FOR PET LOVERS, the loss of a beloved pet can be devastating. Owners and family members feel sad and lost when their pet dies. We go through the same grieving process as we do for humans. But what about our pets? When another pet or a person in the home dies, do the other animals feel grief? If they do, how can we tell? What, if anything, can we do to comfort them?

Research indicates that pets likely do experience grief. They may exhibit certain behaviors that are unusual for them such as lying in the area where another pet used to be. You may also notice a change in their eating and sleeping habits. There can even be a manifestation of behavioral changes such as withdrawing or separating themselves from the rest of the family. One owner reported that after the death of a dog’s littermate, the remaining dog ran away from home twice in one week, seemingly, to look for her sister. Other reports suggest a pet may become irritable or appear to be sad as evidenced by the lack of the pet’s typical happy demeanor.

The pet may wander around the house as though he/she doesn’t know what to do now.

If a family member dies, the pet may show some of the same behaviors. One person said that after the death of the pet’s master, the pet would go to the garage and sit and whine by the deceased person’s wheelchair. Another person reported that the pet would lie under the coffee table and cover his eyes with his paws. The pet may also want to sniff or be close to the person’s clothing or possessions that have the person’s scent.

These animal reactions to loss are not all that different from the way humans react to death. Just as we try to support people who have lost a loved one, we can support animals in their grief by spending more time with them, reassuring them of a safe environment, giving them a special treat or meeting their unique needs in other special ways.

At Hospice of the Western Reserve, we also recognize the intense loss people experience when their pet dies and are always here to help support you. Consider attending our Pet Grief Workshop on **Thursday, August 15**. See the support group section of this newsletter for time and location.
“To live in the hearts we leave behind is to live forever.”

- Carl Sagan

Summer:

Which description resonates with you this year? As we know, grief can be intense year-round. But often in summer, grieving families find it hard to manage their sadness while everyone else is out enjoying the warm weather and having fun. Many bereaved simply don’t feel like celebrating or participating in activities they used to enjoy without their deceased loved one.

Grief can be hard work. Acknowledge this and give yourself permission to grieve. Each person’s style of grieving is unique. Please pay attention to what your individual body and soul needs.

Here are few ideas for navigating your grief this summer:

1. **GO OUTSIDE.** The vitamin D from the sunshine can lift your mood and help reduce your stress.

2. **CREATE A REMEMBRANCE GARDEN AS A TRIBUTE TO YOUR DECEASED LOVED ONE.** This can be done individually or by the whole family. The garden can become a quiet, relaxing retreat for reflection and remembering.

3. **DO SOMETHING YOU PREVIOUSLY ENJOYED LIKE BIKE RIDING OR SWIMMING.** If it feels good, continue to enjoy it. If not, put it on hold for a while and try something new. Have you tried pickle ball?

4. **DEDICATE THE DAY TO YOUR LOVED ONE’S FAVORITE ACTIVITY OR INTEREST.** If you used to frequent a picnic spot, perhaps you can plan an outing with that intention and purpose. You can invite family and friends.

5. **CHILDREN MAY WANT TO INCLUDE SOME MEMORIES OF THEIR SPECIAL PERSON WHO DIED IN THEIR SUMMER FUN.** They can draw chalk pictures outside of special times they had or go for a walk and collect items in nature that their person would have liked. They can also blow bubbles and send wishes to their loved one as the bubbles float away.

Sometimes, being with others who have experienced a death is helpful. We have a variety of grief support groups and a grief camp to meet this need. Please see our support groups pages for more information.

While our loved ones are no longer physically present, they will always remain in our hearts. *We continue to be here with comfort, hope and healing.*

Diane Snyder Cowan, MA, MT-BC, CHPCA
216.686.6312 * dscowan@hospicewr.org
How Can I Work at a Time Like This?
By Karen Hatfield, MMT, MT-BC, CHPCA

What if I start crying? How can anyone understand what I’m going through? What if I can’t concentrate? I can barely get out of bed in the morning and now I must go back to work?

