

What we have once enjoyed
and deeply loved, we can never
lose. For all that we love deeply
becomes a part of us.

- Helen Keller



Dear Friend,

You are not alone at this time.

As you begin the journey through grief
we extend our heartfelt sympathy.
We hope that the information in this
book will help you in some way.

Sincerely,

The staff at Barnes-Jewish St. Peters Hospital
and Progress West HealthCare Center



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Taking Care of Immediate Concerns

We are sorry for your loss, and we know this a difficult time for you and your family. If your loved one died while in our hospital, you are welcome to stay with them as long as you desire. This is your special time to be with your loved one. The staff will be available to assist you when you are ready to move to the next step.

- Staff will attend to your needs as well as those of your loved one.
- Please feel comfortable asking questions, voicing your concerns and asking our staff if you need anything.
- Please take all your loved one's belongings including clothing, jewelry and any other personal items. Staff are available to help with gathering these items. Check drawers and cabinets and remember any cell phone chargers.
- If you have customs or traditions that need to be observed at or near the time of death, please inform the staff.
- At some point, staff will ask which funeral home you prefer. If you do not have arrangements made with a funeral provider, there is a list of local mortuaries attached.

Making Final Arrangements

- Traditional funeral arrangement will require calling a reputable funeral home, such as those attached.

- Consider any predetermined funeral plans that your loved one may already have in place. If you are not sure if your loved one had made such arrangements, check their last will and testament or any safety deposit boxes to see if there are specific instructions.
- The following pages contain information about donation of the body to science, cremation, burial at sea and transportation of the body to another area.

Cremation

- Local funeral homes/crematoriums can help with cremation services.
- Ashes can be buried in cemeteries or kept by the family in an appropriate receptacle.
- Check with local agencies before planning to spread the ashes in public places. There could be restrictions regarding where remains can be scattered.
- After scattering the remains, the receptacle must be disposed of as a waste receptacle. Check with local sanitation agencies prior to disposal.
- If the ashes are spread in uncontrolled public lands, you must notify the United States Environmental Protection Agency within 30 days.
- Cremated remains can be scattered in ocean waters without regard to the depth limitations.
- Burial in inland waters is regulated according to the Clean Water Act.

Burial at Sea

- Burial at sea of human remains that are not cremated shall take place at least three nautical miles from land and in water at least 600 feet deep.

- Certain areas, including Florida and the Dry Tortugas, requires the water to be at least 1800 feet deep. Refer to the Code of Federal Regulations for specific instructions.

Donating the Body to Science

- Local medical schools such as Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis University and Logan College of Chiropractic accept donation of the body for scientific purposes.
- These teaching schools often require pre-arrangement by the decedent prior to death.
- Most of the schools that accept body donation have a memorial service yearly for families of the decedent.
- Arrangements and transportation of the body to the school are the responsibility of the family, including payment of any fees associated with the services.

Organ Donation

- Staff members trained in services from the Mid-America Transplant Services (MTS) of St. Louis are available to talk with you should you wish to know about organ donation services. These decisions must be made at the time of death.
- Every patient death in Missouri is reported to MTS at the time of death. If your loved one is a possible donor candidate, one of our trained staff may discuss this with you. MTS professionals may also speak with you by phone to see if you have ever discussed this option with your loved one.
- If you know at the time of death that your loved one planned to be an organ donor, please tell us as soon as possible. This will help to fulfill your loved one's wishes.

Autopsy

- Autopsies are not ordered on every patient.
- If a family member wishes to have an autopsy performed and it has not been ordered by the Medical Examiner (ME) or attending physician, the cost usually is incurred by the family.
- If the autopsy is ordered by the ME or the attending physician, it will be paid for by the examiner's office.
- Autopsy details are obtained from the ME's office at the St. Louis County Health Department. Their website is: <http://ww5.stlouisco.com/doh/medexam/medexam.html>

