Spirituality & Grief

Grief can be a chaotic emotional journey - which impacts the whole person. The impact from grief hits us physically, emotionally, cognitively, behaviorally and spiritually. In this article we will focus on the spiritual impact of grief. Please refer to our website for information on the physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral manifestations of normal grief. (https://www.nvna.org/bereavement-services)

When the topic of spirituality arises in grief we don’t search for answers, we don’t give advice; instead, we actively listen without judgement or criticism. Bereaved people ask: “where is she now? I have always believed, but now I want proof”; “I am not religious, but I sense my loved one’s presence, is that crazy?”; “Is anyone else angry and feeling challenged by what they believed?” At Hospice each person is respected for their own beliefs and their own struggles. We do however, provide assurance that many of these questions are often a normal response during the grieving process. You are encouraged to find your own sense of meaning.

Notice what questions arise for you. Are your spiritual beliefs challenged by your loss? Are they deepened?

“What did I do to deserve this?” Do you get more upset when you attend your church/synagogue/cherished spiritual place or do you find peace there? All of the contradictory feelings and questions are normal.

Your feelings and questions will help you find your own sense of meaning with this loss. It is important to grapple with them. Share them with a trusted person. Or, write them down in a journal, write letters to your loved one. Talk with others you trust who have been through a similar loss. Holding these difficult feelings inside can only complicate how you feel. Because there are so many contradictions. The confusion is normal, when you are struggling with understanding loss.

Perhaps one moment you are questioning why the universe or God could allow this to happen and in the next moment you are finding strength and fortitude in prayer. This can be confusing, because people experiencing grief often move back and forth between different emotions, or, they find they are holding feelings of sorrow and joy simultaneously. This too is normal for a person in the grieving process it effects the all of you – and your spirit too.

Karen Gore, LICSW
Bereavement Coordinator and Counselor
kgor@nvna.org

Rev. Eduardo Marques MPS, MBA
Spiritual Coordinator
emarques@nvna.org

Sarah Clancey MTS, BCC
Hospice Chaplain
sclancey@nvna.org
Books on Spirituality & Grief

- "A Grief Observed" by C.S. Lewis
- "Grieving Mindfully" by Sameet M Kumar, PhD and Andrew Mulcask
- "Praying our Goodbyes" by Joyce Rupp
- "Gift of the Red Bird" by Paula D'Arcy

Memorial Wall

This May, NVNA and Hospice will unveil newly mounted names on our Wall of Remembrance at the Pat Roche Hospice Home. Hospice families who have cumulatively exceeded $1,000 in memorial donations will have the opportunity to remember their loved ones on the campus in Hingham. A memorial celebration is scheduled for May 5. For more information, please contact Development Officer Lisa Mullen at 781-610-1519 or emullen@nvna.org

Save-the-Date for our Memorial Service
Afternoon of Remembrance

In October we hold a Memorial Service. This service is scheduled for Sunday October 20, 4 p.m. We invite all who have lost a loved one in the last year to gather for an afternoon of music, pictures and reflection. To honor your memories, we invite you to bring a photo of your loved one to place on our memorial table during the service. With your permission, we will read your loved one’s name. We will mail out invitations late summer. Please contact kgore@nvna.org

NVNA SUPPORTS

AS PART OF OUR CHARITABLE MISSION NVNA AND HOSPICE OFFERS WELLNESS AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES TO NEIGHBORS IN OUR COMMUNITY. SOME OF THE GROUPS WE OFFER INCLUDE: CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP, ALZHEIMER’S DEMENTIA CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP, DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP, BRAIN ANEURSM SUPPORT GROUP, PARKINSONS SUPPORT GROUP AND CANCER SUPPORT GROUPS. PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR DETAILS. WWW.NVNA.ORG CONTACT FACILITATOR DIRECTLY.
Volunteer Opportunities

NVNA and Hospice is so grateful to our community of Hospice Volunteers. We offer several volunteer opportunities each with a specific training for volunteers:

Volunteers can choose from a variety of jobs of which feels right for you:

- Community visits
- Hospice House Support
- Legacy Chat (recording life stories)
- We Honor Veterans
- Pet Therapy
- Office Support
- Bereavement Support
- Reiki
- Massage
- Hairdressing

Bereavement Volunteers

Bereavement Volunteers support people who have experienced the loss of a loved one, providing a non-judgmental listening ear during their grief journey. This may be done through friendly in-person visits in their home or home-like setting, phone calls, or assisting with workshops. Finally we offer volunteer opportunities for administration volunteers in the bereavement department. Helping with mailing and tracking in the electronic medical record system. And other projects - Writing book reviews for the newsletter for example.

Process for volunteering

The Volunteer Coordinator would love to hear from you and she will explain the process

The time commitment for volunteering is flexible, one to three hours per week. In order to qualify for volunteering for hospice one has to be at least one year out from your loss. This gives you time to process your own grief so when you do volunteer you can be there fully for others. Our Volunteer Coordinator will review training requirements and application process. Kelly Tammaro, Volunteer Coordinator ktammaro@nvna.org 781-610-1427. www.nvna.org

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 may be 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
Bereavement Support Calendar:

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 Support Groups**
  Daytime - Wednesday Afternoon 2-3:30pm or Evening - Alternating Monday Evenings

- **Support 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 held Spring/Summer/Fall Please call to be put on list. Days/time TBD.

- **In-Person Grief Counseling**
  If you wish to meet with someone in-person, licensed professionals are available for limited meetings and referrals to community resources.

*If none of our groups meet your needs we can search for groups that might be just right for you.*