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 seasonal grief support newsletters are available to you, your friends, and your community at trucare.org/grief.

Please call us anytime for support at 303.604.5300.

Continuing Bonds

Nostalgia and Longing in Grief

After a death, there is often a strong desire to have the deceased loved one back. Because it takes time to integrate and accept the reality that they’re gone, we may continue to look for them in the places where they once belonged.

We long for them to be next to us or we pick up the phone to call them. Then, as we begin to catch up with reality, we struggle to hold on to, remember and recreate things that were unique to them – their voice or the comforting feel of their embrace.

These moments of longing may especially occur when we’re feeling low, confused or lost. Similar to nostalgia, they tend to intertwine with pining for easier times.

It’s not abnormal to rely on loved ones even years after their death. Doing so doesn’t mean we are stuck or aren’t coping; quite the opposite, in fact. These memories become a mechanism for coping.

Nostalgia about these relationships can help to boost confidence in our ability to interact with others. When we feel lonely or sad due to loss and transitions, nostalgia helps us feel more connected.

Continuing bonds with past relationships may remind us that we are capable of loving and being loved and that such relationships may be found again.

Adapted from Nostalgia and Yearning in Grief
whatsyourgrief.com/yearning-in-grief/

The Journey Ahead

A song may come on the radio and a wave of sadness may overcome us, even if we were content and joyful just a few moments before.

We may be at the market, placing something in our cart, and a memory may surface, enveloping us with feelings of love and loss.

Simply going out to a coffee shop may rekindle memories of time spent talking over coffee with a close friend. A powerful longing may overtake us, wanting to recapture a life connection we once had.

Our losses are a continuum, at times deep within and protected, softly felt. The grief catches, not in our own personal regrets or missed opportunities, but in the longing for those who have traveled with us.

Perhaps this rekindling of all we hold dear serves to remind us that we still need these people and experiences within us on the journey ahead.

Adapted from The Loss, Longing and Love of Reappearing Grief by Barbara Jaffe, Ed.D
innerself.com/content/personal/spirituality-mindfulness/death-a-dying/15952-loss-longing-and-love.html
This holiday season, TRU Community Care and Unity Columbine Spiritual Center invite you to remember someone who has been special in your life by attending our Lights of Life Holiday Remembrance Service. Our indoor service will feature a reading of names, music, and lighting candles, along with light refreshments. You are invited to bring a photo and a story to share while connecting with others who are in similar situations and feeling supported going into the holidays.

This year we will have commemorative ornaments available leading up to the holiday season. Visit trucare.org/events under Lights of Life in the coming weeks for more information.

Sunday, December 8, 2019
Doors open 2:00 PM, Service begins 2:30 PM
Unity Columbine Spiritual Center
8900 Arapahoe Road, Boulder, CO 80303

This holiday season, TRU Community Care and Unity Columbine Spiritual Center invite you to remember someone who has been special in your life by attending our Lights of Life Holiday Remembrance Service. Our indoor service will feature a reading of names, music, and lighting candles, along with light refreshments. You are invited to bring a photo and a story to share while connecting with others who are in similar situations and feeling supported going into the holidays.

This year we will have commemorative ornaments available leading up to the holiday season. Visit trucare.org/events under Lights of Life in the coming weeks for more information.

Registering for Grief Support Groups
To register please visit trucare.org/grief or call 303.604.5213 for group information, times, and locations.

We will find our way.
- Karen Reivich

The Art of Longing
Selected Poems
by Robert A. Neimeyer
Resilient Grieving
Finding Strength and Embracing Life
After a Loss That Changes Everything
by Lucy Hone, PhD
A Mix of Happy and Sad

Yearning isn’t about the experiences we fondly recall. Rather, it’s about those people, places and memories that suddenly cross our minds, taking our breath away.

Yearning is actually one of the most common grief responses, an intense feeling or longing for something or someone we have lost or been separated from. It is an emotional state we experience after the death of a loved one.

To understand yearning, it’s important to acknowledge that, in this grief phase, we are acutely aware that the future we imagined is no longer a possibility.

We search for the comfort we used to have with the person we lost and we try to fill the void. We may appear preoccupied, looking for constant reminders of them and ways to keep them close.

It’s also important to understand that our feelings may be ambivalent and may change over time.

Yearning can be a mix of good and bad, happy and sad, depending on how we experience it and the overall effect it has on our life.

*Articles adapted from Yearning in Grief and Loss*  
whatsyourgrief.com/yearning-grief-loss/
Easing the Winter Blues

During the winter season there are several occasions which can be challenging to families after the death of a loved one.

This time period is loaded with pressures about how to move smoothly through events and holidays such as Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, New Year’s, or Valentine’s Day. In addition, when birthdays and anniversaries also fall during this busy season, coping can become even more complicated.

Rather than nostalgia having a negative impact, try creating family activities that help to remember and honor your special person. This will ultimately lead you to a heart-warming, positive result. Some ideas to consider may be:

- Bake or cook the person’s favorite cookies or food to share at family gatherings; sharing food often sparks pleasant memories.
- Wrap a birthday gift box or hang a Christmas stocking in which family members can include cards or notes with stories inside.
- Create an ornament or other memento together.
- Light a candle or sit around a fireplace or family fire pit and share stories and remembrances.
- Write a letter or a Valentine card to the one who died.
- In their honor, create new memories by going to a place, restaurant or event which was meaningful to your loved one.

Remember, there are always choices about how much, or how little, you wish to participate in traditional celebrations. Make it simple, make it fun and include everyone as you ease the Winter Blues and enjoy the season.

Healing Circles

Watch for upcoming Spring 2020 Healing Circles groups in our March issue.

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