This sentiment can feel especially true as you gear up to celebrate the winter holidays without your loved one. Holidays thread the years in their remarkable rituals of food, lights, gifts, music, and religious, cultural and secular observances. But for many, the holiday season may bring on a sense of foreboding as they anticipate heightened feelings of loss.

How can we shift the dread while honoring the grief?

Here are some suggestions:

Leading up to the winter observances, keep a small journal and write down three things that brought you joy or peace during the day. Nothing big, just little things you noticed. Record the emotion, body feeling and thoughts accompanying each moment of joy or peace. Even in the worst of times, finding the good is worthwhile.

Avoidance is not a bad thing. Our bodies and minds are informing us that there may be something emotionally or mentally overwhelming. Grief during the holidays is full of triggering sights, sounds, smells, events and people. We are not the same as we were, and festivities of non-grievers can be too much to bear. Be mindful of your needs.

For some, having a plan and a back-up plan reduces the pressure. Life is not as it was. You may want to shut down for the day. You may want to release yourself from some tasks or preparations that you have done in years past. You may want to participate in a limited fashion. Listen to your body and don’t push yourself. You’ve suffered a loss. This is a sacred time. You have nothing to prove to anyone. Surround yourself with people who love and accept you and your grief.

If you are typically the person who arranges holiday celebrations, have a family meeting in person or by phone. Discuss ideas from important family members (don’t forget the children) and friends on how best to honor the grief and holiday rituals. Remembering your loved one and the memories made with them can be incorporated in the simple candle lighting ceremony detailed on page two.

We here at Hospice of the Western Reserve honor your grief and your loss. Grief support is available to you and your family. Peace to you all.
Holiday Remembrance Ceremony

We light these five candles in honor and memory of you.

This candle represents our grief. The pain of losing you is intense. It reminds us of the depth of our love for you.

This candle represents our courage – to confront our sorrow, to comfort each other, and to change our lives.

This candle is in memory of you – the times we laughed, the times we cried, the times we were angry with each other, the silly things you did and the caring and joy you gave us.

This candle is the light of love. As we enter this holiday season, day by day we cherish the special place in our hearts that will always be reserved for you. We thank you for the gift your living brought to each of us.

And this candle is the light of hope. It reminds us of love and memories of you that are ours forever. May the glow of the flame be our source of hopefulness now and forever.

What we once enjoyed and deeply loved we can never lose, for all that we love deeply becomes a part of us. ~Helen Keller

Cleveland’s snowy winter is right around the corner. While some might enjoy cold weather sports and mugs of steaming cocoa, others find it’s a quiet time of hibernation, contemplation and hot tea. The short gloomy days reflect and contribute to strong feelings of grief. The holidays come and go and leave us with a stillness. Many worry that they will become isolated and lonely.

But we don’t need to be afraid of the winter season. Here are some tips to help you through grey skies and murky days:

Find a way to bring in the light. Open the curtains, turn on the lights. Consider investing in a light box.

Find an activity to get you outside. Take the dog for walk, run a few errands or visit friends. Fresh, cold air can be invigorating.

Be aware that everyone grieves differently. Remember that there is no right or wrong way to grieve.

Breathe. Deep breathing can assist with relaxation and decrease stress and tension.

Invite family and friends to go through photo albums. Sharing stories and memories can be healing and fun.

Be kind and gentle with yourself. You may feel overwhelmed. Remind yourself that it’s okay not to be okay and that strong grief reactions are part of the journey.

Create a list with small, achievable tasks. Clean out one kitchen cupboard. If you do two, great. If you do the whole kitchen, stupendous.

Consider a support group. Social connections are good for the mind, heart and body.

We continue to be here with comfort, hope and healing.

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

We love you.
“Why Bother?”

BY SUSAN HAMME, LSW, CHP-SW

AS THE WINTER SEASON SETS IN, many may start to wonder, “what am I going to do with my time?” Extended daylight hours, the ability to get outside to exercise and soak in some vitamin D have come to a close. For some, the darkness gives permission to stay inside and curl up on the sofa with a warm mug and a blanket. Others, especially those who are grieving, may feel anxiety and dread about those long, dark evenings.

When considering how to fill the long hours, some people feel unmotivated to engage in activities they normally enjoy. Thinking “why bother?” is not uncommon. It is also not uncommon for this lack of interest to be troubling to the individual. “Why can’t I do this thing that I enjoy?” “What is wrong with me?”

There is likely a grief trigger hiding within these activities. A trigger is anything that brings up memories or feelings of a loss—and it’s not always something as obvious as an anniversary date or a favorite song. Even hobbies you think of as solo activities may have a small link to your loved one who died. If you are a baker, perhaps your loved one was the taste tester. If you are a crossword puzzle junkie, perhaps your loved one was your sounding board. That tiny connection may now feel like a giant missing piece that creates a barrier to doing the activity.

