



Grief Support

SPRING/SUMMER 2024

Greetings. We are thinking of you on your grief journey with the changing seasons. We are here to support you and are available to provide grief services to all members of our community following the death of a loved one. Please call us at (303) 604-5300 if you have any questions or would like to get connected to a grief counselor or a support group. We consider it a privilege to help those who are grieving to regain their balance and learn how to engage in life in new and meaningful ways.

Coping with Grief as Spring & Summer Arrive

For many of us who are grieving, the winter months can feel especially dark and isolating as we hunker down more inside, sometimes compounding our losses when we lose a sense of connection with others. After the snow melts and flowers begin to bloom, spring can naturally prompt us to reemerge. While spring can bring hope and rebirth, it's important to remember that this transition can also bring reminders of loss. Unlike the seasons, grief does not follow a pattern. It can be unpredictable, painful, and very personal. Take note of how your grief may be showing up and changing over time. You may be feeling renewed energy and motivation, or this might be a particularly difficult season for you. In time, your spring will come. You, too, will begin to thaw and bloom again in ways you may not have expected.

Consider the following reminders that may be helpful as you cope with your grief during the spring and summer months:

- **Get outdoors if you can.** There are many healing effects of nature. Take a moment to step outside and feel the gentle breeze or warm sunshine on your face. Invite a friend to join you for a hike or walk in the neighborhood and notice the sounds and sights of new growth around you. Perhaps visit a farmer's market in your community and try flavors of spring like fresh berries and seasonal vegetables.
- **Get your hands dirty.** Consider picking out a flower pot and filling it with soil and seeds. Maybe the seeds represent a flower or color that reminds you of your loved one. The anticipation of growth can bring hope as flowers begin to appear and brighten up your environment. Or maybe getting your hands dirty means experimenting with a new recipe in the kitchen or trying a creative activity like painting or crafting.
- **Get organized.** The journey through grief can feel confusing and chaotic. Sometimes amid the chaos, it helps to bring some order to our lives. Start small and be realistic. Consider tackling a closet or organizing a room in your home. Maybe spring is the time to sort through a box of your loved one's belongings or memorabilia saved, providing a moment to reminisce and reflect. Avoid feeling pressured to get organized or go through these items unless you feel ready to do so in your own time.
- **Get together with others.** As mourners, receiving love, compassion, and understanding from supportive people can be an important part of our healing. Perhaps this spring/summer would be a good time to join a grief support group to be with others in a safe space who have also experienced loss. Inviting a friend, neighbor, or family member over for a cup of tea or a simple meal can be a nice opportunity to open the door to conversation and not feel so alone in your grief. The goal is to stay socially connected to get the continued support you might need after a significant loss.

Volunteer Spotlight



Larry Kane

After I retired, I decided that I wanted to commit myself to some form of community service. I always had an interest in death and dying, and since I had retired as a clinical psychologist, working in hospice seemed like a good option to explore. So, I called TRU Community Care and volunteered to lead bereavement groups and work at the Care Center.

I have volunteered at TRU for about 12 years and people often say to me, "I don't know how you can do that." I tell them what a gift and an honor it is to be present with people who are dying, to be able to enjoy the often raw and vulnerable conversations, to see in their eyes the appreciation when I bring them a glass of water, to see how family members are so appreciative of all the caring TRU staff.

I also find it such a gift and honor to help facilitate bereavement groups. When I am tempted to be cynical about life, I think about how inspired I get from group members who are willing to open their hearts, even when breaking; willing, even in their own grief, to empathize with others, have the courage to not give up on life, continue to do their best at the hard work of living and loving.

I also enjoy my work on the Ethics Committee, helping staff, patients and families who are struggling to find a way forward in the midst of often horribly difficult and painful circumstances. I have received so much more than I have given.

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

Our adult grief groups are available to anyone needing support after the death of a loved one. Most support groups are free of charge. The meetings, led by experienced bereavement group facilitators, include specific topics and optional personal sharing in a safe and accepting atmosphere. Registration is required prior to first attendance for all groups.

To register please visit trucare.org/grief or call (303) 604-5300 for group information, times, and locations.

