



The days are getting longer, and warmer, yay! The trees are budding, bulbs are ready to bloom and the seeds that the hungry birds didn't devour over the frozen winter are beginning to sprout. Spring has sprung! This time of the year brings to mind all of the wonderful metaphors about rebirth as Mother Nature



displays her glorious demonstration of cycles and the promise of a new season. Inevitably, with the awakening of the earth from its winter slumber there is a natural desire to embrace the beauty that is beginning to blossom. As new signs of life begin to immerge there is a sense of hope for the future that helps to lighten the grieving heart. I once heard that hope and Spring were created on the very same day. What a beautiful thought!



As you may have already experienced, this new season of your life-life after loss, is a very personal journey. With that being said, it important to remember that "personal" doesn't necessarily mean alone. The death of a loved one often brings about unexpected emotions after all, your heart has suffered a great loss and sometimes being with others who understand your grief is the key to healing.

In this Newsletter you will find information about our Bereavement Support Groups, monthly workshops, quarterly self-care bereavement intensives and informative articles to support you on your path of healing.

May you find peace and comfort at this difficult time. Dr. Karen Turek



"When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight." Kahlil Gibran



Letter to a Friend...

Do you feel like your friends and family may need a little guidance and direction on how to go about supporting you during your grieving process? This letter template may offer what you need to share.



Blessings to you as you continue on your path of healing. Dr. Karen

Dear _____,

I am writing you this letter because I value your friendship and love you beyond measure. What I want to share is that since _____'s death I have been in a deep well of grief.

I am asking for your patience in supporting me as I move along this difficult path. I know that it is hard to see me in this place of great sadness, but no one can fix this pain that I am feeling. I need to grieve in my own way and the best gift you can give me is your shoulder to cry on, a hug and a listening ear.

Sometimes the clichés that are intended to be words of support are hurtful so when they pop up please don't share them with me. Please know that the phrase "I am here for you" is the best thing to say when I am experiencing a grief meltdown. I appreciate calls so please don't withdraw from our friendship. It makes me feel like I'm being abandoned and that adds to my sadness.

My life is forever changed and I need your support more than ever to find my way through this journey. Thank you for your love and support.

Love, _____

The Symptoms of Grief With Dr. Karen

The grieving process is a very personal journey and this uncharted territory can be confusing and very complicated. The following are **some** of the facets of grief that can be expected. If you have any questions about the grieving process please, do not hesitate to contact your A Plus Hospice bereavement support team.

Physical

1. Disrupted sleeping patterns. Restlessness and/or extreme fatigue.
2. Tightness and/or pain in the chest, abdomen and throat. Headaches. Unable to breathe deeply.
3. Crying, deep sighing and a feeling of emptiness. A feeling of disconnectedness.
4. Appetite and weight change.

Behavioral

1. Confusion, slowed responses, forgetfulness.
2. Sensing the loved one's presence in dreams and waking times.
3. Needing to tell the loved ones death story.

Emotional

Abandonment • Anger • Anxiety • Apathy • Fear • Guilt • Irritability • Loneliness • Longing • Meaningless
Numbness • Relief • Sadness • Vulnerability

Social

1. Lack of initiative and interest.
2. Withdrawal, avoiding friends and family and social interaction.
3. Deeply sensitive. Easily hurt by others words and actions.





Bereavement Support Groups

A Plus Hospice Care is here to support you through the loss of your loved one. Our Bereavement Program offers a variety of options tailored to give you the opportunity to choose the level and amount of bereavement care that is best for you.

We provide individual counseling sessions for family members whose loved ones have been on our service as well as bimonthly groups, monthly workshops and quarterly bereavement self-care intensives for anyone in the community that has experienced the death of a loved one.

Our bereavement services are all at no cost. **All activities are held at our Reno office, 227 Vine St.**

Bi-Monthly Group Meetings:

On the **First and Third Tuesdays** of every month, we provide an open forum support group to share our feelings as we move through the grieving process. **2:30-4:00 pm**

Monthly Workshops (see workshop details on back page):

April-Friday, April 26, 2019 at 2:00 pm

May-Friday, May 24, 2019 at 2:00 pm

June-Friday, June 28, 2019 at 2:00 pm

First Quarter Self-Care Intensive: Wednesday, June 12, 2019 at 10:00 am



Nutrition, Hydration and Grief

Grief expends an enormous amount of energy and can create stress which, can play havoc on your health. The grieving process not only can affect one's emotional state, but also their metabolic and hormonal state as well. The stress hormone cortisol is often elevated and can contribute to undesirable fat accumulation in the abdominal area and blood vessels eventually leading to possible high blood pressure, headaches and muscle tension and a myriad of other potential health concerns.

For many people grief is a serious appetite suppressant. You may not be able to negotiate or prepare a big meal, but you can probably nibble on something. Eating frequent small nourishing snacks will keep you going. In some cases, overeating can also occur. If you find yourself eating too much try eating six small meals that are rich in protein. They will help to keep you full and your blood sugar levels balanced. Stock up on nourishing food that don't require a lot of preparation like fruits, cheeses, protein bars, veggies, power smoothies and yogurt. You may also consider taking a multi-vitamin supplement if you feel that you may be lacking in your nutritional needs.

In addition, don't forget to hydrate! Dehydration contributes to the confusion that is often associated with grief. Remember the general "rule of thumb" for adequate fluid intake is to take your body weight, divide it by two and that is how many ounces you should be drinking per day. In other words, if you weigh **150 pounds ÷ 2 = 75** ounces of daily water intake. Take good care and we hope that you will join us for our next self-care intensive on **Wednesday, June 12th**. *Dr. Karen Erek, D.D., Ph.D.*



April Bereavement Workshop

Prayer Flags “Written on the Wind”

Friday, April 26, 2019 at 2:00 pm

Prayer flags have graced the Tibetan Himalayan mountain sides for many centuries supporting the prayers of the local people. As the wind moves across the flags, the prayers and blessings release their message into all-pervading space and bring a sense of peace to all sentient beings. We will be learning more about these little squares of hope, and you will be creating your own to support your path of healing after the loss of a loved one.

May Bereavement Workshop

Nature Mandalas “Creating a Peaceful Center”

Friday, May 24, 2019 at 2:00 pm



The word Mandala means "circle." Circles represent wholeness and eternal life. They remind us that the bonds with our loved ones, who have passed, are ongoing and without end.

Many are surprised to learn that nature inspired the creation of mandalas! The circular motif and symmetrical geometry is found everywhere in the natural world. Some of the most commonly recognized natural mandalas include: flowers, ferns, shells, fruits, snowflakes, spider webs, and our eyes-the windows to the soul.

In this workshop, we will connect to the healing properties of nature as we create personal mandalas that represent our lives and the continuum of eternal life.



June Bereavement Workshop

Continuing Bonds “Healthy Living With Loss”

Friday, June 28, 2019 at 2:00 pm

The term “continuing bonds” is relatively new in the world of grief recovery. Unlike older grief models, it embraces the philosophy of not putting the relationship that you shared with your loved one on a shelf but taking all the love and experiences that you shared and move forward with them. This includes acknowledging your loved one is still very much with you, although not in physical form, and that they still play an important role in your life. In this workshop we will explore healthy ways to continue and grow our relationships with loved ones who have passed.