

About Grief

What WAS... *Winter, Anxiety and Sadness* and What IS... *Insight and Spring*

By Kathryn R. Harrison Brown, MA, LPC

Experiences of grief and sadness can be compared to winter weather. The past few months of winter have produced gloomy skies, cold winds, snow and a sense of bleakness. During the winter it is not uncommon to feel down, isolated or more tired because of the cold and lack of sunshine. For the person who has experienced the loss of a loved one, these feelings may be more intense because of the emotional and physical toll grief takes on one's system. The newly-bereaved may not understand the feelings they are experiencing because they have not had them before. Life may not make sense because the world as they knew it has been changed by the death. Making decisions or staying focused may be difficult due to decreased energy or preoccupation with other thoughts. If someone has lived with anxiety before, it may seem intensified. For those who have not had anxiety, it may feel uncomfortable and unfamiliar but do understand that it is a normal and common experience of grief. These feelings usually pass with time and understanding. If there are any questions about these feelings, they can be discussed with a mental health professional.

Many people start the New Year off by having their annual physical. If there is any concern

about feelings the bereaved is experiencing, this may be a good time to have a checkup with the doctor to rule out a medical reason for the symptoms. If there is no underlying medical cause, then consider the possibility that this is grief-related stress. Try to use good coping skills to lower anxiety and increase confidence: eat right, exercise, meditate or pray, rest and practice positive thinking. If these techniques are unsuccessful seek help from a professional. You do not have to go through the grief process alone. Reach out to friends, family, church communities, counselors or bereavement support groups. Talking with others can be helpful in coping with feelings of grief and in looking to the future with thoughts of hopefulness.

Remember, just as the darkness of winter has lifted and the promise of spring with brighter skies and rebirth approaches, so the feelings of grief will change. There is a seed of hope and optimism planted in the bereaved by those who have lovingly supported you through this transition. Just as new spring plants emerge from under the cold and snow that has blanketed and protected them, you, too, will be able to move forward because of the love and support that comforts you.

Volume 25 | Number 1 | Spring 2015

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 What WAS...
- 2 From The Editor
- 3 Alone in Grief?
- 7 A Child's View
- 8 Book Review

EDITOR

Diane Snyder Cowan, MA, MT-BC, CHPCA, Director

VOLUNTEER EDITOR

Thelma Morris

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Felicia Dunlop

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Kathryn R. Harrison Brown, MA, LPC
Bereavement Coordinator

Lisa Florjancic, MA, LSW

Bereavement Coordinator

Mollie K. Postotnik, ATR-BC, PC-CR

Art Therapist, Grief Counselor

Dominique Butler, MSSA, LISW

School Liaison



HOSPICE
OF THE
WESTERN
RESERVE

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss
Bereavement Center



Diane Snyder Cowan, MA, MT-BC, CHPCA



Please "like" us
on Facebook:

**Facebook.com/
ESPBCenter**

Visit our
Online Discussion
Groups at:

**hospicewr.org/
discussions/grief**

Visit The Bereavement
Center's Blog at:

**hospicewr.org/
bereavement-center-
blog**



From the Editor

Spring is often the time we plan our garden. We prepare the soil with tender loving care and hope to see the fruits (and vegetables) of our labor later in the summer. Change is one of the constants in the world of plants. Nature has a way of surprising us with variety. No two leaves on a plant are alike and we can be sure that this year's growing season will be different than last year's.

We can see many parallels between grief and gardening. Gardening can help us work through the grief and loss in our lives. We can learn to take care of ourselves as we take care of our gardens. Nourishment in the form of water, sunlight and fertilizer is crucial for growth, while pruning and weeding is necessary for full plant development.

We can gain insight from planting; watering, pruning and watching plants grow. We notice that right next to a long-dead tree trunk in a quiet corner of the garden is a young sapling. It reminds us that life continues in the face of death, and regeneration makes the world vibrant. The gardener waits for the beauty of the bloom; the grieving anticipate the return of the beautiful memories.

When a plant loses a major limb, it channels energy inward to heal. This energy is taken all the way down to the roots. This process takes time, but in time new buds appear. When we grieve the death of a loved one, the journey can take time before new growth and creativity occurs.

Many of our families have created memorial gardens. Despite the sweat and hard work that goes into gardening, the ritual of attending to new plants and watching them grow is comforting. Some of the gardens are elaborate - with stepping stones, pathways and waterfalls. Other families use simple pots or containers. While grieving the death of a loved one, many find peace and tranquility in their garden.

Please remember that we are here, providing comfort and support.