So, what’s next?

Perhaps it’s time to stretch and try something new. It’s time to Google, search Pinterest or phone a friend for some suggestions. One of the hardest parts of finding a new activity is finding the motivation to start.

You may want to call a local community center, YMCA or library to see what types of classes are available. For those struggling with motivation, being part of a group activity adds social interaction as well as a sense that others are counting on you to be a part of the experience.

If the thought of finding a new hobby doesn’t appeal to you, perhaps find a new audience for your old pastime. If you enjoyed creating a tangible finished product, look for a place that could benefit from these creations. Friends, family, local shelters, nursing homes, or churches might appreciate your knitted scarves or well-made quilts. Doing something for others can take us outside of ourselves and remind us of our continued value in the world.

Not giving up or giving in to the “why bother” mindset will help lead you to those things that can bring you some relaxation, relief or even moments of happiness on your journey toward a new normal.
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

**SERIES** 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, January 8 – February 12
- 10:30 a.m. to Noon
- Susan Hamme 440.596.3582

**Lakeshore Campus**
- Mondays, January 27 – March 2
- 1 to 2:30 p.m.
- Tensie Holland 216.383.3741

Circle of Hope: Art Therapy Edition

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

**The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**
- Wednesdays, February 5 – March 11
- 10 a.m. to Noon
- Mollie Borgione 216.486.6544 or mborgione@hospicewr.org

Hope & Healing

**MONTHLY** 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

**MONTHLY** 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

**MONTHLY** 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

**MONTHLY** A 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 to 2:30 p.m.
- Mary Ellen Jordan 440.414.1737

Yoga Matters

**ONGOING** 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.
Child Loss  
**MONTHLY**  A support group for parents who have experienced the death of a child aged 18 or younger. Please join us for an opportunity to focus on your grief, find support, and feel community with those who have experienced a similar loss.  
*Please call to register.*

**West Campus**  
First Wednesday of the month, 6 to 7:30 p.m.  
Elizabeth Mason 440.414.6781 or emason@hospicewr.org

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 Office**  
NEW LOCATION  
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

Grief 101  
This one-hour class is for those who have experienced the death of a loved one in the past six months. Learn about signs and symptoms of grief as well as helpful strategies. *Registration is required.*

**East Campus**  
Thursday, February 13, 5 to 6 p.m.  
Register by February 6

Healing the Heart  
**MONTHLY**  Grief after an overdose death.  
*Registration is required.*

**East Campus**  
First Tuesday of the month, 6 to 7:30 p.m.  
Shawn Eigenbrode 216.486.6364 or seigenbrode@hospicewr.org

**HMC HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE**

**THE ELISABETH SEVERANCE PRENTISS BEREAVEMENT CENTER**  
300 East 185th Street  
Cleveland, OH 44119–1330  
216.486.6838

**THE ROBERTSON BEREAVEMENT CENTER**  
5075 Windfall Road  
Medina, OH 44256  
330.725.1900

**AMES FAMILY HOSPICE HOUSE**  
30080 Hospice Way  
Westlake, OH 44145–1077  
440.414.7349 or 835.281.5727

**ASHTABULA OFFICE**  
1166 Lake Avenue  
Ashtabula, OH 44004–2930  
440.997.6619

**DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE AND LAKE SHORE CAMPUS**  
300 East 185th Street  
Cleveland, OH 44119–1330  
216.383.2222 or 800.707.8922

**EAST CAMPUS**  
34900 Chardon Road, Suite 105  
Willoughby Hills, OH 44094  
440.951.8692

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

**LORAIN COUNTY OFFICE**  
2173 N. Ridge Road E., Suite H  
Lorain, OH 44055–3400  
440.787.2080

**WEST CAMPUS**  
22730 Fairview Center Drive  
Fairview Park, OH 44126  
216.227.9048

**THE ELISABETH SEVERANCE PRENTISS BEREAVEMENT CENTER**  
300 East 185th Street  
Cleveland, OH 44119–1330  
216.486.6838

**THE ROBERTSON BEREAVEMENT CENTER**  
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2173 N. Ridge Road E., Suite H  
Lorain, OH 44055–3400  
440.787.2080

**WEST CAMPUS**  
22730 Fairview Center Drive  
Fairview Park, OH 44126  
216.227.9048
Healing Arts Workshops WINTER 2019 - 2020

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.

HOLIDAY FAMILY NIGHT
These six-sided paper “kaleidoscopes” are fun to make using winter scenes from greeting cards, magazines, calendar photos or photos of your loved one. The photos above show one rotation from one scene to the next. The completed piece rotates through four scenes. Please bring along some scenes of your own or use ours, which should be 5 x 5 inches to fit properly.

