



We are thinking of you during your journey through grief. We reach out to our TRU family members by phone and with periodic mailings during the 13 months following the death of a loved one. These quarterly grief support newsletters are available to you, your friends and your community at trucare.org under Our Services/Grief Support.

Please call us anytime for support at 303.604.5300.

Images, Movement, Color and Sound

Finding Solace in the Expressive Arts

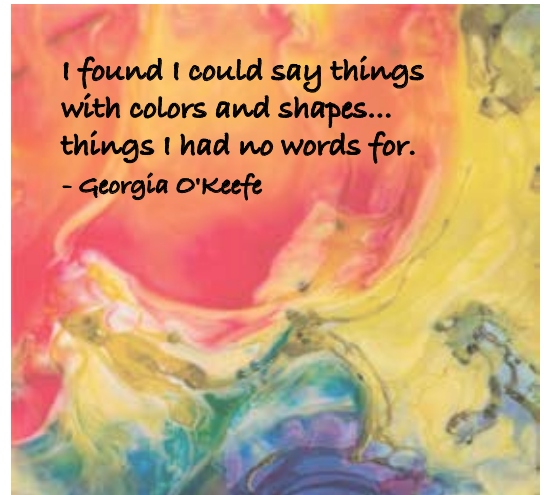
When grief arises from the loss of a loved one, the experience may be difficult to describe or process, a roller coaster of ups and downs. The expressive arts can create a doorway to mend this sorrow by opening all channels to the grieving body.

The arts invite the imagination to come to the surface and shed light on our pain. Images, movement, color and sound release the tension of grief, allowing it to expand and contract, while providing a safe space in which this process can take place.

When we create, we give ourselves permission to examine all that is happening within us. We may notice that a color strikes a mood, or a picture recalls a memory or emotion. The vulnerable parts of our grieving bodies have the opportunity to speak and be heard, encouraging healing.

Fragments of memories, like bits of broken glass, can be difficult to hold, opening a floodgate of emotions. These fragments seek meaning and solace. As we piece together our lives after a loss, the arts can heal us by giving these bits and pieces the attention they deserve and releasing the pain that seeks expression.

*Adapted from How Art Heals Grief by Douglas Mitchell, LMFT
<https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/how-art-heals-grief>*



Expressing Yourself by Creating Art

The act of creating simple images can help with the healing process. A few suggestions to get you started...

Just make a mark. Squiggle. Doodle. Splash. Make lines with pencil, marker or brush.

Gather from nature. Collect leaves, petals, pebbles - anything you're drawn to. Arrange them on paper and trace around them. Add color or just appreciate the beauty of form.

Create shapes with clay. Pound. Knead. Coil. Mold clay into abstract shapes without having a particular result in mind.

Get a coloring book. Imaginative coloring books designed for adults are found in book and hobby stores. No need to stay within the lines or limit yourself to the "right" colors.

Like Georgia O'Keefe, you may find yourself saying things you have no words for.

Our grief groups are available to anyone needing support after the death of a loved one. The meetings, led by experienced bereavement group facilitators, include specific topics and optional personal sharing in a safe and accepting atmosphere.

Registration is required prior to first attendance for all groups. Please call TRU at 303.604.5213 for registration information and details about group times / locations. For additional information, please visit our website at trucare.org.

Structured Groups

Newly Bereaved Support Program

Support, information and networking for persons with recent death losses. Offered monthly

Eight-Week Bereavement Support Group

For anyone who has experienced a loss. Evening groups are held throughout the year depending on enrollment.

Eight-Week Bereaved Parent Group

For parents who have lost a child of any age. Groups are held throughout the year depending on enrollment.

Healing Circles Grief Groups

For children (ages 5 -12), teens (ages 13 -18) and families. Groups are held year-round.

Ongoing Grief Groups

Lafayette Grief Support Group

For those who have experienced the death of someone significant. Meets 4th Tuesday 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Bereaved Parents Group

Educational meeting with program and sharing for bereaved parents only. Meets 3rd Wednesday 6:30 - 8:30 PM

First Year Spouse/Partner Grief Support Group

For spouses or partners whose loved one's death has occurred within the past 12 months. Meets 2nd Tuesday 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Spouse/Partner Loss Group

For people who have experienced the death of a spouse or significant other. Meets 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Widowed Senior Grief Support

For men and women who have lost a spouse. Meets 4th Wednesday 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Boulder Hiking Group

Combines exercise and support for people who are grieving or caregiving. Seasonal

This Song is for You

Because music can affect us deeply and profoundly with seemingly little effort, it can be an effective way to work through feelings of grief.