Ongoing Adult Grief Support Groups

Bereaved Parents Group

Support group with program and sharing for bereaved parents only.

Meets 3rd Wednesday,
6:30 - 8:30 PM

First Year Spouse/Partner Group

For spouses or partners whose loved one's death has occurred within the past 12 months.

Meets 2nd Tuesday,
6 - 8 PM

Widowed Senior Group

For senior men and women who have lost a spouse or partner.

Meets 4th Wednesday,
10 AM - 12 PM

Meditation Support Group

The practice of Instinctive meditation prepares and supports us in our grief journey as well as all other aspects of life.

Periodic offering via Zoom

Spouse/Partner Loss Group

For people who have experienced the death of a spouse or partner.

Meets 3rd Tuesday,
6 - 8 PM

Sudden Loss Group

Support for those who experienced the sudden, unexpected loss of a loved one.

Meets 4th Monday,
6 - 8 PM

Yoga After Loss Group

Exploring grief through yoga poses, breath work, and meditation.

Periodic Offering

Writing Through Grief Group

Members engage in writing and reflection on their grief journey in a safe, nonjudgmental setting. Offered periodically in-person

Adult Structured Grief Support Groups

8-Week Hope and Healing Support Program

For anyone who has experienced a loss and are at least six months out from the loss. Meets for 8 consecutive weeks

4-Week Newly Bereaved Support Program

Support, information, and networking for persons with recent death losses in the prior one to six months. Offered monthly, meets for 4 consecutive weeks, in person.

SEASONAL OFFERINGS

Equine Grief Workshop for Adults

Interact with horses who can support you on your grief journey. No prior horse experience necessary.

Five workshops available:

May 4th, 9 AM - 2 PM (Boulder)
June 1st, 10 AM - 4 PM (Lyons)
June 29th, 10 AM - 4 PM (Lyons)
July 20th, 10 AM - 4 PM (Lyons)
September 7th, 10 AM - 4 PM (Lyons)

Step by Step Hiking Group

Support, exercise and a safe place for quiet reflection for anyone who has suffered a death loss.

Meets on Thursday mornings in South Boulder

Books for Children and Families

The Fall of Freddie the Leaf: A Story of Life For All Ages
by Leo Buscaglia

The Memory Box, A Book about Grief
by Joanna Rowland and Thea Baker (ages 4 - 8)

You'll Find Me by Amanda Rawson Hill (ages 4 - 8)

The Rough Patch by Brian Lies (ages 4 - 8)

When Dinosaurs Die: A Guide to Understanding Death
by Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown (ages 4 - 8)

Ida, Always by Caron Levis and Charles Santoso
(ages 4 - 9)

EQUINE GRIEF WORKSHOP FOR KIDS

This 4-week group is for kids and teens ages 8-17 who are coping with a death loss. We interact with horses safely on the ground while talking about our grief and exploring ways to remember our special person. We are now accepting participants in two separate groups:

Group One: June 5, 12, 19, 26
from 5:30-7:30 PM

Group Two: July 10, 17, 24, 31
from 5:30-7:30 PM

To preregister or for additional information, please call (303) 604-5300.



Lights of Life Remembrance Service



On February 29, 2024, TRU Grief Services presented a poignant and meaningful Lights of Life Remembrance Service, providing solace and support to attendees as they honored and cherished the memory of their departed loved ones. The evening service, held at Unity Columbine Spiritual

Center, featured heartfelt readings including recognizing the names of those departed. Attendees were guided through a Ceremony of Light, crafted to honor the darkness of grief while illuminating the light of hope stemming from courage, cherished memories, and enduring love.

Participants adorned a memory table with photographs and mementos of those they had lost, and the true heart of the service unfolded as individuals stood to vulnerably share personal memories and stories of their loved ones. As the evening ended, both attendees and participants in the service left the hall feeling supported by others in the comforting embrace of their shared grief.

If you were unable to join us for this meaningful event, please consider attending next year. Grieving with others who have experienced loss can be deeply moving and healing. Please review TRU's website for more information on event details in the coming months.

