



**HOSPICE**  
OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY  
*30 years of compassionate care*

**Grief Support Program**  
**Grief Handbook**

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## Grief and Bereavement

The death of someone close can throw us into a sea of chaotic feelings seemingly powerful enough to threaten our very survival. They may feel relentless and never-ending, then quiet down only to arise months or even years later when we least expect them.

Grief is the natural human response to any loss, not only death. Illness, a job change, a divorce, a separation, unfulfilled dreams, a move to a new location, or any other change can bring about a grief response. Grief is not a problem; it is a normal, healthy process of healing.

The word “bereavement” comes from the words “bereave” or “bereft.” It means to be in a state of deprivation, to be deprived of something very important to one’s life, which leaves one feeling desolated, and even violated. The word “grief” comes from the Latin “graure” and means “burden.” The death of a loved one often feels like a very heavy burden.

Grieving is not done all at once. There are long-term aftershocks. Fortunately, nature has a way of bringing us into contact with our pain only as we are able to bear it. Nothing about grief’s journey is simple. There is no tidy progression of stages, and its course is long and circular.

There is no right or wrong way to grieve. The period of loss following death is a far more complex process than most people realize. You may feel many different conflicting emotions (such as anger, fear, sadness, and guilt) all at the same time. Because of this, your grief can sometimes seem intolerable. It is important to recognize that these feelings are normal and will not feel as intense with time, support, and the opportunity to talk about your loss. While there is no clear roadmap, some features are common to almost everyone’s experience.

You may experience other people saying things or giving advice that you do not find helpful. It is therefore good to know how to help yourself by finding someone to support you and listen to you.

## Stages of Grief

### **Shock and Surprise**

Even if the death is expected, you may feel numb or anesthetized for several weeks afterward. Your actions may be mechanical. You get things done (for example, handle all the funeral details), but you are not “all there.” People around you may be saying, “Isn’t he strong?” or “She’s handling this so well.” The impact or reality of the death has not fully reached you. This period of shock is your psyche’s way of protecting you by allowing reality in slowly. If the loss is sudden, unexpected, or violent, the period of numbness may be longer.

### **Emotional Release**

As the shock wears off, reality can be acutely painful. As the full impact gradually dawns, conflict may arise about whether or not to show grief. How much and for how long? You might try to keep up a good front or remain strong, even though you may feel like crying or screaming. If people are praising you for being so brave and not “falling apart,” do you dare show them how you really feel? This is a time when emotional release is important and encouraged. Concealing painful feelings may prolong the grief process and increase physical and emotional distress. At this point family, friends, or a hospice counselor can help support your expression of grief.

### **Loneliness**

Sometimes, even before the funeral or memorial service, the feelings of loneliness, isolation, and depression begin. The memorial is the focus for realizing that your loved one is really gone. Family and friends can be helpful and consoling, but after the memorial the prevailing attitude is “it’s all over.”

### **No One to Hold**

The supportive people in your life may disappear. After the memorial service, you may suffer a second major loss: everyday contact with your loved one. This might mean coming home to an empty house and no welcome home greeting. It may mean no one to help with household chores and no one to hold and share the small, everyday moments and rituals. If your child has died, there is no one to see come home from school, no one with whom to share your future dreams or to watch grow up. If you have lost parents, siblings, or a friend, it may mean no one to talk to about the big and small moments in life. Even if your loved one has been sick for a long time, you no longer have hospital visits to make. Your entire routine of daily living has been shattered. You are alone, suddenly overcome by an utter sense of depression and despair. It is important at this point to have people in your life who can validate the magnitude of your loss.

### **Physical Distress with Anxiety**

Some questions that may come up for you are “What am I going to do?”; “What’s going to happen to me?”; “How can I get along without her?”; and “Will I lose my friends?” You may develop the same type of physical symptoms your loved one had. If your partner had a heart attack, you may now be having chest pains. Anxiety and stress may cause physical symptoms such as shortness of breath, insomnia, headaches, backaches, or an upset stomach. During the entire grief process, you may need to take especially good care of your body; you are vulnerable and may need a lot more rest. You may want to see your physician for a physical examination.