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

*May our heart's garden of awakening
bloom with hundreds of flowers.*

– Thich Nhat Hanh

ALONE IN YOUR *Grief?*

By Mollie K. Postotnik, ATR-BC, PC-CR

Many grieving people report that they feel abandoned by their families and friends. It's not that people intend to abandon them in their grief, but some people just do not know what to do or say to the bereaved person when someone dies. They feel helpless, so they either pull away or try to "fix" them. Neither way is helpful. Even if someone has had the same type of loss, he or she cannot possibly know how another person feels. Each person's grief is unique to them and their situation, life experiences, beliefs about death, relationship with the person who died, and their own emotions.

As a grieving person, many times you have to be your own advocate. You have to educate those around you about grief. Here are some suggestions



which may be helpful: Let people know the ways in which they can support you. Perhaps you would like a call, text message, a card, or email every few days. Maybe you would like them to come and sit with you for a little while. Perhaps you don't want contact with people for a few weeks, but would welcome a call a month after the funeral. Many people would like to be helpful, but do not know how and are afraid to ask. Assure them it's all right to ask. Let them do errands or clean or cook for you if you're comfortable with that. If they try to tell you how long your grief should take or how you should grieve, let them know that everyone's grief is different and each person has to find what works for them. Request them to just support you rather than try to fix you.



The Vista Walk and Tribute Walks *Remember Your Loved One*

The Tribute Walks and Gardens at David Simpson Hospice House and Ames Family Hospice House offer beautiful outdoor spaces for meditation and reflection. We invite you to add your own memory to these special places by dedicating a paving brick, stone bench or even a newly-planted tree in tribute to your loved one. For more information, please call the Development Team at 855.475.0245 or visit our tribute page online at tributes.hospicewr.org.



**HOSPICE
OF THE
WESTERN
RESERVE**

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss
Bereavement Center

SPRING 2015
*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 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 please call 216. 486.6838.

On-going Yoga Class designed for caregivers & bereaved.

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

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

Bereavement Support Groups

Unless otherwise noted, our support groups are open to anyone who has had a loved one die. Groups are subject to change. Call to verify time and location.

Adult Support Groups

CIRCLE OF HOPE SERIES

A six-week educational support group 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 18 – April 22, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Diana Battles 216.486.6364

Lakeshore Campus

Mondays, April 13 – May 18, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Tensie Holland 216.383.3741

Lakewood Office

Mondays, April 6 – May 11, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114

Mentor Office

Tuesdays, April 14 – May 19, 12:30 to 2:00 p.m.

Lisa Florjancic 216.383.2222 ext. 1052

Warrensville Heights Office

Tuesdays, April 7 – May 12, 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.

Vicki Jackson 216.383.2222 ext. 1197



CIRCLE OF HOPE:

Art Therapy Edition

A six-week art and educational support class for adults who have had a loved one die.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss

Bereavement Center

Six consecutive Wednesdays, April 8 – May 20, 10:00 a.m. to noon.

There will be no session on April 29.

Call **Mollie Postotnik at 216.486.6544** or email her at **mpostotnik@hospicewr.org** to register.

HOPE & HEALING

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

Ashtabula Office

1st Wednesday of the month, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Susan Hamme 440.997.6619

Lakeshore Campus

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

April Ratcliffe 216.383.3782

Mentor Office

1st Tuesday of the month, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Lisa Florjancic 216.383.2222 ext. 1052

PARENT LOSS Monthly

A monthly support group for adults adjusting to life after the death of one or both parents.

Lakewood Office

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

Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114

PARENTS TOGETHER Monthly

A monthly support group for parents who have experienced the death of an adult child.

Warrensville Heights Office

2nd Thursday of the month, 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.

Vicki Jackson 216.383.2222 ext. 1197

PARENTS TOGETHER Weekly

A five week group for parents who have experienced the death of an adult child. Register by Tuesday, April 14.

Lakewood Office

Thursdays, April 16 – May 14, 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114

HOPEFUL HEARTS

A monthly grief support group for anyone age 60 and over who has experienced the death of someone special in the past two years.

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

For women who have experienced the death of a partner, significant other, or spouse. Come for discussion, support and education. Registration is required.

Lakewood office

Tuesday, April 7, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114

MINDFUL GRIEVING

Open group, meeting monthly, for grieving adults who have experienced a loss more than six months ago. Participants in this group will learn body, mind, emotional, and relational practices to understand and come to peace with loss. Comfortable clothes are suggested. Refer to Sameet Kamur's *Grieving Mindfully* and *Mindfulness for Prolonged Grief*.

