lorain Office

2173 N. Ridge Road E., Suite H
Lorain, OH 44055-3400
440.787.2080

Mentor Office

5786 Heisley Road
Mentor, OH 44060-1830
440.951.8692

Summit Office

150 Springside Drive, Suite A-100
Fairlawn, OH 44334
330.800.2240

Warrensville Heights Office

4670 Richmond Road, Suite 200
Warrensville Hts, OH 44128-5978
216.454.0399

Westlake Office

29101 Health Campus Drive,
Building 2, Suite 400
Westlake, OH 44145-5268
440.892.6680

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center

300 East 185th Street
Cleveland, OH 44119-1330
216.486.6838



A Child's View

Shavaun Jones, M.Ed., PC

WHAT ARE TEARS GOOD FOR?

Have you ever felt like crying, but didn't cry because you felt like it would not help? Have you ever felt like crying, but didn't because you felt embarrassed or ashamed about what others might think? Have you ever felt like crying, but didn't because you did not want to make someone else sad? Or because someone close to you said, "Aaww don't cry!" When a big feeling arises because of a big loss most people need to express these feelings in a good way. This is a time when tears and crying can really be helpful.

Like the rain, tears help us grow. They bring up the feelings from deep inside us that we rarely pay attention to. Tears come from the inside to clean out all of those cruddy feelings caused by sadness, confusion, loneliness and anger. Tears let others know we have strong feelings about someone or something we have lost that was a very important part of our lives. They let people know we may need a hug or to sit and talk with someone. Tears can even let others know we need some time to ourselves. Tears can remind us that we are special. We have feelings, and to have a big feeling about losing a loved one is very, very normal. Tears can help release and transform our feelings. Tears can make our cloudy days feel like sunny days once they have cleared us out. To have a good cry of nice cleansing tears can make our mind, body and spirit feel brand new.

Tears and crying are good. We need to remember that, because often times folks around us send the message that tears are not OK. So I want to say it again: Tears are very good for you. The next time you have very big feelings because you have lost someone or something very special to you, please tell yourself it is OK to cry. You also may know a friend or someone who needs to express some very big feelings. Please pass on this message of how important it is to cry and what tears are good for.

Children's Bereavement Camps

BRIDGES TO HOPE

Thousand Trails Campground in Ashtabula; date to be announced

TOGETHER WE CAN

A three-day camp for grieving children; August 7 through 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Red Oak Camp in Kirtland (transportation available from three convenient locations); call Karen Hatfield at 216.486.6042 for information and registration materials.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

A memorial service for Hospice of the Western Reserve patients who have died in the past six months will be held on Saturday, April 14 at 1:00 p.m. at Corporate College East. Family and friends are invited to join us for this time of remembrance. Invitations will be mailed in March. You may also call Felicia Dunlop-Stanley at 216.486.6335 for more information.



The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss
Bereavement Center

300 East 185th Street
Cleveland, OH 44119-1330

*Serving Ashtabula, Cuyahoga,
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DSCowan@HospiceWR.org*



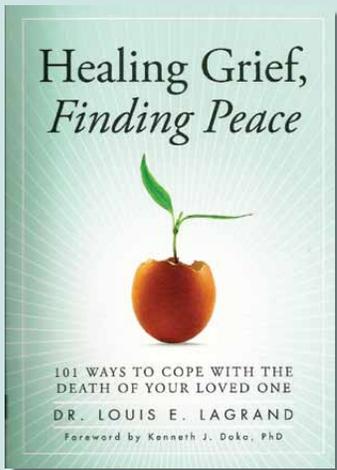
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The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center is a community-based grief support program that provides services throughout Northern Ohio. We offer support to anyone who has experienced a loss due to death.



Healing Grief, Finding Peace-101 Ways to Cope With the Death of Your Loved On

By Dr. Louis E. LaGrand

Healing Grief, Finding Peace is a self-help resource book for individuals coping with a loss through death. Whether the death was sudden or prolonged, the book presents many ideas and practical advice on how to adapt to the loss.

The six chapters each begin with an affirmation. The first three chapters focus on understanding grief, learning about grief, dealing with our feelings and deciding how to respond to those feelings. The last three chapters offer suggestions and practical ideas to incorporate into one's life to help work through the grief process.

The author emphasizes that one can find ways to grow—even in grief. The healthy outcome of the journey is to achieve peace and healing. Easy to read, everyone should find several ideas that are helpful to them. At the end there is a list of books and articles for further reading.

Dr. LaGrand sets the tone in his dedication—"Dedicated to all who are mourning and all who must inevitably respond to the opposite side of the coin of love."

Book review

Lisa Florjancic, MA, LSW