### **Panic and Disorganization**

You may have trouble concentrating on anything but the loss. You may feel something is wrong with you. You may replay thoughts such as “I can’t get the images out of my mind; won’t they ever stop?”; “Sometimes I think I see her.”; “Sometimes I feel his touch.”; “Sometimes I hear her voice.”; “I’ve got to do something. I can’t sleep or eat.”; “All I do is think about her.”; “Will it ever stop hurting?”; or “Will I ever stop dreaming about him?” As a bereaved person, you need to know that this does not mean you are going crazy. This is a normal part of the grieving process.

### **Guilt**

When faced with real or imagined guilt, you may begin asking yourself questions like “What did I do wrong?” or “What if I stayed awake, hadn’t gone to work, kissed her, showed him I loved him?” These questions may indicate guilt, regrets, or unfinished business, which need to be expressed. These feelings can be brought to the surface by sharing them with a non-judgmental listener, or in a letter or journal.

### **Hostility, Projection, and Anger**

Along with these feelings of guilt, you may experience hostility. Maybe you are hostile to people whom you believe have contributed to your problem. For example you may feel angry with a physician: “Why didn’t she do something? Why didn’t he get here on time? Did she do everything she could?” You may be experiencing anger at your friends who draw away from you or seem to belittle your loss with well-meaning but clumsy remarks. You may be furious with God or fate for taking away your loved one. You may also be angry with your loved one for dying and abandoning you. Anger is a very normal human emotion, and it is important to find ways to release those thoughts of “What I’m going through is so unfair!” and “Why did it have to happen to him — he was such a good person?” Talking about your thoughts or feelings and engaging in physical activity are both good ways to keep anger from burning inside you.

### **Suffering in Silence and Depression**

This is also a time when you may suffer in silence. You might feel fatigued, worn out, and unable to get started in any activity. Your thought processes are involved with the loss, but you may no longer want to talk about it. You may feel that others expect you to stop grieving. Tears, anger, frustration, or depression may be poorly tolerated by others several weeks after the funeral. You may have feelings of “not wanting to go on” and then may be shocked or feel guilty for having such thoughts. This is a period where you are recreating meaning in life, and it takes time.

### **Gradual Overcoming of Grief**

Your adjustment to a new status in life gradually occurs by working through this grief period. There can be a noticeable change in the first few months, but often it is much longer. By the end of this phase, there is a considerable brightening of mood, more activity, and the beginning of re-establishing connections with people.

### **Readjustment to Reality**

The acute phase is normally completed in a few months, but it does vary. Readjustment continues for at least 2–3 years. Because traditional symbols of grief such as a black veil or clothing, an arm band, or a black wreath on the front door are out of style, many times it is easy for others to forget that you are grieving. You are beginning to restructure your life without your loved one. You may want to take a vacation, or get involved in a new activity, or take up old activities that you used to enjoy. Occasionally, you may feel twinges of guilt as you begin to enjoy yourself or laugh freely again, as though you are somehow betraying the memory of your lost loved one. It is helpful to be aware of feelings of guilt that get in the way of readjustment. It is also helpful to recognize that wedding anniversaries, holidays, birthdays, or the anniversary date of the death may cause a flood of feelings, or may bring back a shorter version of the grief process. This is normal and does not mean that you will be in acute pain forever.

### **Conclusion**

Grief is a natural life experience that we all go through. Each grief journey is unique. Reaching out to others for support and being kind to ourselves can enable us to survive the pain.