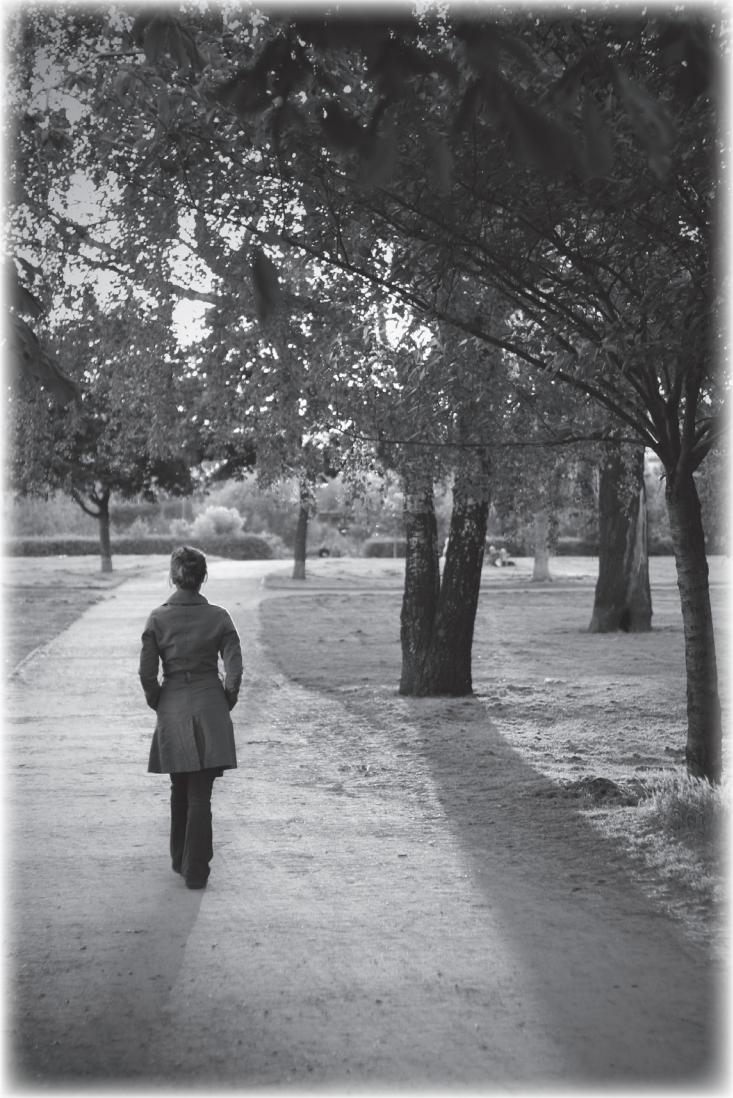
Obtaining Death Certificates

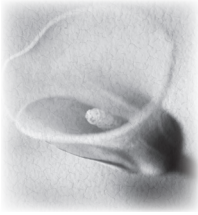
To obtain death certificates after funeral arrangement are completed, contact the Office of Vital Records at the St. Louis County Health Department. Their website is:

<http://ww5.stlouisco.com/doh/vitals/vitals.html>

There is a charge for each certificate and certificates typically take 5-6 weeks to obtain.

- Consider the number of death certificates you may require. Many places require original certificates in order to cancel services. Order sufficient certificates while making arrangements.





This page can be used to record the individuals who have been contacted.

- Contact Name and Phone Number
-
- Clergy _____
- Employer _____
- Human Resource Department of Decedent (benefits/pension)

- Landlord _____
- Schools _____
- Clubs/Organizations _____
- Clubs/Organizations _____
- Executor of Estate _____
- Lawyer _____
- Financial Advisor _____
- Life Insurance Company _____
- Social Security Administration _____
- Bank(s) – Savings, Checking, Safety Deposit Box

- Pharmacy (if decedent receives mail order meds)

- Family _____
- Family _____
- Friends _____
- Friends _____

If your loved one is the sole owner of a piece of property, the following places will need to be notified to stop services and charges. Some of the services may require a death certificate.

- | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Contact | Name and Phone Number |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mortgage | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Electric | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Gas | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Telephone | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cable/Satellite | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Water | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sewer | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Insurance | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Newspaper | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Credit Card Companies | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Postal Service | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other | _____ |





Taking Care of Your Loved One's Affairs

Many family members and friends may be asking what they can do to assist you at this time. Enlisting their help with locating the following papers is a task you may wish to assign.

- Will
- House Title or Mortgage Document
- Car Titles
- Property Titles i.e., rental, vacation home, motorcycle, boat
- Bank Books
- Investment Documents
- Insurance Policies
- Military Discharge (Government Form DD214) will be needed immediately for burial in a national cemetery
- Current Monthly Bills: Mortgage, Electric, Gas, Telephone, Water, Sewer, Insurance, Newspaper, Cable/Satellite
- Library Books
- Rental Videos

Taking Care of Your Loved One's Belongings

This is a task that should be done when you are ready. Allow yourself some time; however, by holding on to some belongings, such as property, or motor vehicles, you may be incurring expenses. You may wish to have someone help you. Deciding what to keep is a personal decision, but these points may help with your decision.

Medications—Contact the pharmacy to dispose of medications. Flushing certain medications in the toilet or down the sink can harm the water source.

Clothes—Clothes can be donated to those in need, but there might be a favorite hat or sweatshirt that has sentimental value. Consider keeping one item to make it easier to part with the rest

of the items. Memory items such as quilts, stuffed animals or other crafts can be made out of clothing items.

Furniture—Family members may welcome an item to remember your loved one by. Also, young members of the family going away to college, or furnishing their first apartment, may be very grateful for your thoughtfulness. Charitable organizations including those listed under Donation Sites are always appreciative of donations.

Books—A favorite book may be a fitting keepsake. Contact used book stores for resale. Many schools and libraries hold annual book fairs and would be very grateful for the donation. Ask if they pick up these donation items.

Hobby Equipment and Memorabilia—Hobby stores, recycling businesses and various organizations may help you find interested buyers.

Guns and Ammunition—Contact your local police department for information on the sale or donation of these items.

Pets—If there is not a friend or family member available to adopt the pet, you may wish to contact your local Humane Society or pet adoption center. Visit www.metroanimal.org for a list of no kill shelters and rescue groups for pets.

Medical Equipment—Most medical supplies cannot be resold or given out through physician offices; however, many local churches are involved in medical missions and can take donations. Health Equipment Lending Closet may take used equipment. Their number is 314-567-4700 or www.stlhelp.org/

Donation Sites – There are numerous charitable organizations that collect household items, clothes, furniture and more.

Several of the more well-known sites include:

Goodwill – www.goodwill.org

Salvation Army – 1-800-SA-TRUCK (1-800-728-7825)

Vietnam Veterans of America – www.schedulepickup.com



Taking Care of Yourself

Grief is a normal and natural response to loss. It is a personal and highly individual experience. There is no set time-table for grieving. There is no right or wrong way to grieve, but there are healthy ways to cope with the pain.

It is important to find a good balance between the things that really need to be taken care of and taking care of yourself. It is like having an emotional bank account: You make deposits when you do things that help you relax and find comfort.

In contrast, you make withdrawals from your emotional bank account by doing the necessary things, such as the hard work of grief, taking care of practical matters or taking care of others. You can also make a withdrawal from your emotional bank account by doing things that could be harmful to yourself physically or emotionally.

Everyone grieves differently, and it can trigger a wide variety of emotions. Right now, you may be experiencing any number of these common reactions to loss:

- Shock
- Disbelief
- Anger
- Guilt
- Depression
- Loneliness
- Fear or anxiety

These feelings are normal, and with proper grieving, they should fade over time. However, in order to arrive at a healthy acceptance of your loss, you will need to take care of your own emotional needs:

- Allow your thoughts to come forth.
- Express your feelings.
- Reach out to people you trust for help.
- Accept help from others.
- Be kind to yourself.
- Allow yourself private time to reflect.

