The Holiday Season and the New Year can be enjoyable and social but also difficult, especially for those who are grieving. We are now in the middle of the Holiday Season. I walked through a local square last night and saw a huge star lit up and the song playing was “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year.” In contrast to this song several people have said to me in the last week “I just want the Holidays to be over.” Many who are grieving a loss find the Holidays challenging. They bring up so many feelings of loneliness, yearning and sadness. We have gathered here suggestions for coping from those who have had losses—We hope they provide inspiration for you. On behalf of all of us at NVNA and Hospice I send you peace and hope for gentle self-care during this Holiday Season and beyond. We are here for you.

Suggestions for Coping with Grief in the Holidays & Winter

- Plan ahead. Write down what events you agreed to go to. It can help you know what you have committed to. At the same time, allow yourself flexibility...you may find you are too exhausted to attend the office party after all.

- Ask for help... ask a friend or relative to help put up decorations, wrap presents, write cards. Serving you helps them too.

- Help others in need. Contributing to someone else gets your attention away from yourself and actually makes you feel better too.

- When you go out, leave a light on and a radio playing. Walking into a house with warm light and low music can be comforting when returning home on a dark winter evening.

- Allow feelings to come and go... express your feelings. Create support for yourself. Gather with people you feel you can talk to or join a support group.

- Take care of yourself physically
Cry, Breathe, drink water, exercise, and say no to sweets and alcohol.

- Allow your loved one’s spirit to be present in concrete ways.
  - Remember your loved one with a special ornament
  - Place a bouquet of flowers on your holiday table in memory of them.
  - Cook their favorite dish or make a toast in their honor.

- Avoid the holidays...if joining in festivities is too much to bear, you can choose not to observe.

- Begin a gratitude Journal:
Three things each day you are grateful for. These do not need to be big things. Simple things are important in our grief to begin to find hope, meaning and gradually re-create our lives.
Educational Workshops:
Please call to REGISTER

Cooking and Eating for One: Wednesday
February 13, 2018
4-5:30pm

Recognizing that loss of a loved one often sends you into the world of faring for yourself in the kitchen, we offer this educational and inspirational workshop; usually held on a winter evening with warm samples of healthy food.
NVNA and Hospice Claire Kennedy, MS, RD, LDN Licensed dietitian and Karen Gore co-facilitate this evening. Location and snow date will be given at time of registration.

Children/Teen Art Workshop
If you are interested in Children/Teen Support Programs – call and let us know and we will put you on a call list. We recognize that children/teens often express their feelings creatively so we offer art workshops to express feelings and share memories of their loved one through art and play.

BOOK REVIEW

Waterbugs & Dragonflies:
Explaining Death to young children.
By Doris Sticline and Gloria Ortiz Hernandez.

This small beautifully illustrated book was inspired by a Pastor and his wife. It was written to help a neighborhood process a tragic death of a child in their community. The story is based on a fable heard long ago. The tale itself has no specific religious references. It is a tale that children and adults may find comfort in.
Whether you have a strong faith, are questioning your faith or no faith, this story will touch your heart and bring you and your child hope.
(Available in our lending library)

Lending Library: You are invited to contact the Bereavement Coordinator to set up a time to review our booklist and check-out a book 781-659-2342 or kgore@nvna.org. We will make every effort to make all reading materials available in languages besides English, or Large Print or Audio.
Bereavement Support Groups:

A telephone screening and face-to-face meeting are necessary for enrollment for support groups Please call Karen Gore, LICSW, Bereavement Coordinator at 781-659-2342 x305 to register or for more information.

Spouse/Partner Loss Groups
Daytime –
Wednesday Afternoon 2-3:30pm
Evening -
Alternating Monday Evenings

Group for Adults Grieving the Loss of a Parent
(or Parent figure/Guardian)
Alternating Monday Evenings

Support Group for Parents Grieving the Loss of an Adult Child (18 or older).
8 Week Series NEW GROUP STARTING FIRST WEEK IN JANUARY call 781-659-2342 x305 to register.

NVNA SUPPORTS
Please Note: NVNA SUPPORTS offers free groups to those in the community – whether bereaved or not.

Care Giver Support Group

Caregiving can be tough, isolating and exhausting. Our Caregivers Support Group meets from 6-7:30pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month connecting caregivers in a safe place where we share our stories, our resources, and ourselves. We are always welcoming new participants.

Please contact group facilitator Beth Spaulding, LICSW at 781-610-1484 for more information.

NVNA SUPPORTS also has cancer support groups, Tai Chi, Yoga and much more. We invite you to go to the NVNA and Hospice Website (www.nvna.org) for more info.

We strive to have all our communications be very helpful & useful by providing education, support and reassurance that, though painful, what you are going through maybe a common grief reaction. We encourage you to contact us if the frequency of contact is not right for you, please let us know.

Bereavement Mailing List: To add or remove a name, or update your address please call 781-659-2342 x305 or email kgore@nvna.org. Please include your loved one’s name in your communication.

Much of the information here can also be found on our website at: www.nvna.org/bereavement