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

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

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

LIGHT BREAKING THROUGH
The light our loved ones brought into our lives brings us hope in the darkness of grief. At this workshop, participants will create a simulated Kintsugi candle holder. In the Japanese art form Kintsugi, gold is used to “heal” the broken pieces that are put back together. We will end the evening together for a short candlelight ceremony to honor our loved ones.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Thursday, January 16, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

West Campus
Tuesday, January 21, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

KIDS ART: HEART HUGS
One of the difficult things that the death of a special person brings is the absence of their physical presence. Sometimes it’s helpful to have something you can hold onto in your grief. Participants will make a huggable heart-shaped pillow from fleece to remember their loved one to which fabric from a piece of your loved one’s clothing may be incorporated. Ages 6+. Kids are invited to bring family members along for this workshop.
Light refreshments provided.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Tuesday, January 14, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

West Campus
Tuesday, January 28, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

CIRCLE OF LOVE BOOKS
The photos show the book when folded up and fully opened. At this workshop, participants will put a circle book together. You can begin to add photos, notes, and other two-dimensional mementos to remember your loved one at the workshop or add them at home.

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

West Campus
Tuesday, February 4, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Christ Episcopal Church
3445 Warrensville Center Rd., Shaker Heights
Wednesday, January 22, 6 to 8 p.m.
Please note the time.

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
Thursdays, 2 to 4 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE
ART FOR RELAXATION: BEAD-MAKING
Making beads can be very relaxing! At this workshop, you can make beads from magazines, paper or fabric. In addition to the ones you make, there will also be others that you can use to make a necklace, bracelet or rearview mirror hanger to remind you of your loved one.

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

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

Christ Episcopal Church
3445 Warrensville Center Rd., Shaker Heights
Wednesday, March 25, 6 to 8 p.m.
Please note the time.

KIDS ART: HEART HUGS
One of the difficult things that the death of a special person brings is the absence of their physical presence. Sometimes it’s helpful to have something you can hold onto in your grief. Participants will make a huggable heart-shaped pillow from fleece to remember their loved one to which fabric from a piece of your loved one’s clothing may be incorporated. Ages 6+. Kids are invited to bring family members along for this workshop.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Monday, February 17, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

West Campus
Monday, February 24, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
When children and adolescents experience the death of a loved one, it can be difficult for parents and adults to talk about grief with them. Sometimes, we do not know the right words to say or how to answer difficult questions. These conversations can be especially difficult when the death of their loved one is traumatic or sudden, like death due to a drug overdose. Ohio has the second highest rate of drug overdoses at 46.3 people per 100,000, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s most recent research. That means children and adolescents in Ohio are more likely than most to lose a loved one to drug overdose.

Like other types of grief, children and adolescents who experience the death of a loved one to drug overdose have a range of mixed feelings from anger, sadness, guilt, and regret, to feelings of love and happiness. What makes an overdose death different, however, is that children and teens are more likely to experience higher degrees of stigma, guilt, shame and blame. You may find them asking why this has happened or dwelling on what they could have done to prevent the overdose. Often, they will experience complicated grief and may require extra support from trusted adults on their grief journey.

As one of these trusted adults, here are a few things to consider when talking with your child or teen:

- Use language that is clear and appropriate to the child’s age and level of understanding.
- Talk about the deceased in a respectful way. The overdose does not define the person.
- Emphasize that no one is to blame or is at fault for the death.
- Guide children in how to talk about their loss to others.
- Use the seven C’s when working with the child: I didn’t cause it. I couldn’t cure it. I couldn’t control it. I can care for myself by communicating my feelings, making healthy choices and by celebrating myself.

Source: National Association of Children of Alcoholics

While this only briefly touches on how to talk to children and adolescents who have experienced the death of a loved one due to overdose, it provides a starting point. If you are interested in more information regarding this topic or learning about our school program, please contact Western Reserve Grief Services at anytime.
We the Widows:
A Guide to Your New Life

by Patricia Tyson Redmond

Author Patricia Redmond felt lost after her husband of 33 years died from lung cancer. Not only did she have to cope with the pain of losing her soul mate and the father of her children, but she also had no idea how to deal with the more practical aspects of life on her own. She's spent the past decade navigating those decisions and wants to share her experience with you.

Redmond's book *We the Widows: A Guide to Your New Life* goes beyond the traditional grief books on how to survive after the death of a spouse. It includes advice on logistical issues, like funeral arrangements, and financial tips for widows whose husbands managed those aspects of their households. While much of Redmond's focus is on the practical side of grief, she also discusses self-care and what it's like to socialize as a single person.

The book is thought-provoking, humorous and empowering. You will learn that it is possible to find the strength to face the sorrow and begin to forge a new life.