Sometimes, people can react to loss in very physical ways. Taking care of your body is also a very important part of returning to a healthy state of living after your loss. Be aware of your own physical needs:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Eat well-balanced meals, even if you don't feel like it.
- Get regular physical activity and fresh air.
- Incorporate ways to manage stress.
- Watch for signs of physical changes or concerns. Be sure to contact your healthcare provider if the need arises.
- Avoid self-medicating with alcohol or other drugs. This only numbs feelings, it does not make them go away.

Here are some practical ideas to assist you in the grieving process:

- Rituals (even something as simple as lighting a candle) can be a helpful acknowledgment and expression of your feelings.
- Look to your faith as a source of comfort and consolation.
- Meditate and pray with others, as well as alone.

- Face your past regrets and put them into perspective.
- Postpone major decisions that are not urgent – try to be aware of how your new feelings may be influencing your decisions.
- Complete a project your loved one started.
- Express your feelings in writing by journaling, writing a letter to your loved one or completing a memory book.
- Keep one or more sentimental items; however, it is important to realize that this can sometimes hinder you from moving on if you decide to keep everything.
- Consider helping others – service can add meaning to life and help turn your attention to positive outlets.
- Make a list of special memories or characteristics of your loved one. This can also be made into art by writing the inspirational words on a border around a framed photo.
- Tell the story and do not allow your loved one to be forgotten. Show pictures to remember the good times.

It can be helpful to seek outside assistance when coping with emotional distress. The grief you are experiencing may take many forms and reveal itself in various ways. Healing will occur but the journey can be long and painful. Support is often needed along the way. Consider some of the following options:

- Barnes-Jewish St. Peters Hospital and Progress West HeathCare Center Bereavement Support Program – This 4-week core program, designed for individuals 30 years and older, can benefit individuals who are experiencing the loss of a spouse or life partner. It is facilitated by a bereavement specialist with BJC Hospice and the hospital chaplain. Call 636-916-9733 to learn more about this program.



- Counselors – Seek individual, group, and/or family counseling.
- Support groups – The following site maintains a large database of support groups that meet in the Saint Louis metropolitan area: www.alz.org/stl/documents/stlreportgrief.pdf. Although this site is sponsored by the Alzheimer’s Association, they have a very extensive list of groups for all ages and circumstances.
- Baue Funeral Home – This organization offers a wealth of resources for guidance and support.
- Spiritual Advisers – It can be helpful to seek support from within your own faith community.

If you are experiencing suicidal thoughts, seek professional help IMMEDIATELY. Go to your local emergency department, call 911 or call the suicide hotline at 800-811-4760.





Taking Care of Children

Take Care of You To Take Care of Them

When you grieve the loss of someone close to you, you are likely to feel a range of intense emotions including shock, sadness, anger, guilt and loneliness. Coping with these emotions is difficult enough by itself. But when you are a parent or guardian of children who are grieving also, it can be hard to know how to support them.

It is important that you make time for yourself, to think about what's happened and to recharge your energy or you will not have the strength required to support others. Enlist friends and relatives to help you and your children.

Myths About Children's Grief

There are many myths that surround the way children grieve. For example:

- **Young children do not grieve.** Children grieve at any age, but their grief manifests in different ways according to their age, developmental stage and life experience. Children often grieve intensely for a period and will then just switch off. Their break from grieving usually takes the form of play, which adults often mistake as a sign that the child is not grieving.
- **Children should, or should not, go to funerals.** Whether a child goes to a funeral should be their choice – a choice made based on information and support. Each child will handle their loss differently and for some children it may be beneficial to attend the funeral, while others will not want to.

- **Children recover quickly from a loss.** Both adults and children will learn to live with loss and adapt to a new reality without their loved one, but no one ever fully gets over a significant loss. For children in particular, the loss may be revisited at different stages of development as they grow up, and the grief may arise again strongly.
- **Children should always be encouraged to talk about their grief.** It is important to encourage and support children to talk about their loss if they want to; however, other approaches like art, play, writing, music and dance may also allow children to express their emotions in a less confronting way.
- **Children will be permanently scarred by the death of a loved one.** Children are resilient and with continued support can deal with their grief appropriately. Sometimes a significant loss can affect a child's development, and if you are concerned about this, talk to a health professional for recommendations on counseling resources.
- **It's important to be strong for the children and not show emotion.** It's fine to cry in front of the children, especially if you explain to them why you are angry or sad. Saying, "I'm crying because dad died and I miss him," shows your child that it's all right to talk about your feelings and that they are not alone.