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library

2345 Lee Road, Levey Room

2nd Thursday of the month, starting April 9 - September 10, 2:00 to 4:00 pm

Mary Murphy 216.454.0399

"To Be Known" INFANT LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

A six-week group for parents who missed the opportunity to know their child due to death in utero or within the first year of life. Join us to "Be Known" with others who can share in your sorrow, questioning and healing. Registration is required.

Brecksville United Methodist Church

65 Public Square

Wednesdays, March 4 & 18, April 1, 15 & 29, May 13

7:15 to 8:45 p.m.

Mindy Stewart 216.916.5520

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

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

Warrensville Heights Office

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

Vicki Jackson 216.383.2222 ext. 1197

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

Lorain County Community College

Spitzer Conference Center, Room 219

1005 North Abbe Road, Elyria

1st Friday of the month, 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Laurie Mason 216.383.2222 ext. 1359

Children & Family Support Groups

PET GRIEF WORKSHOP

As a pet owner, animals hold a special place in your heart and life. It is natural to grieve when these treasured friends die. This workshop for adults will offer suggestions on ways to remember your special friend, whether "furry, feathered or finned." Please bring a photo of your pet if you have one. Call Felicia Dunlop at 216.486.6335 to register.

Lakeshore Campus

Thursday, April 23, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Healing Arts Workshops, Spring 2015

Funded in part by residents of Cuyahoga County through Cuyahoga Arts & Culture



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



ART FOR RELAXATION

Winterscapes

Winter is a time of hibernation, inactivity and dormancy. Hope and growth lie dormant, just under the surface. What is lying dormant in you? Use watercolors or acrylics to paint a winter scene from a photograph, calendar, or simply let your imagination create a winterscape scene.

Warrensville Heights Office

Wednesday, March 11, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Westlake Center for Community Services

29694 Center Ridge Road, Westlake, 44145

Tuesday, March 17, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center

Thursday, March 19, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.



SPIRIT STICKS

Paint and decorate a piece of driftwood to commemorate the spirit and personality of your loved one. Small mementoes, jewelry, trinkets or pieces of clothing may be incorporated into the piece.

Warrensville Heights Office

Wednesday, April 8, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Westlake Center for Community Services

29694 Center Ridge Road, Westlake, 44145

Tuesday, April 14, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center

Thursday, April 16, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.



MANDALA PLATES

Participants will create their own mandala design and paint both sides of a bisque (unglazed china) dinner plate with ceramic glazes at the first session. The plates will be kiln-fired during the week so that we can use them for our potluck meal at the second session, which will be devoted to sharing about the process. Bring your loved one's or your own favorite food to share!

Westlake Center for Community Services

29694 Center Ridge Road, Westlake, 44145

Both Tuesdays, May 12 and 19, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Warrensville Heights Office

Both Wednesdays, May 13 and 20, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center

Both Thursdays, May 14 and 21, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

ART FOR RELAXATION



Sun Catchers

Celebrate the onset of summer by creating a sun catcher, painting with dyes on silk. The vibrant colors will bring beauty hanging in a sunny window and remind you of your loved one.

Warrensville Heights Office

Wednesday, June 10, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Westlake Center for Community Services

29694 Center Ridge Road, Westlake, 44145

Tuesday, June 16, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center

Thursday, June 18, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.



Monthly SCRAPBOOK NIGHT

Remember that scrapbook of your loved one(s) that 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 are recommended), handwritten notes, poetry, etc. Scrapbooks and some embellishments provided.

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



FABRIC AND FEELINGS

A 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

Weekly - Thursdays, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Mollie Postotnik 216.486.6544

Ames Family Hospice House - Art Studio

Monthly - 4th Wednesday of the month, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Mollie Postotnik 216.486.6544



LGBTQ ART THERAPY EVENT

Quotation Spoons

This event is for members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer Community who have experienced the death of a loved one. This



workshop offers a unique way to remember your loved one while creating a meaningful keepsake using old silver or silver-plated spoons. Bring a favorite phrase or quote from your loved one to incorporate into the artwork. Spoons will be provided.

The Elisabeth Severance

Prentiss Bereavement Center

Tuesday, April 21, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE OFFICE LOCATIONS

DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE AND LAKESHORE CAMPUS

300 East 185th Street
Cleveland, OH 44119-1330
216.383.2222 or 800.707.8922

THE ELISABETH SEVERANCE PRENTISS BEREAVEMENT CENTER

216.486.6838

AMES FAMILY HOSPICE HOUSE

30080 Hospice Way
Westlake, Ohio 44145-1077
440.414.7349 or 835.281.5727

ASHTABULA OFFICE

1166 Lake Avenue
Ashtabula, OH 44004-2930
440.997.6619

HEADQUARTERS

17876 St. Clair Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44110
216.383.2222 or 800.707.8922

LAKELWOOD OFFICE

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

LORAIN COUNTY 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 235-B
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

hospicewr.org

A Child's **VIEW**

Dear Parents,

Reading books are a great way to learn to express new ways to deal with big feelings of grief. Some books talk about feelings we may experience when a loved one dies. Other books teach us cool ways to remember our loved one by creating something new in their memory. The book, *Chester Raccoon and The Acorn Full of Memories*, written by Audrey Penn shares Chester Raccoon's feelings about the death of his friend Skiddil Squirrel and how he creates new memories to cope with his feelings.

