



# Comfort for the Grieving Heart

November 2026

St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program 484-526-2499

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## Taking Time in Our Grieving

When we take the time to observe grief, our own or someone else's, we can begin to see that grief is not something that moves in a straight line. It is constantly moving. Sometimes that movement is slow and gentle and other times, it can feel sudden and overwhelming.

One way of understanding this movement is through the **Dual Process Model of Grief**, developed by Margaret Stroebe and Henk Schut. The model uses the image of a pendulum swinging from side to side. The hope is that learning about this model can provide some insight and understanding into our own grief.

On one side of the pendulum is "loss-oriented". This is where we are focused on the death and the person who has died. This may include processing emotional pain, having memories and reminders, feeling sadness, and the longing for their presence. This can show up in many ways: crying, feeling deep sadness, looking at photographs, listening to a familiar song, talking about our loved one, or simply wishing they were still with us. These are normal parts of grieving.

"Loss-oriented" does not necessarily end after the funeral, or after six months or a year. Our relationship with the person who died may continue to shape our lives, and moments of missing them can occur throughout our lifetime. Acceptance is the understanding that the death has become a part of our life and will continue to show up in it. However, the pendulum does not stay to one side, it swings.

On the other side is "restoration-oriented coping". This is when we begin adjusting to the changes that death has brought into our lives. We start rebuilding routines, learning new skills, and finding ways to move through everyday life without the person who was once part of it. While we may have a multitude of emotions about this change, we understand that accomplishing these tasks is necessary.

Sometimes this means taking on tasks that our loved one used to do. Perhaps we are now the person who does the grocery shopping, manages the finances, mows the lawn, or takes the car for an oil change. These changes can be surprisingly difficult. They can affect not only what we do, but also how we see ourselves and our sense of purpose. Learning to adapt takes time. It is okay to ask for help and to lean onto others while we adapt to our new routines.

Restoration also includes moments of rest and distraction. We may laugh at a joke, spend time with friends, go on a vacation, watch a favorite show, work on a hobby, or become absorbed in something that has nothing to do with our grief. Those moments are not a betrayal of the person we have lost. They are not proof that we are "moving on." They are moments of respite, and they are part of the grief journey you are on.

For more information about the services offered by the St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program or if you would like to be added or removed from our mailing list, please contact us at 484-526-2499. Newsletters are also available electronically by calling our office or online at [www.sluhn.org](http://www.sluhn.org) (search - Hospice grief)

## So, how can thinking about grief as a pendulum help?

Perhaps it can be a reminder that grief ebbs and flows rather than moving in a straight line. One day, we may feel hopeful and focused on the future. We may learn something new, make plans, laugh with a friend, or create a new memory. The next day, we may find ourselves holding tightly to our loved one's favorite shirt, remembering their voice, or yearning for their closeness.

Both experiences can belong to grief. Moving toward life does not mean we have stopped loving or missing the person who died. Also, returning to a place of sadness does not mean we have gone backwards. The pendulum swings. Some days, you may spend more time on one side than the other. Some days the movement may be barely noticeable. Other days, it may swing quickly and unexpectedly.

There is no need to judge where the pendulum is today. Instead, we can gently remind ourselves: *This is where I am right now. Tomorrow may feel different.* Grief is in movement. And wherever you find yourself, perhaps swinging on the pendulum, you deserve patience, compassion, and support.



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## Our Monthly Support Groups

Our bereavement support groups are facilitated by one of our grief counselors. We provide a safe and collaborative space to process your grief journey .



**NEW! IMPORTANT—PRE-REGISTRATION WILL BE REQUIRED FOR ALL SUPPORT GROUPS. PLEASE CALL 484-526-2499 TO REGISTER.**

**Groups will be held when 3 or more are registered.**

### Lehigh Valley Area Support Groups

Trinity Lutheran Church 323 Nazareth Pike, Bethlehem 18020 **10-11:30am: 11/6; 12/4**

Trinity Lutheran Church 323 Nazareth Pike, Bethlehem 18020 **6:30-8pm: 11/10; 12/8**

### Brodheadsville Area Support Group

Western Pocono Comm. Library, 131 Pilgrim Way, Brodheadsville 18322 **1-2:30pm: 11/11; 12/23**

### Carbon/Schuylkill Area Support Group

St. Luke's Lehighton Campus, 211 N. 12th Street, Lehighton PA 18235 **1-2:30pm: 11/4; 12/2**

### Sellersville Area Support Group

Zwingli UCC Church, 350 Wile Ave, Souderton PA 18964 **1-2:30pm: 11/9; 12/14**

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**Walking with Grief Support Group:** Physical activity is a powerful tool in the healing process. The simple practice of walking has been shown to be a healthy outlet for working through difficult emotions. If you are looking for a different outlet to grieve, come join us. Sometimes we don't just want to talk about it, we want to walk about it. Facilitated by St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Team.

