



# goodwords

news from the **good grief center for bereavement support**

## What Follows the Holidays?

The holiday season can be a very stressful time for anyone, especially if you have lost a loved one. Very often people express that the days leading up to the holidays are more anxiety provoking than the holiday itself. Once the holiday activities are over and the routine of everyday life sets in yet again, these days can be just as hard if not harder for many. The reality of being faced with searching for a new normal is very apparent once more. We may find ourselves overwhelmed with new responsibilities and exhausted, or maybe we have too much time on our hands. Either way, having more responsibility and too little time, or too much free time doesn't allow us to escape the feelings of loneliness and stress.

Being proactive in developing a plan on how to live fully after the holidays can alleviate some of the anticipated strain. For example, some may find it helpful to take care of projects around the house that have been neglected over time or to line up a volunteer position for themselves to lift their spirits by helping others. If children make you smile maybe you want to tutor a child in reading or math; or become a Big Brother or Big Sister. If you enjoy the wisdom of the elderly perhaps visiting residents at a long-term care facility will bring pleasure to both you and those you visit. Individuals who get pleasure from animals may want to look into volunteering at their local pet shelter or take on a side job of pet sitter.

At first you may have to force yourself to leave the safety of your home. Try. Become self-aware of how quickly you get involved and what you learn about yourself. Ask yourself if this is the right activity for you? Is it worth the effort you are exerting? As you endeavor to uplift others are you finding yourself uplifted as well? (continued on page 2)

Give!  
please

## Year End Donations ... now more than ever!

We are thankful to The Pittsburgh Foundation for initiating PittsburghGives Match Day. Due to the incredible response, many of our donors were not able to get through with their donations. We make sure every dollar goes a long way, match or no match! We need your support this year more than ever before – we have doubled and even quadrupled some of our numbers!

If you go to our PittsburghGives portrait at [www.pittsburghgives.org](http://www.pittsburghgives.org) you can see detailed information about GGC including a You Tube video which features our clients talking about how GGC made a difference in their lives.

We are sure the facts and figures you see will make you want to give! Please use the enclosed envelope to send in a generous donation so we can continue providing our good services free of charge! We are ever so grateful for your generosity.

***Our mission:*** To be a comprehensive bereavement resource and referral center that builds a more compassionate community through grief awareness, education, support and hope; creating a safe place where all who have experienced the pain of death may come to work through loss and learn to manage grief.

## What Follows the Holidays?

(continued from front cover)

Often there are certain times of day that affect people who are grieving that leave them feeling more alone. If first thing in the morning is harder for you maybe you want to meet a friend for coffee or get up and take a walk. If evenings are harder, then making dinner plans or attending an exercise class may help fill the void.

Maintaining a daily routine can assist in making sure that you remain active and aid in meeting your physical needs such as eating, staying hydrated, sleeping, and good personal hygiene. Daily structure can also help alleviate anxiety from feeling overwhelmed and out of control.

However you choose to bring a close to the holiday season and begin the upcoming year, it is important to remember to have balance in your life as you journey through your grief. Balance between choosing activities that are right for you and time for yourself to let your feelings surface and experience your grief. Remember that the Good Grief Center is here to support you in your journey.

## Let's Talk About Grief Conference October 21, 2009

### *Boy, did we talk about grief!*

Our *Let's Talk About Grief* Conference was a great success. The workshops were packed and well received, the lunch delicious and even served hot, and how about our keynote speaker? **Jeff Zaslow**, co-author of *The Last Lecture* was fabulous! He made us laugh, cry and really think – about things big and small that affect our lives each and every day. If you are one of the very few who have not read this book -- please do – it will make you really think about life.

**So many thanks to all of our sponsors, advertisers and most importantly those of you that packed the house!**



*Interesting stuff!*



*Jeff Zaslow & Sally Wiggin*



*Happy attendees*



*Panel discussion*



*Jennifer Antkowiak  
& presenter Jim Hargis*



*Many books autographed*

## message from the executive director

## Dear Friends,

Another holiday season is upon us and I am once again reminded that it doesn't always mean 'happy holidays'. Many people and most importantly, the majority of 'our people' are dreading the holidays. For those of you in that group please remember we are here for you. Keep in mind the anticipation is usually worse than the actual holiday. Many clients have told us that spending time in advance of the holiday talking to people at GGC helped to diminish the anxiety. Planning ahead of time and exploring different ways to spend the holiday can assist in not only getting through the day but perhaps even enjoying the day, which is something they did not think possible.

As I write this Thanksgiving is right around the corner, however I know when you read this, it has just passed. We have much to be thankful for here at the Good Grief Center. We are most grateful to our clients who call or come into the Center and share their stories with us. The trust they instill in us is humbling, the tears they shed heartbreaking and the hope they leave with encouraging.

My hope for each of you is to recognize and acknowledge whatever it is in your life for which you are thankful. Grieving can temporarily close your eyes to the many positive things that remain in your life. Try to open your eyes as best you can...remember and enjoy some of the good in your life. It isn't just okay to do this, it is necessary!

