

Holiday time can be enjoyable and social, but also difficult, especially for those who are grieving. This year brings more challenges than I have known in my lifetime.

We are now in month nine of the COVID-19 pandemic, heading into the winter months and the holiday season among the many other social and cultural challenges we each face day in and day out.

Grievers often say in November, “I just want the holidays to be over.” Holidays bring up so many feelings of loneliness, yearning, and sadness. However, I have not heard these words this year. This year, the need for safety and security appears to be first and foremost on grievers’ minds. As one person said:

“I have chosen to spend Thanksgiving with my two cats this year. I want to be safe. Just me, my cats, and a turkey dinner.”

This made me consider Maslow’s Hierarchy. In Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, the two foundational needs are Physiological (food, water, warmth, and rest) and Safety. These foundations have to be established first before we build up to psychological needs such as Belongingness and Love, Self-Esteem, and Self-Actualization.

This year, build your foundation, and the rest will follow.

We have gathered suggestions for coping from those who have had losses and 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.

Karen Gore, LICSW, Bereavement Coordinator

SUGGESTIONS FOR COPING WITH GRIEF IN THE 2020-2021 HOLIDAY SEASON

- **Plan ahead.** Discuss holiday tasks with others. For your peace of mind, determine what and how much you will need, and then inform others accordingly.
- **Focus on just this year.** Whatever you do this year can be changed in following years, so don’t worry about all the holidays to come in years ahead. You will be at a different place at different times.
- **Help others in need.** Contributing to someone else moves your attention away from yourself and actually makes you feel better, too.
- **Ask for help.** Ask a friend or relative to help you with a task. Serving you helps them, too.
- **Remember all the pressures** and demands of the holidays, and recognize that this year you are fatigued and more vulnerable than usual. Consider cutting back on alcohol and sugary foods.
- **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.
- **Follow** the “Principles for Managing Difficult Times” at The Center for Complicated Grief website.
www.complicatedgrief.columbia.edu



“Recognize that your loved one’s absence will cause pain no matter what you do. This is only natural and right. After all, you are mourning because you love and miss this person. Try to mix this

with your love for those you still have and your positive memories of the past. ‘Bittersweet’ is a good word to describe this. You can feel the sweetness of the holiday but also the bitterness of your loved one’s absence. Together they can give you a full rich feeling, marked with love for those present and those gone whom you will never forget.”

How to Go on Living When Someone You Love Dies – Therese Rando

Winter Bereavement Support Calendar



Please check the website for group updates:
www.nvna.org

*A telephone screening is necessary for enrollment in support groups. For your safety, we are providing phone screenings phone/virtual groups and virtual/phone individual grief counseling sessions. **In-Person Grief Counseling is now offered via phone/Zoom or masked outdoors.***

While all of our [NVNA SUPPORTS](#) groups are unable to meet in person for safety right now, our team continues to support our community. Our [bereavement support groups](#) continue to “meet” virtually.

Please call Karen Gore, LICSW, Bereavement Coordinator at 781-659-2342 x305 to register or for more information.

RECENT LOSS GROUP *for any loss* 8 Session Series

Please call or email Karen Gore, LICSW, Bereavement Coordinator at 781-659-2342 x305 or kgore@nvna.org to register or for more information.

WINTER GRIEF & HEALING SERIES

This year we will have once-a-month ZOOM sessions for bereaved to attend. *Please see website for dates, times and registration.*

Reiki Healing

With Volunteer Reiki Master Paula Nesoff MSW

Spirituality & Healing

Reverend Susan Sullivan, NVNA and Hospice Spiritual Care Coordinator

Harp & Healing

Nicole Anderson (You can hear more of Nicole’s harp on our Afternoon of Music & Reflection at www.nvna.org News & Events or at her website, www.harpanwellness.com)

Mindfulness & Healing Grief

Karen Gore, LICSW, Bereavement Coordinator.

AN AFTERNOON OF MUSIC & REFLECTION *Memorial Service for 2020*

Visit www.nvna.org’s News & Events section.

New Workshop: COPING SKILLS FOR GRIEF & LOSS DURING THE PANDEMIC

A Short-Term Educational Workshop

Dates: Nov. 23 & 30. The main objective of this workshop is for the participants to learn a few specific exercises to help manage stress and reduce anxiety while grieving during the pandemic. Space is limited.

Ongoing Support Groups:

SPOUSE/PARTNER LOSS SUPPORT GROUPS (VIRTUAL)

Daytime - Wednesday Afternoon 2-3:30pm
OR Evening - First & Third Monday