*I don't wanna go out,
but I just can't stay home.
I don't need company,
but I sure don't want to be alone.
And to tell myself that I'm doing well,
is only making believe.
Without you,
what do I do with me?*

– Poem written and read by
Bob, Lights of Life Attendee

My Grief Journey and the Angels Who Supported Me

I slowly lost my dad to the silent “Life Thief” called dementia before I lost him to eternal life with God. I was so heartbroken and confused with what to do after his death. 24/7 caregiving for my best friend, my constant companion, was gone. The loss didn't just end with my dad's passing; I lost most sibling support even before Dad passed. Now, I was losing my home and the neighbors who had become friends, the visitors who would stop at our front porch and allow my dad to pet their dogs. I was losing the friendliness of the lady who delivered hospice medicine, and the TRU hospice nurses who not only cared for dad's needs but who had patience and care for me as well.

Grief infiltrated every fiber of my life, being, soul, and spirit. I lost my identity, self-confidence, happiness, security, and sense

of safety. I lost my past, sense of direction, and really couldn't see a viable future. I thought, where do I go from here? The hospice social worker encouraged me to call TRU's Grief Services team for help. In desperation, I finally did. With inclement weather, it was only phone calls those first few months with an amazing counselor, and then in-person sessions with another awesome counselor. They both validated my emotions all the while helping me build coping strategies to deal with tough days. They embraced me with care, love, open arms, active listening, compassion, and a deep concern for my well-being, not letting me go until they felt confident that I could fly on my own. And, even then, they suggested that I be a part of the Dementia Loss Grief Support Group that was vital

to me by tying up those loose knots to make me “whole” again. Being part of a wonderful group of people, mourners like me, who shared similar experiences of caregiving for family members was invaluable! I was not alone.

The TRU Grief Services team embodied every aspect of my grief that comes with the loss of a loved one, and without them, I know I'd still be a wandering soul with no purpose or direction in life. I will always be grateful to them for their persistence, love, understanding, and guidance. I'm blessed to have had such gifted and sincere “grief angels” who not only helped me in my journey back to life and healing but helped so many others as well.

– Pat, a grief counseling client and support group participant

Spring and Summer Ideas for Grieving Kids and Families

As spring and summer bloom, offering ample opportunities for outdoor activities, the power of nature can foster resilience within bereaved families. Here are some ideas for both younger kids and teens in your family who have experienced a death loss:

ROCKS – If families find themselves on walks or hikes where there are stones and rocks available for gathering, a great activity is to have everyone find a rock that speaks to them (“for whatever reason”) as well as a stone that they would like to paint. With the first rock, have everybody on the walk/hike describe what it was that drew them to the rock they chose as well as any feelings that may have come up for being drawn to that rock. Any chance to just talk about feelings that we have is a great thing for those who are grieving, so sharing about something from nature can be a non-threatening way to get used to talking about our feelings. Next, with the stone that family members are choosing to paint, buy a small set of brushes and inexpensive acrylic paints that can be found at local craft stores. Instruct everyone to paint either a message to the person who died or a small saying or image that reminds them of that person. They can then choose to hold onto the stone as a memento or leave it somewhere special outdoors as a reminder that fun surprises (like a painted stone!) found by others can be a way of sharing cool things with strangers. The teachable lesson with this is that even when we are sad, we can still find creative ways to remember our loved ones and lift the spirits of



KIDS' CORNER

Grief Support for Children and Teens

others who may see that beautiful painted rock while enjoying the outdoors.

FLOWERS AND POTS – The idea of planting a “memory garden” in even just a small patch of ground can be a nice way for families to commemorate a special person with a simple spring activity together. Kids may want to choose flowers for specific reasons (“purple was grandma’s favorite color”, “I loved how dad brought home roses to mom”) – the reasons may be very diverse and highly unique and may even surprise you! Encourage each other to talk about the choices made. If there are flowers that are better suited for patios or decks than planting in the ground, a family activity can be painting clay flower pots with messages and pictures that remind everyone of the person you are remembering.

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Visit us at:

TRUcare.org and
[Facebook.com/TRUCommunityCare](https://www.facebook.com/TRUCommunityCare)

TRU Grief Services welcomes donations at trucafe.org/donate. Donations help provide group resources and materials. TRU Community Care is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. We appreciate your support.