Returning to work after a loved one’s death can seem overwhelming. Depending on your situation, you may return after just a few bereavement days or you may have the good fortune to be able to take off more time. Either way, the transition back to work after a death can be a challenge.

Work can also offer a welcome return to familiar routines. Focusing on projects and spending time with coworkers can feel like a “break” from the heaviness of grief. Some people find that going back to work is some combination of the two – both comforting and a bit overwhelming at the same time. Below are some suggestions to help you and your colleagues as you return to the workplace as a person who is grieving.

- Be realistic about your expectations – you may find that staying focused takes more attention and that you are more tired than usual at the end of the day.

- Identify or create a place to take a breather away from your regular workspace.

- Ask for help if you need it.

- Utilize your company’s Employee Assistance Program, if available.

- Maintain a healthy diet, get enough rest and a bit of exercise to help manage both your grief and your return to work.

As you return to your job, remember that some ups and downs are to be expected. Be gentle with yourself and with those around you as they try to find the right things to say and do. As always, remember that there is no one way to grieve – your journey is as individual as you are.
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. Please call to verify time and location.

Adult Support Groups

Circle of Hope

An educational support group for adults who have had a loved one die. Please call the facilitator listed below for more information. Registration is required no later than a week prior to start date.

Ashtabula Office

Wednesdays, August 14 – September 18
10:30 a.m. to noon
Susan Hamme 440.596.3582

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center

Fall dates to be announced

Lakeshore Campus

Summer dates to be announced

Summit/Portage

Call for location

Tuesday, July 9 – August 13, 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Margaret Bossaller 330.241.6282

West Campus

Mondays, June 24 – July 29, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Judy Beckman 440.414.1731

Circle of Hope

Art Therapy Edition

Six-week art and educational support group for adults who have had a loved one die.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center

Wednesdays, July 10 – August 14
10 a.m. to Noon
Mollie Borgione 216.486.6544 or mborgione@hospicewr.org

Hope & Healing

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

Lakeshore Campus

Third Tuesday of the month, 6 to 7:30 p.m.
April Ratcliffe 216.383.3782

The Robertson Bereavement Center

Second Tuesday of the month, 3 to 4 p.m.
JoDee Coulter 330.662.4240

East Side

Mentor Public Library
8215 Mentor Avenue, Mentor
Second Tuesday of the month, 10 to 11 a.m.
Lisa Florjancic 440.853.5365

Portage County

United Church of Christ
1400 E. Main Street, Kent
Second Tuesday of the month, 1 to 2:30 p.m.
Margaret Bossaller 330.241.6282

Parent Loss

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

West Campus

Second Tuesday of the month, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Judy Beckman 440.414.1731

Parents Together

For parents who have experienced the death of an adult child.

Lakeshore Campus

Second Wednesday of the month, 2:30 to 4 p.m.
Shawn Eigenbrode 216.486.6364

Hopeful Hearts

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

Avon Lake

Holy Spirit Parish Center
410 Lear Road, Avon Lake
Fourth Tuesday of the month, 1-2:30 p.m.
Mary Ellen Jordan 440.414.1737

Yoga Matters

Designed for caregivers & bereaved.

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.

Wednesdays, 5:30 to 6:45 p.m.
Fee: $40/month or $12 Drop-in (sliding scale fee available)
Please call 216.486.6838.
Partner/Spousal Loss Groups

Monthly support groups for adults who have experienced the death of a spouse, partner, or significant other. Groups are open-ended and on-going. Registration is not required.

New Beginnings

**MONTHLY**
For adults in middle life.

**West Campus**
Second Wednesday of the month, 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Mary Ellen Jordan 440.414.1737

New Journey

**MONTHLY**
For adults of any age.

**Ashtabula**
St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
89 East Satin Street, Jefferson
First Thursday of the month, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Susan Hamme 440.596.3582

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**
Fourth Thursday of the month, 10 to 11:30 a.m.
Kathryn Harrison Brown 216.486.6331

Horizons

**MONTHLY**
For adults in late life.

**Mayfield Village Baptist Church**
6500 Highland Road, Mayfield
Second Tuesday of the month, 1-2:30 p.m.
Kathryn Harrison Brown 216.486.6331

Women’s Workshop

A periodic workshop for women who have lost their partner, significant other or spouse. Please call for date and to register.