One of the first opportunities to help a child express their grief after a death is the funeral.

You can help by explaining what will happen before, during and after the ceremony. Let the child's questions and natural curiosity guide the discussion.

Give as many specifics as the child seems interested in hearing. You might tell him/her how the room will look, who will be coming and how long everyone will be there. When possible, arrange for the child to visit the funeral home before the funeral. This allows the child more freedom to react and talk openly about feelings and concerns.



Color of Grief

By Venetia, age 15, Texas

I see it now.
A mixture of colors.
A confusion of feelings.

Some are bright,
Like the redness of anger.

Some are bold,
Like the blackness of confusion.

Some are plain to see,
Like the whiteness of sadness.

Some are in between,
Like the rainbow of madness.

Yet they now run together,
A drab, gray puddle.

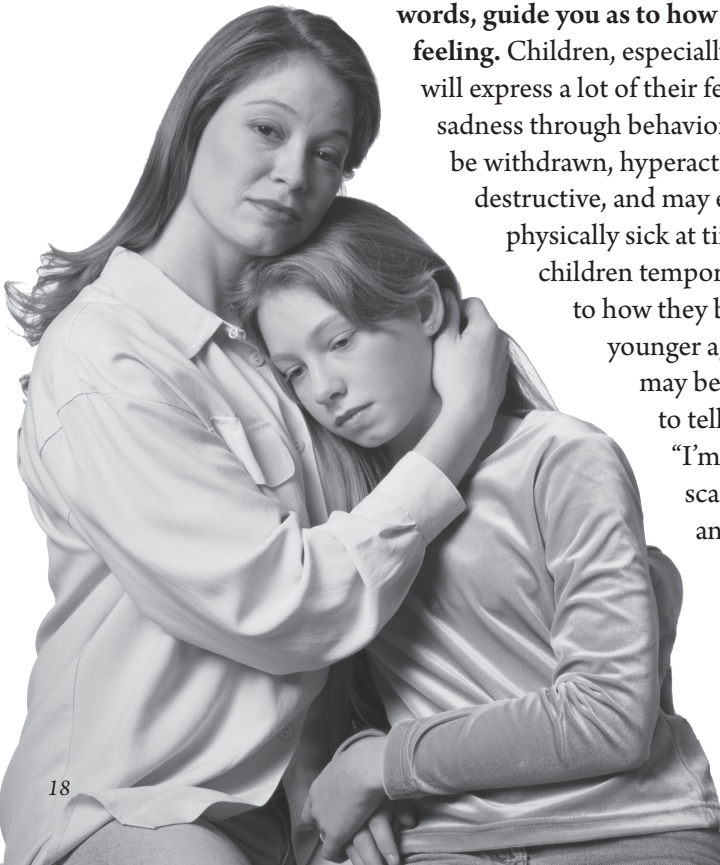
The only way to see my grief
is to look into my puddle.

Ways to Guide Children through Grief

Always tell the truth. Explain what happened and why, using simple direct language. Use the correct words: people die, they are dead or they were killed. Be sure to provide some information on why the death happened or children may fill in any blanks with creative ideas of their own. Children without facts are more likely to blame themselves for causing or contributing to the death.

Let children know that the emotions they are experiencing are normal. Grief is more than sadness. Adults and children feel anger, fear, confusion, guilt, and relief, as well as sadness when someone dies. These feelings are not good or bad. They are simply normal.

Let children's actions, as well as their words, guide you as to how they are feeling. Children, especially young ones, will express a lot of their fear, anger and sadness through behavior. They may be withdrawn, hyperactive, clingy, destructive, and may even feel physically sick at times. Many children temporarily regress to how they behaved at a younger age. Actions may be their only way to tell caregivers, "I'm mad, worried, scared, confused and/or hurt."



