



10 Suggestions for the Holiday Season

This time of year can be especially difficult after the loss of a loved one and so it is important to recognize that having some sort of “plan” for how you will spend the holiday often helps to relieve some of the stress. Listed below are a few tips you may find helpful.

1. Acknowledge the holidays will be different and may be tough.
2. Prioritize and don't overcommit. The holidays are often filled with parties, dinners, and events, save your energy for those that are most important. Consider all of your options and rank them in order of importance. Let your hosts, or guests, know that you may have a change of heart so that they are prepared and won't be overly disappointed in case you are not up to the event on that day.
3. Light a candle in your home in memory of the person you've lost.
4. Make some quiet time for yourself. The holidays can be hectic and bring an onset of extra stress. Set aside time for yourself to journal, meditate, listen to music, or watch old movies.
5. Hang a memory stocking, or create a memory box, and place it in a special place where you and others can write down treasured memories. Choose a special time to read them together.
6. Decide which traditions you want to keep or change. Consider creating a new tradition.
7. Join in on a bereavement support group. When everyone appears to be filled with holiday cheer sometimes it is helpful to talk with others who are struggling.
8. Ignore people who want to tell you what you “should” do for the holidays. Listen to yourself, trust yourself, communicate with your family and do what works for you.
9. Skip it. Really! If you just can't face the holiday it is okay to take a break this year. However, before you go to this extreme, consider if you could just simplify your holiday. If you do skip, still make a plan. Decide if you will still see friends or family.
10. Remember, it is okay to be happy! Finding happiness doesn't diminish how much you love and miss the person who isn't there this holiday. Don't feel guilty for the joy you do find this holiday season.

Surviving the Holidays...Holiday Bereavement Support

Grieving is a necessary and natural part of healing after the loss of a loved one. It is a personal journey that is very unpredictable and mysterious at times. For many the holiday season can be especially intense. We are offering a four-week program that will focus on healthy coping tools to support you during this difficult time. You are invited to attend one or all as each week we will be addressing different aspects of the grieving process. All groups will be held in our Reno office at 1pm.

Monday, November 25th Monday, December 2nd Monday, December 9th Monday, December 16th

We hope that you will join us for this informative bereavement support series.

Educational material and worksheets will be provided. Contact Dr. Karen for more information (775) 351-7346



Bereavement Newsletter

Autumn: October-November-December 2024



As the crisp autumn air begins to chill the nights and bring a welcomed contrast from the long dog days of summer we feel a sense of transformation. Mother Earth turns the trees into a spectacle of amazing beauty as the leaves turn into the auburn shades of fall and release from their comfortable and secure positions-swirling and dancing in the wind as though to announce that they are making peace with letting go.

This a good time for reflecting on better times as we honor the ache of loss in our souls. Letting go of the warmth of what was and entering into a season of change is most likely the most difficult thing you have ever done. Approaching the Winter Solstice, and the shortest day of the year, we are reminded by the Season of Lights that even in the darkest times there is always hope for a new beginning as we rekindle the embers of hope in our hearts.

Sometimes it is hard to rekindle those embers by ourselves and in reaching out we find solace in the words of others who have walked in similar shoes. We learn from each other that we are not alone. The encouragement that we receive and share helps to keep our minds positive, our hearts open and affirm that although our lives will not be the same, that there is hope for the future. With the holiday season rapidly approaching, I hope that you will join us by participating in our support groups, workshops and the “Surviving the Holidays” series. There truly is a special quality of healing that comes from being with others who are willing to listen and understand the pain of losing someone dear.

In this Newsletter you will find information about our Bereavement Support Groups, Workshops and “Surviving the Holidays” a four-week series specifically designed to offer support for the holiday season. We hope that you will join us and that you have a peaceful Holiday Season.

Peace to you. Dr. Karen

*Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops, at all. - Emily Dickinson*





October Bereavement Workshop

Aboriginal Dot Art

“Creating Sacred Messages to Heal the Heart”

Wednesday, October 23rd at 1pm

In this workshop we will explore the art of over-dotting to create a message, affirmation or symbol that is intended to represent a positive image that you would like to experience in your life.