**Location: Anderson Campus 1872 St. Luke's Blvd, Easton, PA 18045 (Meet at Gazebo near Cancer Center)**

**Time: 12:00pm - 1:30pm**

**Dates: Tuesday 11/10; Tuesday 12/8**

**\*\*This is an outdoor program, dress for the weather. Wear comfortable walking shoes. Bring a water bottle.\*\***

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## Good Grief Workshops

A 90-minute virtual workshop offered monthly to provide you with an introduction to grief. It is informational, interactive, and a good starting point before our in-person support groups.

Registration is required and the program is recommended for those 4-6 weeks out from their loss. For more information, call 484-526-2499.

**Join us from 1-2:30pm: 11/5; 12/10**

**Join us from 6-7:30pm: 11/18; 12/16**

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## St. Luke's Senior Meals

St. Luke's University Health Network offers healthy, affordable meals for seniors. It's a great opportunity for a meal for less than \$5 and to enjoy meeting new people. Scan the QR code and select **Older Adult Meal Program** for location, days and times.



## Other Places to Find Support

We encourage you to call the number on the back of your insurance card to find resources paid by your individual insurance plan. Find an individual therapist at [psychologytoday.com](http://psychologytoday.com)

### Community Bereavement Resources

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**Bradbury Sullivan LGBT Community Center** offers bereavement support for LGBT people who have experienced loss. Visit [bradburysullivancenter.org](http://bradburysullivancenter.org) or email at [reilly@bradburysullivancenter.org](mailto:reilly@bradburysullivancenter.org).

**Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley** provides professional programs of emotional support and education. Visit [cancersupportglv.org](http://cancersupportglv.org).

**The Compassionate Friends** offers ongoing support for parents, grandparents, and adult siblings grieving the loss of a child, grandchild, or sibling. Visit [thecompassionatefriends.org](http://thecompassionatefriends.org). Enter your zip code to locate the local chapter and contact person near you.

**Doylestown Hospital Hospice** offers a variety of support groups and programs that change seasonally. Visit [doylestownhealth.org/hospital/services/bereavement](http://doylestownhealth.org/hospital/services/bereavement) or call 215-345-2079.

**Gentle Yoga for Grief, Stress and Life Transitions** is currently being offered virtually by Wendy Littner Thompson, M.Ed., LPC, RYT. Visit [givinggriefavoice.com](http://givinggriefavoice.com) or call 610-730-1992. Be sure to indicate if your loved one was a St. Luke's Hospice patient.

**GRASP (Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing)** currently offers two virtual evening meetings per month, plus an afternoon meeting at the Oasis Center. Call 484-788-9440.

**Grief Share** is a faith-based support group offered throughout the Lehigh Valley. Visit [griefshare.org](http://griefshare.org) and enter your zip code to find the contact person and program near you.

**Lehigh Valley Health Network** offers many groups and services for adults and children between the ages of 6-17. Call 610-402-7481. For information about program offerings in the Pocono area, call 272-762-3826 or email [Bryson.Boes@lvhn.org](mailto:Bryson.Boes@lvhn.org).

**OASIS Community Center** offers a variety of support groups to those grieving a loss due to substance-related causes. Therapist-led meetings are held in-person and virtually for bereaved parents and young adults (siblings, partners, friends, etc.). Visit [oasisbethlehem.org](http://oasisbethlehem.org), call 484-747-6825 or email at [rhonda@oasisbethlehem.org](mailto:rhonda@oasisbethlehem.org).

**Suicide Loss.** The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention has excellent information on risk factors, statistics, and education about suicide. Visit [afsp.org](http://afsp.org) and enter your zip code to find the chapter/contact person near you. All chapters are run by people who have experienced the suicide of a loved one.

### Support Information in New Jersey

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**Karen Ann Quinlan Hospice** offers support to those who are grieving the death of a loved one. For more information, call 973-948-2283 or visit [karenannquinlanhospice.org/services/bereavement](http://karenannquinlanhospice.org/services/bereavement).

**“Grief is like the ocean; it comes on waves ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim.” Vicki Harrison**

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