Help children understand the behavior of adults around them. Children may be confused by changes in behavior and the variety of reactions they see in adults; Uncle John might be angry; Aunt Jane constantly tearful; and Grandpa silent and withdrawn. Young children, in particular, need to know that it is not their behavior that is causing them to be upset.

Protect children's rights to remain children. Do not allow or encourage children and adolescents to step into adult roles because of the loss. Grieving children need routines, structure and discipline so that their world can stay as normal as possible. Children and teens do not lose their need to socialize and have fun. They can be grieving hard one minute and playing hard the next: This does not mean they do not care. Children want to fit back in as soon as possible.

Know when to get help. A question parents often have is, "How do I know if my child needs professional help?" Any kind of extreme behavior is an obvious red flag. These behaviors include suicide threats; serious destructive acts toward people, property or animals; frequent episodes of panic; and drug or alcohol abuse. Other changes that probably warrant evaluation are an inability or unwillingness to socialize, a significant decline in schoolwork, or continued denial (in words or behavior) that the death has happened. Young people may also need assistance if they had a difficult relationship with the person who died. Sometimes there is confusion surrounding the death—misinformation, lies or a delay in notification, and this may place the young person at risk for coping poorly. A child who is feeling a sense of responsibility for the death also needs individual support.

Helpful resources

www.missouribaptist.org

The Grief Support Program at Missouri Baptist Medical Center provides services for teens and children. Phone: 314-997-5057

www.rd4u.org.uk

RD4U is a website designed for young people by young people to support them after the death of someone close.

BJC Hospice offers the following camps, retreats and support groups for specialized grief needs. These programs are open to the public and are offered at no charge to the participants.

For more information, visit www.bjchospice.org.

Camp Stepping Stones

This weekend camp is designed for children (6-12) who have experienced the death of a family member. Every August children meet at Camp Wyman in Eureka, Mo., to safely express their feelings, identify coping tools and connect with other children who have gone through the same experience. With the support of professional staff and volunteers, the children participate in therapeutic activities as well as traditional camp fun and games.

Labyrinth

This one-day grief retreat is for teens (13-19) who have experienced the death of a friend or family member. Held annually in April, teens spend the day at Camp Wyman in Eureka, Mo., participating in team-building activities, small group discussions, and creative, hands-on experiences.

Weavings

This powerful weekend retreat is for mothers who have experienced the death of a child aged 29 or younger. Professional grief counselors and volunteers will encourage sharing and healing as well as lead activities of celebration and remembrance for each child. The retreat is held in October and all meals, accommodations and activities are provided.

Daybreak

This one-day retreat provides an opportunity to meet the unique needs of a couple grieving the death of their child aged 29 or younger. Grief counselors will provide education about the differences in how men and women grieve, while allowing couples to explore their own grief processes. Activities will encourage communication, partnership, and a sense of hope.

Threshold

This support group for widows and widowers, ages 30-60, is led by a grief counselor and offers support to participants who are confronting the challenges and opportunities of widowed life. The program begins with four weekly core group meetings in which participants begin to share their stories and explore the grief process together. Those who wish are then encouraged to participate in the ongoing monthly meetings for continuing support through their journey with grief. Threshold is held in the evenings in University City and is open to the public.

Portals

This support group provides widows and widowers over the age of 30 with a safe, intimate environment to process their grief and explore how to face their new life alone. Facilitated by bereavement professionals, this afternoon group meets in St. Charles County. This program begins with four weekly core group meetings, with the option of continuing support through monthly meetings. Portals is co-sponsored by BJC Hospice, Barnes-Jewish St. Peters Hospital and Progress West HealthCare Center.

There are many books for children on grieving. Some funeral homes provide a list of appropriate books that your local library and/or school counselors may have available for your child.

*There is a sacredness in tears.
They are not the
mark of weakness,
but of power.
They speak more eloquently
than ten thousand tongues.
They are messengers of
overwhelming grief...
and unspeakable love.*

- Washington Irving



BARNES-JEWISH
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Hospital

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