I wish everyone, clients, board members, our generous donors and the core of GGC ~ our staff and volunteers, the best holiday season possible! Many thanks for all you do for and with the Good Grief Center throughout the entire year. Until next year...

Take care,



*Comments? Suggestions?*

Send us an email at [support@goodgriefcenter.com](mailto:support@goodgriefcenter.com)  
or visit our website at [www.goodgriefcenter.com](http://www.goodgriefcenter.com)  
412-224-4700

## goodnewsgoodnewsgoodnews

## staff spotlight: special note &amp; thank you

## GGC Salutes Katie Riley

A special note of thanks to our social work intern, Katie Riley. Katie joined the GGC team in August and has worked tirelessly over 30 hours per week. Her warm and compassionate way came through when supporting clients while her intelligence and can-do attitude helped the staff with many projects. True to the social work approach, Katie worked with individuals, families, and the community during her 4 months at GGC. Her openness to learn and work with the staff and board was welcomed and enjoyed by all.



## board of directors

**We are very pleased to announce new members to our board of directors.**

**Kate Burroughs** is the director of development for the Association of American Cancer Institutes and former development director of The Children's Home of Pittsburgh and Lemieux Family Center. She has served on a number of non-profit boards including the Greater Pittsburgh Non-Profit Partnership and an at-large board member for the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP).

**Kate Sphar** is a Senior Consultant for the Dewey & Kaye division of McCrory & McDowell LLC. Dewey & Kaye is the largest non-profit consulting firm in the Pittsburgh area. Kate was named one of Pittsburgh Magazine's "40 Under 40" in 2008 and is a graduate of the Leadership Development Initiative program at Leadership Pittsburgh. She currently serves on boards of the Human Services Center and Mentoring Partnership.

**Sally Wiggin** joined WTAE TV in 1980 and is one of the most recognized faces in Pittsburgh. Alongside her role as anchor of Channel 4 Action News, Sally shares her time and talents by being very active in our community. As well known as Sally is, she is equally well respected for her passion about causes near and dear to her. She has long been a friend to GGC and recently interviewed Jeff Zaslow at our Let's Talk About Grief Conference. Presently she serves on several boards -- but with GGC she felt it was a must. "You guys are the real deal," she said.

***We humbly welcome all of our new board members and are truly grateful to our entire board for all they do to support GGC!***

  
**good grief center**  
 for bereavement support  
 2717 Murray Avenue  
 Pittsburgh, Pa 15217

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DECEMBER					
M	T	W	T	F	
	1	OPEN GROUP 3-4:30 PM FAMILY PROGRAM 5:30-8 PM	2 DAUGHTERS w/out MOTHERS 7-8:30 PM	3 4	
CALL GGC FOR HOLIDAY SUPPORT	7	8	9 FAMILY PROGRAM 5:30-8 PM	10 OPEN GROUP 7-8:30 PM	11
14	15	16 OPEN GROUP 3-4:30 PM	17 DAUGHTERS w/out MOTHERS 7-8:30 PM	18	
21	22 OPEN GROUP 7-8:30 PM	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE GGC CLOSED	25 CHRISTMAS DAY GGC CLOSED	
28	29	30	31 LAST DAY FOR TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS		

JANUARY					
M	T	W	T	F	
				1 NEW YEAR'S DAY GGC CLOSED	
	4	5	6 OPEN GROUP 3-4:30 PM	7 DAUGHTERS w/out MOTHERS 7-8:30 PM	8
11	12	13	14 OPEN GROUP 7-8:30 PM	15 CALL GGC FOR SUPPORT	
18	19	20 OPEN GROUP 3-4:30 PM	21 DAUGHTERS w/out MOTHERS 7-8:30 PM	22	
25	26	27	28 OPEN GROUP 7-8:30 PM	29	

FEBRUARY					
M	T	W	T	F	
1	2	3 OPEN GROUP 3-4:30 PM	4 DAUGHTERS w/out MOTHERS 7-8:30 PM	5	
8	9	10	11 OPEN GROUP 7-8:30 PM	12	
CALL GGC FOR SUPPORT	15	16	17 OPEN GROUP 3-4:30 PM	18 DAUGHTERS w/out MOTHERS 7-8:30 PM	19
22	23	24	25 OPEN GROUP 7-8:30 PM	26	

MARCH					
M	T	W	T	F	
1	2	3 OPEN GROUP 3-4:30 PM	4 DAUGHTERS w/out MOTHERS 7-8:30 PM	5	
8	9	10	11 OPEN GROUP 7-8:30 PM	12	
15	16	17 OPEN GROUP 3-4:30 PM	18 DAUGHTERS w/out MOTHERS 7-8:30 PM	19	
CALL GGC FOR SUPPORT	22	23	24 OPEN GROUP 7-8:30 PM	25	26
29	30	31			