



Grief Support

WINTER 2022

We are thinking of you during your journey through grief. We are here to counsel and provide support to all members of the community following the death of a loved one. These seasonal grief support newsletters are also available to you, your friends, and your community at trucare.org/grief. Please call us anytime for support at (303) 604-5300.

Winter: How to Honor Your Grief

Things tend to become slower in the winter, especially in the wake of the holidays, and this brings mixed feelings. For some, the quiet season is a relief after spending the first holidays without a loved one. For others, the stillness comes with a deeper sadness as family and friends go back to their daily routines. The WINTER acronym provides ideas on how to honor your grief and care for yourself during the winter months:

W: Warmth

Winter weather often leads to more time indoors and can sometimes feel dreary. Add extra warmth and coziness to your space during this time. Leave out extra blankets, light candles, or add twinkle lights to make the space warm. Some keep out something soft from their loved one - a blanket or clothing item.

I: Introspection

The deep quiet of winter, when some of the deeper feelings of grief emerge, can be a time for introspection. You may want to explore your emotions through counseling, groups, or journaling. Allow yourself to express your feelings in any way that feels comfortable for you.

N: Newness

Winter is often described as lacking growth or newness; take this time to create newness in your own life. As parties and events with family slow down following the holidays, this creates more free time in which to do something new. Sign up for a class, attend a workshop, or visit somewhere new.

T: Time

Allow yourself time to grieve and heal, knowing that the grief process cannot be rushed. In the slower season, give yourself extra time to do and accomplish things on your to-do list. Slow your pace.

E: Empathy

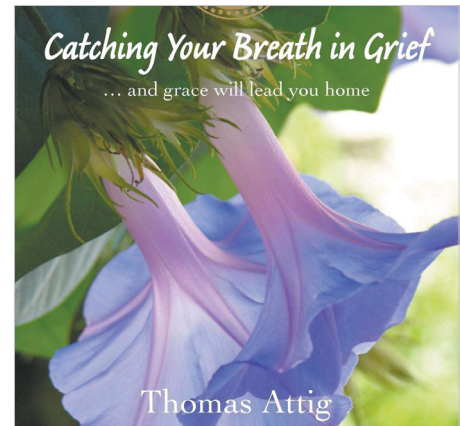
Be extra gentle with yourself. Acknowledge that grief impacts many aspects of the self and know that's ok to not keep the same pace as you did before.

R: Rest

Embrace the slower pace of winter. Give yourself time to rest, allowing your body and mind to heal from the stress that grief can bring. Sleep in a little longer than usual, get a massage, or watch an uplifting movie in your cozy pajamas.

Above all, remember to honor yourself and your needs. Seasons of the earth change, as do seasons of grief.

Adapted from "W-I-N-T-E-R: How to Honor Your Grief" from Transitions Lifecare..



Catching Your Breath in Grief ...and grace will lead you home By Thomas Attig

"In *Catching Your Breath in Grief... and grace will lead you home*," author Thomas Attig captures the best of what he has learned in over forty years of reflection on loss and grief. He reflects on aspects of a universal story whose themes thread through the world's great spiritual and religious traditions, even as they weave through our own lives, link us in our common humanity, and shape our uniqueness."

TRU Grief Services is selling copies of Thomas Attig's *Catching Your Breath in Grief* for \$15. 100% of contributions support sponsorships for our youth programming, including Healing with Horses and Healing Circles.

Copies of the book can be found at the front desk of our Grief Services Administrative building.

Please call (303) 604-5300 with any questions.

Our adult grief groups are available to anyone needing support after the death of a loved one. Support groups are free of charge. 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. To register please visit trucare.org/grief or call (303) 604-5300 for group information, times, and locations.

Ongoing Adult Grief Support Groups

Bereaved Parents Group

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

Spouse/Partner Loss Group

For people who have experienced the death of a spouse or partner.
Meets 3rd Tuesday,
6:00 - 8:00 PM.

First Year Spouse/Partner 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.

Sudden Loss Group

Support for those who experienced the sudden, unexpected loss of a loved one.
Meets 4th Monday,
6:00 - 8:00 PM.

Widowed Senior Group

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

Yoga After Loss Group

Exploring grief through yoga poses, breath work, and meditation.
Periodic Offering.

Structured Adult Grief Support Groups

Creative Expression Group

Exploring grief through the process of making art. Periodic offering.

Newly Bereaved Support Program

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

Eight-Week Support Group

For anyone who has experienced a loss. Offered monthly.

Introducing...

Substance Use Loss Grief Support Group

This group offers an environment to share the pain and suffering of addiction and the drug-related death of your loved one with others who understand and can identify with your experience. This is safe place to remember, honor, and share the loss of your loved one as you walk the journey of grief.

Tentatively restarting early in 2023. Register for more information.



"Grief is always sudden as winter, no matter how long the autumn." — J. Aleksandr Wootton



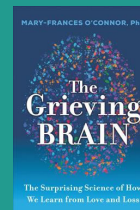
Resilient Grieving: How to Find Your Way Through a Devastating Loss by Lucy Hone, PhD

The death of someone we hold dear may be inevitable; being paralyzed by our grief is not. Recent research has revealed our capacity for resilient grieving, our innate ability to respond to traumatic loss by finding ways to grow—by becoming more engaged with our lives, and discovering new, profound meaning.



The Grieving Brain by Mary Frances O'Connor

Neuroscientist and psychologist Mary-Frances O'Connor, PhD, gives us a fascinating new window into one of the hallmark experiences of being human.



