



Comfort for the Grieving Heart

St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program

484-526-2499

November 2025

A Gentle Request: How to Support Me in My Grief

Right now, I am living in a fog. My mind feels slow, my heart is heavy, and my energy and motivation are running on empty. I know you care. I know you want to help. Sometimes I'm too overwhelmed, I'm too tired, I don't know what I need, I don't know how to ask, or I just don't want to burden you.

This newsletter has been written as a sincere and gentle plea to lift the burden of asking. If you want to support me, here are some real ways you can help and provide comfort.

1. Offer Help with Specific Tasks or Necessities: Focus is not my friend, and decisions have taken on a new weight. Please do not ask me what I need. Instead, tell me exactly what you are going to do and when you will do it. This removes the mental load from me.

• **No Request Needed:** Please don't ask, "Can I bring you a meal?" Instead call or send me a message: "I'm dropping off soup and bread on your porch at 6pm. No need to open the door. No need to reply." (The "no need to reply" is a priceless gift.)

Handle a Specific Chore: Offer to do a task you can complete entirely on your own. "I'm coming over Sunday night to take out the trash and recycling", or "Send me your grocery list. I'll drop the bags off on your front porch Tuesday between 3-4pm."

2. You Have My Permission to Talk About Them: The silence surrounding their loss is one of the hardest parts of grieving. Please don't be afraid to talk about them.

• **Say Their Name:** This comforts me and reminds me that their life mattered and that they are not forgotten. It's okay to tell me, "I was thinking about '_____' today and wanted you to know I'm thinking of you, too."

Share a Memory: Tell me a simple, positive memory. It doesn't need to be profound or dramatic. It can be short and funny. These stories are priceless to me and remind me I am not the only one missing them.

• **Validate My Feelings:** Please avoid cliches like, "Everything happens for a reason", "They had a good long life," or "They're in a better place." Instead, simply validate my sense of loss and feelings. "I can see you are hurting and I'm so sorry." "I don't know what to say, but I want you to know I care about you." "I can only imagine how overwhelming all of this is."

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 (search - grief)

3. Don't Forget to Remember Me: My life and calendar have changed. Please think of me and include me if you can.

Invite Me: My days and nights look so different. My holidays and social calendar are different, too. Sometimes the thought of being alone is scary and overwhelming. I don't want to ask if I can join, and I don't want to put you out, but here I am wondering where my place is for these special days or lonely nights with my loved one no longer here.

Please Be Patient with Me: Low-pressured invitations are best. What I need today may not be what I needed yesterday, or will need tomorrow. I cannot tell you how I will feel the day of your invitation to that holiday meal, social gathering, or event. I may change my mind, arrive late, or need to leave early. Please know this has nothing to do with you and that I appreciate your love, thought, care, and inclusion.

4. Keep Checking In: The flood of support quickly ends, but I am learning all too well that grief is a marathon.

Call, Text, or Write: Please mark your calendar to reach out to me in 3 months, 6 months, a year, etc. Birthdays, Anniversaries, Holidays, and the date they died each year can be hard. It's nice to know you are thinking of me and care.

Please do not be offended if you do not hear back from me: I'm receiving your calls, texts, and cards, and they continue to warm my heart. Sometimes, I just don't have the words to say or the energy to respond.

5. My Particular Need Is...

6. I Just Want You to Know...

Thank you for loving me enough to read this. Your unwavering, non-judgmental presence is the most powerful comfort you can offer me. Your efforts to be there for me are seen, felt, and appreciated more than words can express. *Thank you.*

We realize not everyone grieves the same and some of you may feel you have just the right amount of support and communication/conversation you need. However, if this edition of *Comfort for the Grieving Heart* spoke to you and you would like extra copies of this newsletter to share, please feel free to reach out to the St. Luke's Bereavement Office at 484-526-2499.

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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 . For more information, call us at 484-526-2499.



Bethlehem Area Support Groups—

Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center St., Bethlehem, PA 18017.

Join us from 10-11:30am: November 7; December 5

Hanover Township Community Center, 3660 Jacksonville Rd, Bethlehem, PA 18017.

Join us from 6:30-8pm: November 18, December 16

Brodheadsville Area Support Group

Western Pocono Community Library, 131 Pilgrim Way, Brodheadsville, PA 18322.

Join us from 1-2:30pm: November 12, December 10

Carbon/Schuylkill Area Support Group

St. Luke's Miners Campus, 360 W. Ruddle St. Coaldale, PA 18218

Join us from 1-2:30pm: November 5, December 3

Good Grief Workshops

These virtual 90-minute workshops are offered monthly to provide you with a better understanding of what grief is. This workshop is informational, interactive, and a good starting point towards entering our in-person support groups. Sign -up is recommended for those 4-6 weeks out from their loss. For more information, call 484-526-2499.

Join us from 1-2:30pm: November 13, December 18

Join us from 6-7:30pm: November 19, December 10

St. Luke's Senior Meals

St. Luke's University Health Network provides healthy, affordable meals for seniors (65 or older). It's a great opportunity for a great meal at a great price (under \$5 for an entrée, salad, side, veggie, dessert and drink) and enjoy meeting new people. **ALL ARE OFFERED WEEKDAYS ONLY.**

- **Anderson, Carbon, Upper Bucks & Warren Campuses – DINNER 4pm-6pm**
- **Geisinger/St. Luke's—DINNER 4:30pm-6pm**
- **Miner's Campus— LUNCH 11:15am –1:30pm; DINNER 4:15pm-6pm**



Video Library

St. Luke's website includes a dozen short videos that provide information about the grieving and mourning process and ways to care for yourself after a loss.

To view the videos, go to <https://www.sluhn.org/vna/hospice>. Scroll down to "Grief Support".

Click onto the video library heading "Want to understand your grief?" at the bottom of the page.

Then view the videos from the comfort of your home.



Other Places to Find Support

We encourage you to contact your primary care physician or 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](https://www.psychologytoday.com)

Community Bereavement Resources

Bradbury Sullivan LGBT Community Center offers bereavement support for LGBT people who have experienced loss. Visit bradburysullivancenter.org or email at reilly@bradburysullivancenter.org.

Cancer Support Community of the Greater Lehigh Valley provides professional programs of emotional support and education. Visit cancersupportglv.org.

Center for Loss and Bereavement provides programs and resources for children and adults who have experienced a loss. Visit bereavementcenter.org or call 610-222-4110.

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

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

Grief Share is a faith-based support group offered throughout the Lehigh Valley. Visit griefshare.org and enter your zip code to find the contact person and program near you.

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, call 484-747-6825 or email at rhonda@oasisbethlehem.org.

Peter's Place provides safe and supportive programs and resources for grieving children and families. Visit petersplaceonline.org or call 610-687-5150.

Suicide Loss. The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention has excellent information on risk factors, statistics, and education about suicide. Visit 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

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.

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