## Common Grief Reactions

Physical	Emotional	Cognitive
Fatigue	Sadness	Disbelief
Lack of energy	Loneliness	Distraction
Sympathy pains	Anger	Absent-mindedness
Hollowness in stomach	Guilt	Forgetfulness
Tightness in chest	Anxiety	Low motivation
Shortness of breath	Shock	Dreaming of the dead
Dry mouth	Yearning/Longing	Poor concentration
Increased noise sensitivity	Relief	Memories of other losses
Pain	Numbness	Diminished self concern
Sleep disturbances	Depression	Denial
Appetite changes	“Grief attacks”	Disorientation
Restlessness	Fear	Apathy
Tension	Helplessness	Diminished self concern
Exhaustion	Lack of control	
	Insecurity	
	Resentment	
Social	Behavioral	Spiritual
Social Withdrawal	Searching	Questions about spirituality/religious beliefs
Less desire to converse	Crying/Tears	How are they?
Needing to take care of others	Carrying special objects	Where are they now?
	Visiting the grave site	Why could God allow this?
	Keeping an altar	When will I die?
	Keeping belongings intact	Will I see them again when I die?
	Looking at photos	What will happen to me when I die?
	Talking to the dead	Sensing the presence of the dead
	Changes in daily routine	

## **Main Tasks of Grieving**

### **To accept the reality of the loss**

When someone dies, even when the death is expected, there is always a sense that it hasn't happened. The first task of grieving is to come full face with the reality that the person is dead; that the person is gone and will not return; that reunion is impossible, at least in this life. Denying the facts of the loss, the meaning of the loss, or the irreversibility of the loss only serves to prolong the grief process. Though denial or hope for reunion is normal immediately after the loss, this illusion is usually short-lived.

### **To experience the pain of grief**

Many people (and society) try to avoid the painful feelings in a variety of ways: "being strong," moving away, avoiding painful thoughts, "keeping busy," etc. There is no healthy way of avoiding this pain. You must allow yourself to experience and express your feelings, difficult as though it may be. Many feelings and experiences are normal: anger, guilt, loneliness, anxiety, and depression. Recall and relate the memories of the dead — pleasant and unpleasant. Ask for the support of friends. Tell them what you need from them because people often misunderstand the needs of the grieving. Be assured that the memory of your loved one will continue, but the pain will lessen in time and will finally disappear.

### **To adjust to an environment in which the dead are missing**

This means different things to different people, depending on what the relationships were. Many survivors, especially widowed persons, resent or are fearful of having to develop new skills and to take on roles that were formerly performed by the dead. There may be many practical daily affairs with which you need help and advice, but there will be a great sense of pride in being able to master these challenges. The emotions involved in letting go — in not having that person's love, support or assistance — may be painful but, again, necessary to experience. By not doing so, you will remain stuck in the grief process and unable to resolve your loss.

### **To emotionally relocate and memorialize the deceased**

The final task is to find a place within you for the deceased that will enable you to have a continuing connection with him or her, while moving forward with life. This means finding ways to remember your loved one - keeping the love and the memories of that person with you – and also going on with life. For many people this is the most difficult task of all, but ultimately it, too, can be mastered.

From William Worden's "Tasks of Grief"

## Surviving a Loss: What Do You Need During Grief?

**Take good care of yourself.** Take a minute every so often throughout your day to focus on your breath. Get plenty of rest. Resume your routine of physical activity when it is comfortable. If new or unusual symptoms arise, see a physician.

**Keep nutrition in mind.** Good eating habits help the healing process and defeat stress. Drink enough fluids, especially water.

**Maintain a regular schedule.** Plan your days. Activity will give you a sense of order. Avoid setting unrealistic expectations and goals for yourself.

**Be gentle with yourself.** Treat yourself with care. Avoid self-judgment. Don't put "I should have" on yourself. What you are going through is natural and has no specific timetable. Your life may take on new shape and meaning.

**Keep decision making to a minimum.** Expect your judgment to be clouded for a while. You are going through change; don't add additional ones!

**Seek comforting.** Don't just accept support from others — seek it. It's human and courageous. Find a supportive person or people you can trust. Share honest feelings with them.

**Tell and re-tell what happened.** Remembering is healing. Every grief needs 1,000 tellings.

**Hope.** You may find hope and comfort from those who have experienced a similar loss. Knowing some things that helped them and realizing that they have recovered may give you hope that sometime in the future your grief will feel less raw and painful.

**Be willing to engage in your own grief work.** For example, crying, taking time to be with memories, and expressing your feelings allows you to grieve.

**Give yourself permission to backslide.** Sometimes after a period of feeling good, we find ourselves back in the old feelings of extreme sadness, despair, or anger. This is the nature of grief — up and down — and it may happen over and over for a time. It happens because as humans we cannot take in all of the pain and the meaning of death all at once. So we let it in a little at a time.