In this touching story Chester Raccoon has a hard time understanding that his good friend Skiddil Squirrel had an accident and will not ever return. Mrs. Raccoon explains to Chester that Skiddil Squirrel has died and suggests that creating memories of our loved one is a good way to deal with our "big" feelings of grief. He likes the idea of creating new ways to keep his friend's memory alive in his heart. Chester and his friends gather together and find joy in honoring their deceased friend Skiddil Squirrel. Reading this delightful tale to a child of any age will provide them with a sense of comfort after a death and encourage them to share and make new memories to honor their loved one.

Sincerely,
Dominique Butler, MSSA, LISW

Save the Date

MOTHER'S DAY TEA

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

Call Felicia Dunlop at 216.486.6335
to register by April 24.

**The Elisabeth Severance
Prentiss Bereavement Center**

**Saturday, May 2
2:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

TEEN RETREAT

A retreat for teens ages 13–17 that have experienced the death of a loved one.

Share your story with other teens who understand the courage it takes to face the changes brought on by the loss of someone special. Engage in activities that will help you remember and honor your loved one.

Lakeshore Campus

**Saturday, April 11, 4:00–8:00 p.m.
Dominique Butler 216.486.6287**

Ashtabula Office

**Saturday, April 18, 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Susan Hamme 440.997.6619**

Together We Can

A three day camp for grieving children ages 6 through 12; August 4–6, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Red Oak Camp in Kirtland (transportation available from 3 convenient locations); call Karen Hatfield at 216.486.6042 for information and registration materials.



RIDING THROUGH GRIEF

This camp is offered in collaboration with Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center and is for children ages 8-12 who have experienced the death of a loved one. Through riding and working with horses, campers explore grief issues supported by trained counselors.

**Week 1: June 22–June 26 OR
Week 2: July 13–July 17
Lesley Dials 216.486.6702**



The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss
Bereavement Center

300 East 185th Street
Cleveland, OH 44119-1330

*Serving Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga,
Lake, Lorain and Summit counties with
offices throughout, and outreach into
Medina, Portage and Stark counties.*

Hospice Resale Shop in Lyndhurst

800.707.8922 | hospicewr.org

Follow us on:



*Go green! If you would like your copy of
About Grief emailed to you, please send your
email address to Diane Snyder Cowan at
DSCowan@HospiceWR.org*

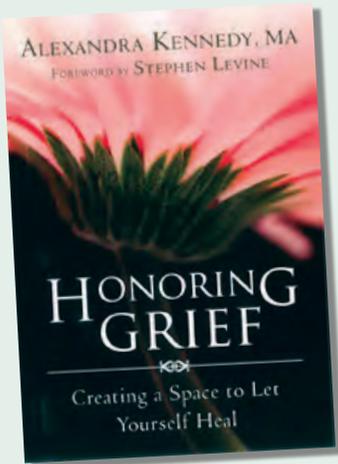
© Copyright 2015 All Rights Reserved

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage

PAID

Cleveland, OH
Permit No. 848

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.



Honoring Grief—Creating a Space to Let Yourself Heal By Alexandra Kennedy, MA

As Alexandra Kennedy states in the introduction of this book, “Grief touches us all.” *Honoring Grief* is an “everyday wisdom” book on dealing with the death of a loved one.

The author organizes the book into four parts:

1. The Nature of Grief: What We Can Expect,
2. Creating a Sanctuary for Grieving,
3. Healing Old Hurts, Saying Good-Bye, Expressing Love, and
4. Recreating Our Lives after Loss.

Each part contains practical information, reflections, and exercises to help one during their grieving process. There are only a few thoughts on each page, because Kennedy acknowledges that a grieving person can become overwhelmed with reading too many words on a page.

Honoring Grief is a good resource for anyone who has experienced a loss through death. It is a compact book, easy to read, and makes the reader think about their grief process. “As you embrace your grief with awareness, with kindness, and with enough depth to heal, you may find that you feel lighter and more at peace in your heart.”

Book review

By Lisa Florjancic, MA, LSW