**Panera Bread**
19705 Center Ridge Road, Rocky River
6 to 8 p.m.
Judy Beckman 440.414.1731

Restoring Hope: When a Loved One Dies From an Overdose

**SERIES**
This six-week group is for those adults who have had a loved one die from an overdose death. Registration is required.

**Ashtabula Office**
Mondays, July 1 – July 29
6 to 7:30 p.m.
Susan Hamme 440.596.3582

WALKING IN GRIEF

Some benefits of walking include decreased stress, decreased blood pressure, and increased endorphins—all which are beneficial to helping us cope with loss. Why not take the first step and join others for a time of friendship, motivation and sharing. Weather permitting.

**Carolyn Ludwig Mjugrave Park Pavilion**
4985 Windfall Road, Medina
First Tuesday of the month, May through September
9 a.m.
JoDee Coulter 330.662.4240

Pet Loss

**SPECIAL**
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 and children will offer suggestions on ways to remember your special friend, whether furry, feathered or finned. Please bring a photo of your pet.

Pet Grief Night

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**
Thursday, August 15, 6 – 7:30 p.m.
Kathryn Harrison Brown 216.486.6331
Register by August 8.

Adult Retreat

**Healing and Well-Being Through the Heart of a Horse**

**SPECIAL**
Join us for a day of healing and well-being through the compassionate heart of the horse and calming beauty of nature.

**Pebble Ledge Ranch**
9725 Cedar Road, Novelty
Saturday, October 12, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Call to register 216.486.6838
Register by October 1.
Healing Arts Workshops SUMMER 2019

Healing Arts Workshops provide grieving people with a creative outlet for their grief and are open to the community. No art experience is necessary. Please call Mollie Borgione at 216.486.6544 or email her at mborgione@hospicewr.org to register no later than four days in advance of workshop date. Suggested $5 donation for supplies.

ART IN MOTION
Movement has been shown to positively effect grieving people physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually. In this workshop, you will experience relaxing movement and art therapy. Vanessa Smylie, one of our bereavement coordinators who is also an experienced dance instructor will take participants through a series of very gentle motions. Then you will create an image from a scribble drawing mimicking your movement. Accommodations will be made for those who need to sit.

**Christ Episcopal Church**
3445 Warrensville Center Rd., Shaker Heights
Wednesday, July 10, 6 to 8 p.m.
Please note the time.

**West Campus**
Tuesday, July 16, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**
Thursday, July 25, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

KIDS ART: SMALL BOOKS, BIG STORIES
Grief is a big story
The loss of a loved one can be a big story in the life of a child. In this workshop, kids can make a small book through which they can remember the times spent with their loved one. Photos, notes and other two-dimensional items can be incorporated at the workshop if time allows, or may be added at home. Ages 6+. Kids are invited to bring family members along for this workshop. Light refreshments provided.

**West Campus**
Tuesday, July 30, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**
Tuesday, August 6, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

ART FOR RELAXATION:
LANDSCAPES OF THE HEART
Painting a natural landscape can sometimes help reveal one’s emotional landscape. Come and paint a scene from our grounds on the lake if weather permits at our Lakeshore campus to express mood and feeling. If you attend either one of the other workshops, you can paint from a stock photograph or bring your own.

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

**Christ Episcopal Church**
3445 Warrensville Center Rd., Shaker Heights
Wednesday, August 14, 6 to 8 p.m.
Please note the time.

**West Campus**
Tuesday, August 20, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

FABRIC AND FEELINGS
**WEEKLY** 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**
Thursdays, 2 to 4 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE

AUTUMN LEAVES
Did your loved one have a favorite tree? Did you take walks together in the fall crunching through the leaves? Using the shapes of real leaves, participants will create autumn leaves out of paper clay and paint them with watercolors.

**Christ Episcopal Church**
3445 Warrensville Center Rd., Shaker Heights
Wednesday, September 11, 6 to 8 p.m.
Please note the time.