**Surround yourself with living things.** A new plant, a pet, a bowl of fresh fruit and vegetables.

**Enjoy small pleasures.** Do not underestimate the healing effects of small pleasures, as you are ready. Sunsets, a walk in the woods, a favorite food — all of these are small steps toward regaining your pleasure in life itself.

**Do your mourning now.** Give your pain time and attention. Postponed grief can return to haunt you. Feelings of grief will be expressed *one way or another*.

**Be alert to addictive activities.** Alcohol, drugs, food, and other diversions can all momentarily help us escape from pain. But we can easily become dependent on them, and this never helps us to heal.

**Set small goals.** For a while, it may seem that much of life is without meaning. At times like these, small goals are helpful. Something to look forward to, like playing tennis with a friend next week, a movie tomorrow night, or a trip next month, helps you get through the time in the immediate future. Living one day at a time is a good rule of thumb. At first, don't be surprised if your enjoyment of these things isn't the same. This is normal. As time passes, you may need to work on some longer-range goals to give some structure and direction to your life.

**Keep a journal.** Putting your thoughts and feelings on paper is a good way to get them out. You can look back and see just how far you have come.

**Write a letter or draw a picture.** These are healing ways to get feelings from the inside to the outside. Writing to the person who has died, or to yourself, public agencies, institutions or anybody else, enables you to process what your body longs to say. It also enables you to release anger, frustration, and isolation, and move to a forgiving, life-affirming love for yourself and for those who have touched your life.

**Heal at your own pace.** *Never* compare yourself to another grieving person! Each of us has our own time clock in these matters.

**Give yourself praise.** You are richer, deeper, and wiser. You will begin to understand that change and separation are a natural part of living. You are a better person for *having* loved.

**Begin to look to the future.** Begin to experiment with new lifestyles and new ways of filling the day. They might even turn out to be fun!

**Be open.** Give yourself opportunities to meet new people, places, ideas, and experiences, but don't forget to *build on the past*. Don't throw out what has been worthwhile to you. Small changes are best at first.

**Begin to give of yourself.** Giving can bring you the greatest joy. It is healing.

**Expect relapses.** There will always be certain things that trigger sadness again. This is *normal*.

## Daily Thoughts for Reducing Stress

- Breathe, deeply.
- Stretch, gently.
- Close your eyes.
- Clench your fists and then relax them.
- Laugh.
- Take a break between tasks.
- Learn to ask for help.
- Learn to say no.
- Put yourself at the top of your list of priorities.
- Learn that you are not the only person who can do it.
- Learn to be a human being, not a human doing.
- Practice doing one thing at a time.
- Know that it is ok to feel what you feel.
- Find a safe place to talk about your feelings.
- Reacquaint yourself with spiritual values and support.
- Reacquaint yourself with your heart.
- Listen.
- Be gentle with yourself.

## More Tools for Coping

### Quiet Time

Take advantage of quiet time. Choose a time when you can be alone with your thoughts and feelings.

There is a tendency to run from the pain of grief — to keep so busy, to push yourself so hard that all you can do is fall in bed at night and go right to sleep. You may keep from feeling the pain, but it will catch up with you in some form in the future.

So, stop and allow the pain to be felt. Experience your thoughts and feelings. They are all part of you. The paradox is that the more you feel them, the sooner you'll heal.

Stop and ...

- Open up the picture album and remember times past.
- Take a walk in a place where there were special memories.
- Sit down during the day and reflect.

At the beginning of these quiet times you may have a rush of feelings. Feel them. You will not break, and no one has cried forever. Once you have gone into them, you will eventually quiet down. At this time, you could play some quiet music or put on a tape with some relaxing sounds, such as ocean waves or gentle rainfall.

Rest when you can. During this time your body is trying very hard to heal your emotional wounds and you may tire easily. Take a nap in the middle of the day. Yes, even at your place of work if possible.