O'Connor has devoted decades to researching the effects of grief on the brain, and in this book, she makes cutting-edge neuroscience accessible through her contagious

enthusiasm, and guides us through how we encode love and grief.

Special Handling, Please.

Dear Bereaved Heart:

The death of your loved one has forced you to start a new type of living that's hard on the heart.

*Undecorating your life of its angers and fears
Is not easy to do without shedding tears.*

*And untying your guilt can release a bundle of strife.
Questions are stirred up about living and life.*

*Don't be concerned now with invitations, big meals.
See how the little stuff handles and feels.*

*Let the love of your family, neighbors, and friends
Uphold and sustain you when you're at loose ends.*

*Most are eager to be there, willing to share.
Tell them your needs, and they'll show you they care.*

*They'll take you shopping, write cards, even cook.
Let that stuff go now. Get yourself off the hook.*

*You need time for healing. You've much work to do. Your
heart needs mending - Give that gift to YOU.*

*Take a walk, read a book. Try something your style. Make
sure it's relaxing, makes you pause, rest awhile.*

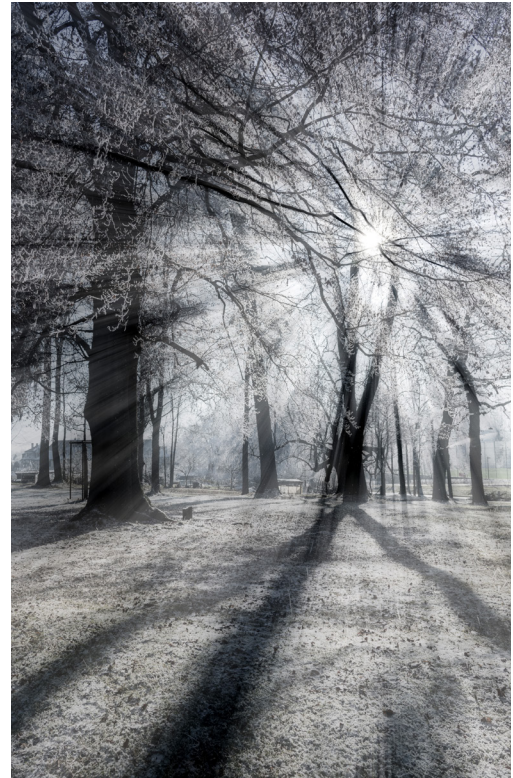
*When holiday invitations knock at your door,
Don't say "yes" to five when you only want four.*

*If you wish to remember your loved one who dies,
Plant a tree, give a gift. Let your heart be your guide.*

*This season of wonder can bring you relief
If you're willing to unwrap your tears and your grief.*

*Please listen, Bereaved Heart, stay close & please dare to
open your package and let others care.*

*Signed,
Your Friend*



Winter Grief by Marie Swann

Bird songs of sunrise hues
Filter through the morning dew.
Forever sits upon sultry lips
Tasting the sun in little sips.
Winter arms scatter delicate treats
And lay the snow in velvet sheets.
Afternoon fades, swallowed whole
Beneath the bell, for me it tolls.
Evening hypnotic spells are cast
In which my dreams come to past.
My skin soaked in winter grief
Hope this endless dark is brief.
Birds, which to the south have flown
Return again when leaves have grown.

ACTIVITIES FOR WINTER BREAK

While the holiday season peaks in December, for those who are grieving, the holidays can be another reminder of their loss. The holidays are a difficult time for grieving children and teens. School is often used as a distraction from the reality of their grief. During Winter Break, young people are forced to confront difficult feelings associated with the death of their loved one.



There are many creative ways to approach and address grief for children and teens. Projects can be a great outlet and a healthy acknowledgement for these thoughts and feelings. Below are a few activities that can help young people express their grief during the holidays.

The Holiday Letter

Encourage your little one to write a holiday letter to their loved one who died. The letter could be a “year in review” letter, a friendly update, or anything they feel needs to be said. They may choose to read it aloud or keep it sealed in an envelope. Writing often allows children and teens to express the thoughts and feelings they don’t feel comfortable sharing with others.

The Stocking Stuffer

Your child or teen can create a stocking designated for their special person. They can decorate it and display it however they want. Your child can write a memory or emotion they have about their loved one and place it in the stocking. Anytime they have a thought about their person throughout the season, your child or teen may choose to read these aloud, privately revisit them, or leave them in the stocking.

Set a Memorial Place at the Table

An empty spot at the table can be a reminder for children and the family that their loved one is deeply missed. Setting a place at the table for them during a holiday meal can be healing. You can have your child or teen set a photo of their loved one, stuffed animal, foods, and any other kind of memento in their place.

Light a Memorial Candle

Lighting a candle in memory of your loved one with your child or teen during the holidays can be a great way to gather and share memories. You can choose a candle with a scent that reminds the family of the person who died. Often times, having a space designated for children to share memories of their special person can be soothing.

Adapted from “Grief During the Holidays,” from Erin’s House for Grieving Children.

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Contact Us

(303) 604-5300

Visit us at:

[TRUcare.org](https://www.trucare.org) and
[Facebook.com/TRUCommunityCare](https://www.facebook.com/TRUCommunityCare)

TRU Grief Services welcomes donations at [trucare.org/donate](https://www.trucare.org/donate). Donations help provide group resources and materials. TRU Community Care is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. We appreciate your support.