

CENTER *Connections*



The Center *for*
Loss and Bereavement

Our Spring 2021 newsletter is now available! Check your mailbox or read online!

This issue of **Center Highlights** features information about Camp Millie, Centered Connections, support groups, training, and upcoming special fundraising events. We also highlight our Nello's Corner groups and explore "The Power of Gratitude".

Check it out here:



Center Highlights

Volume 21, Issue 1 SPRING 2021

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Looking back at 2020 brings a mixed bag of feelings and stories to tell. For our staff and volunteers as well as our clients, living through this pandemic has brought its fair share of challenges, some universal and others unique, all very personal.

At The Center for Loss and Bereavement, finding strength through this time has reinforced for us the importance of practicing the strategies we encourage in others. Like our clients, we have assuaged the grief and stress of this pandemic by adjusting expectations where able and adequately caring for oneself and others. We have been present with our clients and each other while acknowledging painful moments that have touched the lives of so many. We practice mindfulness, compartmentalize needs, and connect with nature in meaningful ways that bring peace and positive feelings. We strive to focus on gratitude in how we tell our stories and turn towards hope.

Being inspired by good will in others has also carried us all through this year. In addition to being overwhelmed by the generosity of those who supported our virtual 5k in August and the growing list of donors who have given to our Covid relief support and our 20th anniversary campaign, we have been so grateful for the ability to carry on our work with many through telehealth platforms. We were especially struck by the courage of several clients who brought hope to others by sharing their stories of grief, healing, and growth as part of our 20 Years of Impact fall celebration. These individuals passionately expressed their journey with heartbreaking loss and the ways in which they found support, connection, and guidance through the programs at the Center. Being able to take those messages to a greater audience through this virtual platform was not only touching to us, but uplifting to many others.

Should you have missed the opportunity to hear these hope-filled messages that so many are seeking right now, please visit our 20th anniversary event page, bereavementcenter.org/20thanniversary, and take in their full stories. Share them with others who may be hurting right now and encourage them to reach out for help. Be part of a new story that makes a difference for someone else in need, and thank you for remaining one of our most treasured gifts in community mission work.

Emily

Emily Vincent, LPC FT



REFLECTING ON *20 Years of Hope...*

"Don't give up on yourself. The road right now may look short and dark, but when you are able to see the light again, you will realize there is still so much road to travel on. The Center of Loss and Bereavement will help you get there. That loss will never go away, but there is HOPE. That is exactly how this place makes me feel - hopeful."
- Megan

"I couldn't imagine where I would be right now mentally in terms of my grief journey if it weren't for the Center.... If you sign yourself up with the Center, I know you will find a sense of community with others that have lost loved ones and you'll be able to tell your story and talk about your grief... you are not alone."
- Adrienne

"Over the years, I have found individual counseling and the monthly Loss of Child group (and Hello's Corner) to be extremely helpful.... We left behind what we were able to teach to those who work and volunteer at the Center about our grief, hoping they can use it to help others who experience a loss that is as difficult as ours."
- Kelli

"The Center has done wonders for me.... I just hope we can keep this going. I've been blessed and I thank God I made that phone call four years ago..."
- Reanna

"I found a caring, compassionate place to talk, cry, and laugh. I needed tending, and felt tended to.... I was able to find comfortable ways to 'sit with my grief'.... I believe that I will always have this grief, I will always miss Lance, and I will always love him. My grief is quieter now, not gone, and not always in the background, but quieter..."
- Nancy

"They not only helped me through the grief that I went through, and the mourning, but I've continued to see them even two years after my wife passed away.... they've been able to help me with a few other issues that all come back to the loss of my spouse."
- Mark

www.bereavementcenter.org

*Make sure you don't miss an issue in the future!
Please subscribe to our newsletters!*

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NEWSLETTER

Mark Your Calendars



Centered Conversations

Education offered for public wellness at
NO charge, donations appreciated!

Continuing Bonds

Wednesday, March 17, 2021
1:00-2:00p.m.

Resiliency & Growth

Thursday May 20, 2021
1:00-2:00p.m.

CENTERED
CONVERSATIONS
DETAILS

Professional Roundtable Training 2 CEU's available for each training!