It's very common to have sleeping difficulties. Grievers frequently have trouble getting to sleep or awaken during the night and are unable to go back to sleep. You have a great deal on your mind and it's hard to turn it off. If you are having trouble sleeping at night, try the following tips before resorting to sleeping pills:

- Play quiet, meditative music by your bed.
- Have good reading materials close at hand and read until you feel ready to sleep again.
- Have a cup of warm milk or herbal tea and sip it slowly, breathing deeply and giving your mind permission to slow down.

### Journal Writing: A Means of Coping and Growing Through Crisis

1. Identify as many feelings as you can that you have experienced today. You may have coped with grief, anger, loneliness, guilt, relief, denial, confusion, weakness, nausea, a heavy chest, crying, or sleep disturbance. All of these, by the way, are normal!
2. If someone you loved was killed, take a memory trip with your loved one through one event, which you can remember clearly. Write about it in detail as you fully experience the memory. Do not be afraid to feel.
3. List as many “losses” — other than the current crisis — which you have experienced in your life. How were they similar and how were they different? How did you cope with them?
4. Write about the person(s) you have felt most supported you since your loss. When finished, write that person a note of gratitude.
5. Write about the persons who have pulled away from you since your loss. Explore why. Who have you pulled away from and why?
6. If you are grieving a death, take out a favorite picture of your loved one. Write about the things you appreciated most about that person. Then write about how you feel now.
7. Write about some of the things that you are angry about in relation to your loss. Write about how you can express those feelings rather than holding them in.
8. Write about the guilt that you feel: the “should-haves,” and the “if-onlys.” Check for yourself what is rational, and mark out what is irrational. Then write a letter to “the someone” or to a spiritual source asking forgiveness for those items that are indeed rational.
9. Write about your fears: being alone, driving a car, money, your future...
10. If you survived a death, write about one thing that you plan to do to let go of what happened. Examples of these are taking off a wedding ring, putting up or taking down a picture, and giving away clothes or other things. If you survived a personal loss, write about giving up some aspect of it to which you may still be clinging. Write about how you think it will feel to do this.



# GRIEF SUPPORT SERVICES

## Additional Support

### Community Resources

Al-Anon - bilingual, Spanish <a href="http://www.ncwsa.org/d23">www.ncwsa.org/d23</a>	462-1818/ 336-9969
Alcoholic Anonymous <a href="http://www.aasantacruz.org">www.aasantacruz.org</a>	475-5782
Alzheimer's Association <a href="http://www.ALZ.org">www.ALZ.org</a>	464- 9982
American Red Cross <a href="http://www.sccredcross.org">www.sccredcross.org</a>	462-2881
Arthritis Foundation <a href="http://www.arthritis.org">www.arthritis.org</a>	800-464-6240
Calif. Assoc. Marriage and Family Therapists	429-7786
Casa De La Cultura - bilingual, Spanish	763-0702
Centro De La Familia - bilingual, Spanish	423-5747
Chaplain Services through Dominican Hospital	462-7739
County Crisis Intervention (County Mental Health)	454-4170
Defensa de Mujeres (Women's Crisis support) <a href="http://www.DDM.org">www.DDM.org</a>	425-4030 685-3737 Hot line 722-4532 Watsonville
Del Mar Resource Center <a href="http://www.delmarcaregiver.org">www.delmarcaregiver.org</a>	459-6639
Divorce Center	426-2778
Divorced Fathers Network, weekly meetings <a href="http://www.divorcedfathersnetwork.org">www.divorcedfathersnetwork.org</a>	335-5855
Dominican 24 hour Crisis, mental health	462-7719
Dream Foundation (last wishes for adults) <a href="http://www.dreamfoundation.org">www.dreamfoundation.org</a>	805-564-2131
Elderday (support for clients, caregivers) <a href="http://www.saludparalagente.org">www.saludparalagente.org</a>	458-3481
Family Services Agency Santa Cruz <a href="http://www.FSA-CC.org">www.FSA-CC.org</a>	423-9444 728-9970 Watsonville
Help After Neonatal Death (HAND)	438-4513

### Community Resources

[www.handsupport.org](http://www.handsupport.org)