**West Campus**
Tuesday, September 17, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**
Thursday, September 19, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**Words and Snapshots:**
PHOTOGRAPHY AND JOURNALING GRIEF SERIES
This five-week series is for those who desire a more introspective way to convey their feelings of grief for their loved one through digital photography and writing. Participants will need their mobile phone or another digital camera to take photos and the ability to either email or print them. (Space is limited, so register early!)

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**
Wednesday, August 28 – September 25
10 a.m. to noon.
Mollie Borgione 216.486.6544 or mborgione@hospicewr.org.

**Autumn Leaves**
**Honesty is the Best Policy**  
*By Vanessa Smylie, MSW*

Do you remember that age-old phrase you heard as a child from a parent, grandparent or adult in your life? Honesty is the best policy. As children, we may have wondered whether this was true. What if the truth makes my caregiver angry? Will I get in trouble if I tell the truth? In reality, telling the truth often minimizes negative consequences and increases trust, love and openness between child and adult.

But it’s not just children who struggle with the adage—adults do too, especially after a loved one’s death. Adults often want to shield children from the reality of the death. There may be fear of using the words died, death or dead. These words may sound harsh. However, using concrete terminology with children and adolescents can help prevent confusion and help children realize that this special person won’t physically come back. It can increase their ability to be open with their emotions and grief. “We just want to be told the truth, even if it hurts,” an adolescent once told me. Being honest within age appropriate ranges and your families’ cultural norms will bring trust, love and connectedness to a confused and grieving child.

Give children permission to grieve, as they were a part of the death that occurred. Children seek permission from adults to communicate their grief. Open that door by being honest with their questions. Using simple, honest language will encourage them to come to you with other stressful scenarios in the future because they’ll know they can trust you. In times of grief and loss, children often feel the world is turned upside down and, just like the adult, experience the same rollercoaster ride of emotions. This is normal for the both of you! Be gentle with yourself and, in turn, it may teach the children in your life to be gentle as well.

**THINGS TO CONSIDER:**

Try to avoid euphemisms, as they can create more confusion as a child or adolescent grows older. Avoid using terms such as “Grandpa passed” or “Grandpa just transferred over” as children may wonder where they passed to or if they can transfer over, too. Instead try something along the lines of, “Grandpa did die, and he won’t be physically coming back, but his memory is always with us and always in your heart.” You can still incorporate the natural language within your family’s customs, norms and religious connections—but be honest, too.

Together We Can camp provides the opportunity for kids to be with others who are also grieving the death of a loved one. Camp is expressive in nature and led by experienced facilitators in art, music, play and nature activities. For more information or a registration packet, please contact us at 216.486.6838.

**Red Oak**  
Red Oak Camp, Kirtland  
August 6 – 8, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
A 3-day bereavement day camp for children ages 6–13 who have experienced the death of a loved one. Pick up and drop off times to be determined.
BOOK REVIEW

April L. Ratcliffe, LSW

I Can't Stop Crying
It’s So Hard When Someone You Love Dies
By John D. Martin and Frank D. Ferris MD

After the death of a loved one, bereaved family members and friends may feel like all they can do is weep. *I Can’t Stop Crying* is a short book which explains that this is not only normal, but also an important step in the grieving process. Authors John D. Martin, a bereavement counselor, and Frank D. Ferris MD, a palliative care specialist, discuss the importance of giving yourself permission to grieve and offer suggestions for rebuilding your life without your loved one.

The book is divided into three parts: “Grief,” “The Heart” and “The Head.” The authors review how the death of a loved one affects your emotions, relationships, lifestyle, work habits and hopes for the future. They use what they refer to as the three Rs—Realize, Recognize, and Rebuild—to help explain the grieving process.

Martin and Ferris also emphasize that even though grief is painful, it allows us to reconstruct our lives after a major loss. Society often seems to have unrealistic expectations for people who are grieving. They may feel like people should “hurry up and get over it.” Consequently, this may prevent one from grieving in a normal and healthy way.

“Our society needs to be re-educated in understanding grief,” fellow author Robert Buckman MD, PhD, noted in the foreword. “This book is part of that much-needed enlightenment.”