One way music can be used is through personally meaningful songs. If there is a song that reminds you of the person you lost or your relationship, listen to it. Let the music allow you to acknowledge your feelings without judgment. There is no "right or wrong" to how you feel and how you experience your grief.

Song-writing may also be helpful for getting to a place of acceptance and readiness to move forward. Put down in words what you want or need to say and a melody may come to you.

While you're writing, you may even come up with new insights. Remain open to your experience. Give yourself time and space for reflection.

From this place, you may work through your thoughts and feelings to create something beautiful from your grief. Keep it simple and accessible. This song is for you.

*Adapted from Using Music for Complicated Family Grief by Faith Halverson-Ramos
<https://soundwellmusictherapy.com/>*

Grief Groups Location

Grief Services: 2593 Park Lane, Lafayette, CO 80026



How I Feel:

A Coloring Book for Grieving Children

by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D
centerforloss.com

Each grieving person has a unique story to tell

griefinsixwords.com

For those who prefer to speak in pictures

photogrief.com

*All the art of living
lies in a fine mingling
of letting go and
holding on.*

- Havelock Ellis

Image courtesy of jscreationzs at FreeDigitalPhotos.net



Loss makes artists
of us all as we
weave new patterns
in the fabric of life.
- Greta W. Crosby

Exploring, Writing and Reflecting

Although you may not think of yourself as a writer, using a journal to express your grief may be both helpful and healing.

To get started, take some time to explore what you might write about. What's going on? How do you feel? What are you thinking? What do you want? When you're ready, take a few deep breaths, focus, and start writing.

Tell yourself the truth. Don't try to talk yourself out of knowing what you know or feeling what you feel. If the truth seems too bright or too harsh, slow down and give yourself permission to pace yourself.

When you've finished, re-read what you've written and reflect on a sentence or two. Note any actions you may want to take.

"As I read this I notice..."

"I'm aware of..."

"I feel..."

Write naturally. Don't worry about what you're *not* doing. If there is one "rule" of journal writing, it is that there simply are no rules.

Adapted from *A Short Course in Journal Writing: It's Easy to W.R.I.T.E* by Kathleen Adams <https://journaltherapy.com>

Approaches to Journal Writing

Free-associate
from a word or phrase

Capture the sensations
of a meaningful experience

Write a letter
that will not be sent

Describe an event from
a different point of view

Create a written
portrait of your feelings

Expand on recurring
topics or themes

Bring hope
and perspective to a
challenging time

What Children Can Teach Us about Expressing Grief

Children can be our best teachers. They don't follow the rules. They play, run fast, dance, bang drums, color, build and tear down Legos, sing, draw, paint, write. An aggressively played basketball game or beautiful poem, painting or photograph may help them process their grief.

Words can fall short when trying to capture the complex emotions that a loss brings up. Art, music and play allow children to process grief through symbol, metaphor and fantasy. Some people prefer to sit and talk about their feelings, but that doesn't work for everyone.

When supporting a grieving child, encourage these forms of expression and focus on the process, not the product. How did you feel as you drew that picture? Can you tell me why you chose those colors? Pretending to be a fierce dragon may be an empowering way to slay their fears or act out their anger. Art, poetry and play can be easier ways to process the big emotions kids feel while grieving.



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Contact Us

303.604.5330

Visit us at
trucare.org
and [facebook.com/TRUCommunityCare](https://www.facebook.com/TRUCommunityCare)

Healing Circles

**Kid and Parent
Grief Support Group**
Ages 6 -12

Healing With Horses
Ages 6-18
Cost \$100 per child
(scholarships available)

**Teen Grief
Support Group**
Ages 13 - 18

Counseling is available for TRU Community Care kids and teens. Consultations, information and presentations for community families, schools and professionals also are available. Groups are available to both TRU families and community members free of charge. For specific times, dates and locations and to register, please call 303.604.5330. Pre-registration is required for all events.

TRU Grief Services welcomes donations. Donations will help provide resources for groups and family night and provide materials. TRU Community Care is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. We appreciate your support.