Jacob's Heart (Children's Cancer Association)	724-9100
Janus Outpatient (Alcohol and Drug treatment center) <a href="http://www.janussc.org">www.janussc.org</a>	462-1060
Katz Cancer Resource Center - bilingual, Spanish	462-7770
La Manzana Recursos Comunitarios - bilingual, Spanish	724-2997/763-3105
Legal Aid <a href="http://www.crla.org">www.crla.org</a>	458-1089
Lift Line - bilingual, Spanish <a href="http://www.communitybridges.org">www.communitybridges.org</a>	688-9663
Linkages (Home case management, Sr. network Services) <a href="http://www.seniornetworkservices.org">www.seniornetworkservices.org</a>	462-4122
Leukemia Society of America - bilingual, Spanish <a href="http://www.LLS.org">www.LLS.org</a>	408-271-2873
Make a Wish Foundation	722-9474
Meals on Wheels - bilingual, Spanish <a href="http://www.communitybridges.org">www.communitybridges.org</a>	464-3180
Mountain Community Resources <a href="http://www.mountaincommunityresources.org">www.mountaincommunityresources.org</a>	336-2553
Pajaro Valley Family Services Agency	724-7123
Parent's Center	426-7322
Planned Parenthood, Westside health center - bilingual, Spanish <a href="http://www.ppmarmonte.org">www.ppmarmonte.org</a>	426-5550
Protective Services (Child and Adult)	454-4101/ 724-2879
Psychologist Referral Service for SC County	429-7799
Renaissance Program (in home Senior counsel) - bilingual, Spanish	728-9009
Salvation Army - bilingual, Spanish	426-8365
Salud Para La Gente - bilingual, Spanish	728-0222/728-8250
Santa Cruz AIDS project - bilingual, Spanish <a href="http://www.scapsite.org">www.scapsite.org</a>	427-3900
Senior Network Services - bilingual, Spanish <a href="http://www.seniornetworkservices.org">www.seniornetworkservices.org</a>	462-1433

### Community Resources

Senior Outreach of the SC Public Library	420-5653
South County Adult Mental Health Services - bilingual, Spanish <a href="http://www.santacruzhealth.org">www.santacruzhealth.org</a>	454-4170
SPCA (Pet Loss Support) <a href="http://www.santacruzspca.org">www.santacruzspca.org</a>	465-5000
Stroke Center (Cabrillo College)	425-0622
SIDS Alliance Of Northern California	877-938-7437
Suicide Prevention 24 hours Crisis line	458-5300
Survivor's Healing Center - bilingual, Spanish <a href="http://www.survivorshealingcenter.org">www.survivorshealingcenter.org</a>	423-7601 761-3861 Watsonville
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (members of the military) <a href="http://www.TAPS.org">www.TAPS.org</a>	800-959-8277
Veteran's Center of Santa Cruz County <a href="http://www.VA.gov">www.VA.gov</a>	464-4575 464-5518 Medical
Victim Services (victims or witness of crime) - bilingual, Spanish	454-2010
WINGS(Survivors of Suicide support group) - bilingual, Spanish	459-9373
WomenCare (Cancer support, groups, education) - bilingual, Spanish	457-2273
Youth Services - bilingual, Spanish <a href="http://www.SCCCC.org">www.SCCCC.org</a>	429-8350 728-2227 Watsonville

### Select Bibliography

Hospice staff and Volunteers have recommended these selections over the years.

#### **Widow**

Lynn Caine

Personal account that includes excellent resources for everyone, particularly women.

#### **A Very Easy Death**

Simone de Beauvoir

A day-by-day recounting of her mother's death: personal and sensitive.

#### **The Last Dance**

Lynne DeSpelder

A textbook on death and dying by an internationally known Cabrillo College instructor.

#### **Motherless Daughters: The Legacy of Loss**

Hope Edelman

A best-selling exploration of women's pain and grief upon the loss of their mother.

#### **Man's Search for Meaning**

Victor Frankl

A profound classic of the author's experiences in a concentration camp where he learned to live meaning in the midst of profound suffering.

#### **Death Be Not Proud**

John Gunther

A Father's memoir of a brave boy in his fight to overcome a dreadful disease.