Please RSVP to Dr. Karen at karen@aplushospicecare.com

November Bereavement Workshop Gratitude Wreaths

“Thankfulness adds meaning to life,
even in difficult times”

Wednesday, November 13th at 1pm

Practicing gratitude can be transformational. This spiritual discipline helps us focus on what we have, not what we have lost. Being thankful helps us to discover hidden blessings and treasures that we often take for granted. Paying attention to what is good often turns a rotten day into “hey that wasn’t so bad after all” type of reflection. Gratitude is good medicine for the grieving heart.

Please RSVP to Dr. Karen at karen@aplushospicecare.com



Book Resource List

A Time to Grieve: Meditations for Healing After the Death of a Loved One

Healing After Loss

Hello from Heaven

Hope for Bereaved: Understanding, Coping and Growing Through Grief

How to go on Living When Someone You Love Dies

I Wasn't Ready to Say Goodbye

I Can't Stop Crying

Living When a Loved One Has Died (Revised)

RESTORED: A Self-Paced Grief Workbook for Your Journey from Loss to Life

The Four Things That Matter Most

The Grief Recovery Handbook

Understanding Your Grief

When Bad Things Happen to Good People

When Your Spouse Dies: A Concise and Practical Source of Help and Advice

Carol Staudacher

Martha Whitmor Hickman

Bill and Judy Guggenheim

Therese S. Schoeneck

Therese A. Rando

Brook Noel, Pamela Blair PhD

John Martin

Earl A. Grollman

Marilyn Willis

Ira Byock, M.D.

John W. James & Russell Friedman

Alan Wolfelt, PhD

Harold S. Kushner

Cathleen L. Curry



Bereavement Support Groups

227 Vine Street Reno, Nevada 89503 (775) 329-0900

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 bereavement support groups and workshops. There is no charge for our bereavement services for community members who have lost a loved one.

In Person Bereavement Support Groups: On the **First** and **Third Tuesday** of the month we will provide an in-person open forum support group at our Reno Office located at 227 Vine St., Reno, 1pm.

October 1st and 15th

November 5th and 19th

December 3rd and 17th

Mourning... the Passage of Time

Many who have experienced the loss of a loved one feel as though their lives today are grouped into two categories: “before” and “after” their loss, often finding it difficult to mourn the past while also appreciating the present and beginning to create a new life “after.” There is a myriad of mixed emotions that surface when attempting to move gracefully into the future while mourning the past.

Very tricky, and many times exhausting, until a point in mourning is reached when expectations for the future are able to be released. It’s true...life will never be the same. But your love for your loved one is not in the past, it is now, and always will be. It can be distressing when the passage of time begins to make our memories a little hazy and... the day that we realize that we are moving forward in grace may stir up some feelings of guilt because you actually feel good. However, in general, humans are survivors and our hearts don’t want to dwell in the “after” so we begin to notice a shift and somehow through all the pain a beautiful human trait begins to bubble up to the surface, hope. Hope and gratitude are healing balms for the grieving heart.

As we know, time can be a thief; it flies by in a blink of an eye and doesn’t even have the courtesy to acknowledge what it has taken from us. But there are always two sides to a coin and sometimes time can give us opportunities to grow in ways that our “before” life didn’t. It may be difficult to imagine right now but, a healthy “after” is not only possible but often welcomed as grief begins to soften. There are many paths of healing and being grateful for what has been and hopeful for what is ahead are encouraging signs that our lives are moving towards a happy fulfilling future. Remember the old phrase, “you cannot be grateful and unhappy at the same time.” Well, I believe it to be true. So...I encourage you to focus on what is good in your life, give gratitude for it and hopefulness will surely bloom. In Gratitude, Dr. Karen



Missing You at Christmas Author Unknown

Every day without you since you had to go ...
is like summer without sunshine and winter without snow.

I wish that I could talk to you. There’s so much I would say.
Life has changed so very much since you went away.

I miss the bond between us, and I miss your kind support.
You’re in my mind and in my heart and every Christmas thought.