Resilience Rebirth & Resourcefulness: Meaning Making in the Face of Adversity

April 22, 2021
12:00-2:00 p.m.

TRAINING DETAILS

Grief Brief



GRIEF AND THE MIND-BODY CONNECTION

Grief is an all-encompassing physical, social, psychological, biological, and spiritual experience

It is important to be aware of the connection between our mind and body as we process grief. A grieving heart can feel heavy and often cause physical symptoms that can be mistaken for illness. A racing mind can lead to sleepless nights and in the physical exhaustion that grief often presents. Educating ourselves and others in this mind-body connection is important in supporting our overall wellness.



What causes these physical symptoms?

A range of studies reveal the powerful effects grief can have on the body.

- Grief increases inflammation, which can worsen existing health problems and lead to new ones.
- Grief can take a toll on the immune system, making one more vulnerable to infection.
- Intense grief can alter the heart muscle so much that it causes "broken heart syndrome," a form of heart disease with the same symptoms as a heart attack.
- The "heartbreak" of grief can increase blood pressure and the risk of blood clots.
- Emotional stress can activate the nervous system as easily as physical threats can. When stress becomes chronic, increased adrenaline and blood pressure can contribute to chronic medical conditions.
- Research shows that emotional pain triggers the same areas of the brain as physical pain.
- Grievers often experience sad thoughts and feelings and typically occur in waves or bursts of grief followed by periods of respite, as opposed to the more persistent experience of major depression which can cause fatigue, a weakened immune system and increased inflammation.

What can we do to maintain our health?

- Find and maintain social support and connections as much as possible
- Self-acceptance and leaning in and out of grief when appropriate
- Find joy amidst the grief
- Implement good self-care measures; fall back on ones that have worked in the past, but be open to trying new ones as well
- Physical activity; simple walks and general movement
- Fresh air, sunlight and Vitamin D. Soak up all that the outdoors offers!
- Maintain basic health practices as much as possible; proper sleep, nutrition, vitamins
- Meditation and quiet personal time
- Periods of rest and relaxation; leaning into what feels good instead of a "must-do" list
- Practice mindfulness and trying not to let anxiety and ruminative thinking set in
- Foundational faith and spiritual practices
- Tell people that it is OK to not be OK and that space might be needed at times
- Accept encouragement and communication from loved ones and allow them to do the relationship work to minimize personal physical and emotional exhaustion



Our Mission: The Center for Loss and Bereavement is a non-profit resource of specialized knowledge and professional support that provides meaningful connection and restorative guidance for those impacted by grief. Our Vision is for all facing loss to find solace and renewed strength while investing in life.

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Grief is an all-encompassing physical, social, psychological, biological, and spiritual experience. It is important to be aware of the connection between

our mind and body as we process grief. Please visit our tip sheet on our resource page for helpful information on maintaining our health.

[GRIEF AND THE MIND BODY CONNECTION](#)

Clinical and Group Programs Update



Winter has a way of slowing things down, requiring us to be patient and to take our time. We may not like it, especially during this time of other restrictions, but we know we have to go through it, learning a lot while keeping our eyes focused on the warmth and promise of our next season. It is similar to what we strive to provide at the Center for those living with grief. The therapists and children's grief group facilitators offer the time and

space to sit, reflect, share and become aware of the meaning of loss while exploring the hope that healing is possible.

- Counseling appointments are available for those of all ages (currently offered virtually)
- There is still some space in our school-year Nello's Corner peer groups for those children and teens who have experienced loss (Zoom format)
- Plans for an in-person Camp Millie 4-day bereavement program at the end of June for ages 6-young teen are underway.

Reach out to us by phone or through the Request Information button on our website. Our Intake Coordinator, Kim, will warmly answer questions and provide more information.

REQUEST
INFORMATION

Community Connections

Our fabulous events' committee is planning some fun, safe events for later in 2021. We look forward to hosting a [FIELDS OF HOPE](#) Sunflower Festival this summer and will be having our second [STRIDES OF HOPE 5K](#) this fall!

Please follow us on social media and check the events page on our website as more details are posted. We hope to see you!

You can also still contribute to our [20th Anniversary!](#)

www.bereavementcenter.org/events/

DONATE

REQUEST INFORMATION



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