#### **When A Lifemate Dies**

Heinlein, Brumett, and Tibbals

Three local authors edited this volume of stories and poems. The three met at a Hospice of Santa Cruz County Grief Support Group.

#### **Last Letter to the Pebble People**

Virginia Hine

A beautiful account of one woman's preparation to say goodbye to her husband.

#### **Losing A Parent and The Infinite Thread: Healing Relationships beyond Loss**

Alexandra Kennedy

Two books by a popular local author and therapist.

#### **On Death and Dying**

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

A classic that influenced our society's treatment of the dying.

## More Tools for Coping



### **When Bad things Happen to Good People**

Harold Kushner

A popular book addressing a perennial question.

### **A Year to Live: How to Live This Year as if It Were your Last**

Stephen and Ondrea Levine

The authors' guide to facing death in a conscious way for a year as a way to profoundly alter one's relationship to life.

### **Hour of Gold, Hour of Lead**

Anne Morrow Lindberg

The last part of the book deals with the kidnapping of her son and her grief.

### **How To Go On Living When Someone You Love Dies**

Theresa A. Rando

A compassionate, comprehensive guide to the bereavement process by a specialist in the field.

### **The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying**

Sogyal Rinpoche

Very popular introduction of Tibetan Buddhist perspectives on death as applied to contemporary American culture.

### **Beyond Grief**

Carol Staudacher

An exploration of the grieving process by a local author.

### **Men and Grief**

Carol Staudacher

A guide for men surviving the death of a loved one.

### **The Courage to Grieve**

Judy Tatelbaum

A classic introduction to the normalcy of the grief process. Useful guide for everyone.

### **Necessary Losses**

Judith Viorst

Popular author, very accessible. Explores the normal losses that are part of our lives.

### **A Broken Heart Still Beats: After Your Child Dies**

Anne McCracken and Mary Semel

A remarkable collection of poetry, fiction and essays compiled by a journalist and a social worker, both of whom have lost a child.

## More Tools for Coping



### **Never Too Old For A Lullaby**

Juanita White

Emotional support for parents whose adult child dies.

### **A Look In The Mirror: A Handbook for Widowers**

Ed Ames

Covers single parenting, finances, employment, living alone and what to do with her things.

### **Widow to Widow**

Thoughtful, practical ideas for rebuilding your life: challenges, changes, decision-making and relationships.

### **Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place**

Terry Tempest Williams

A powerful book. Williams weaves the story of her mother's dying process with poetic and political observations of ecological changes in the Great Salt Lake.

### **The Art of Condolence**

Leonard and Hilary Zunin

Excellent, practical guide for what to write, say, and do at the time of loss.

### Websites

#### **Caring Connections**

<http://www.caringinfo.org>

Caring Connections, a program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO), is a national consumer engagement initiative to improve care at the end of life, supported by a grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

#### **Death: A Salon Special Issue**

<http://archive.salon.com/weekly/intro960805.html>

This special double issue of the Internet magazine Salon explores death from many different points of view.

Also see ‘The Last Waltz’ by Anne Lamott.

#### **The End of Life — Exploring Death in America**

<http://www.npr.org/programs/death/>

National Public Radio’s transcripts of programs in its ongoing series about death and dying in America are available on the website along with a resource guide and personal stories posted by visitors to the site. Also available are selections from novels and short stories, poems, religious rituals, clinical research, scripts for plays and television and radio programs.

#### **Family Caregiver Alliance**

<http://www.caregiver.org/>

Free online help for caregivers featuring support groups, a resource guide, and more for families coping with Alzheimer’s disease, stroke, Parkinson’s, ALS, and other disorders.

#### **Growth House, Inc.**

<http://www.growthhouse.org/>

An international gateway to resources about life-threatening illnesses and end-of-life issues, including hospice and home care, palliative care, pain management, death with dignity, and bereavement.

#### **Project On Death In America**

<http://www.soros.org/death>

PDIA’s mission is to understand and transform the culture and experience of dying and bereavement through initiatives in research, scholarship, the humanities, and the arts, and to foster innovations in the provision of care, public education, professional education, and public policy.