

Lifepath Hospice Bereavement Support Groups and Holiday Programs



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A Chapters Health® Affiliate

After the loss of a loved one, some survivors may find that the pain associated with their loss doesn't always lessen with time. Individual grief counseling and support groups provide a safe place to express feelings, share experiences, learn about grief and move ahead in the process. LifePath Hospice provides various support groups and individual

counseling. It is our hope that you will take advantage of the programs that best suit your particular needs and circumstances.

For more information and to register, please call 813-877-2200 or visit the calendar at www.chaptershealth.org

Individual Counseling

At LifePath Hospice, we continue to provide grief support for bereaved family and friends during this difficult time. Individual counseling with a bereavement specialist is available through Zoom, over the phone, or in person while following CDC guidelines. Please call for more information and to register.

Masks are required at all Chapters Health Systems locations.

New Beginnings Support Groups

Eight-week structured support group programs for grieving adults.

Fridays

Lunchtime Group
November 19 – January 7
11:30 a.m - 1:00 p.m.
Hosted via Zoom

Ongoing Adult Grief Support Group

Support group open to new attendees at any time.

Mondays

November 19 – January 7
3 - 4:30 p.m.
Hosted in person at the Ruskin/Sun City office

Grieving through the Holidays

Bereavement offerings to provide the extra support needed during the holiday season.

Eight-Week Holiday Group

Tuesdays

November 16 – January 4
6 - 7:30 p.m.
Hosted via Zoom

Holiday Workshops

Tuesday

November 16
11:30 a.m - 12:30 p.m.
Hosted via Zoom

Tuesday

November 30
6 - 7:30 p.m.
Hosted via Zoom

Wednesday

December 1
5 - 6:30 p.m.
Hosted via Zoom

Tuesday

December 7
1 - 2:30pm
Hosted in person at the Temple Terrace office

Specialty Bereavement Support Groups

Young Adult Support Group

Providing support for ages 18-30

1st & 3rd Tuesdays Monthly
6 - 7:30 p.m.
Hosted via Zoom

Loss of a Child Support Group

Providing support for the loss of minor and adult children. Please call to speak with Bereavement Specialist Ed Evans.

Circle of Love Children's Grief Program

Providing support for young griever ages 4-18 and their families.

*Tuesday

November 9 & December 14
6 - 7:30 p.m.

Hosted in person at our grief centers:
Tampa or Ruskin/Sun City

*No second meetings due to Thanksgiving and Christmas

Registration is required to allow for social distancing.
Please call 813-877-2200 to RSVP for Circle of Love.



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7 ways to help someone suffering from spiritual distress

By: Julie Evans, GetC, Gannett Media Corp for Chapters Health

Generally, the holidays are a time of merriment, good cheer and festivities galore. However, for those facing the end of life or grieving the loss of a loved one, this time of year can be especially hard. Approximately 6 million people over age 65 are depressed, and holiday celebrations can exacerbate their symptoms. As the world around them seems joyful and bright, their world may feel like it's collapsed.

"It's a lot when you have the trees going up, the holiday songs playing, the commercials flashing on TV, and you have a loved one on hospice, or you've lost someone close to you," said Teressa Crock, a bereavement counselor with Chapters Health System. "Stress comes with the holidays even when you haven't lost anyone, so it can be very depressing for people who are grieving."

"While no one can erase those feelings of sorrow and loss, there are ways to help manage them during the holiday season," said Crock. She offers the following tips:

1. Recognize the signs of spiritual distress

Crock said it's common for people facing the end of life — whether their own or someone close to them — to suffer from spiritual distress, particularly during the holidays, which often center around religious themes. She defines spiritual distress as a disruption in a person's belief system, questioning a source they once turned to for hope, love, comfort and strength. They begin to doubt their long-held beliefs about God, their higher power of wherever they find meaning, and when they can't find this source of meaning anymore, it can affect their entire being, physically, mentally and spiritually. Crock said talking to loved ones or a hospice chaplain can help, as can groups for those facing similar issues. She said assisting people to recall the good things in their lives and finding a way to help them express their thoughts and feelings is also important. "The most important thing is for people to find an outlet to work through their emotions," Crock said. "It's very normal and natural for people to question God or their spirituality at difficult times in their life, but most with the right support can come to a point where they feel peace."

2. Accept that things will be different

Give yourself grace. If you don't feel like putting up the Christmas tree this year, know that you don't have to. If you always send out cards, accept that it's okay if you just don't want to this year. Your whole world has changed, and your holidays may look different this year.

3. Find good listeners

Crock said it's essential to find good listeners you can open to about your feelings. "You need someone who doesn't tell you how to grieve but who really listens to you and your feelings." She shared it's also important to foster connections with others rather than isolating yourself. "As survivors, if people are alone a bit, it's okay, but too much solitude isn't healthy."

4. It's okay to say no

Recognize that the holidays don't have to be perfect, and you don't have to attend every event. Don't make promises to people that you may not be able to keep. "Grief goes up and down; it's a roller coaster," Crock said. "You never know when you're going to have a grief burst. Learn how to say no without feeling guilty. People should understand when you just don't feel up to it."

5. Help yourself by helping others

Some people who are suffering find meaning and joy in helping others. Find a local organization that speaks to your heart and see how you might be able to help.

6. Take care of yourself

While the spirits often flow during the holidays, Crock cautioned people who are grieving to avoid overindulging. "You don't want to get into bad habits by turning to alcohol or drugs." It's also important to eat healthily, engage in physical activity, get enough sleep and find something you enjoy doing.

7. Seek support

If your grief is too overwhelming, reach out to a mental health expert or find a group with people facing similar challenges.

Chapters Health offers a series of annual workshops to help people get through the holiday seasons. They also hold holiday ceremonies through their various affiliates to remember patients who have passed and offer a supportive environment for families. "Grief is a process, not an event, and it's one of the hardest jobs you'll ever do," Crock said. "Everyone does it differently, and especially during the holidays, it's important to take care of yourself and loved ones who may be hurting, questioning and feeling less than festive."