



goodwords

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

The True Cost of Grief in the Workplace



Some people believe that grief doesn't belong in the workplace. Those who have experienced grief know first hand it is virtually impossible to simply leave all those thoughts and feelings at home. Employees will experience grief whether it happens in their personal life and/or in their

professional life when a co-worker or client dies. Grief is not selective -- every member of an organization from board members and the CEO down the entire chain of command will experience it.

Since grieving can place a heavy burden of stress on a person affecting their ability to think and work, co-workers and colleagues are also affected in addition to the corporate bottom line. The Grief Recovery Institute (2003) reports that 1 in 4 employees are grieving at any given time, and the financial cost to business for the death of a family member, colleague, friend, or animal companion alone is \$46.9 billion. By not properly addressing grief in the workplace, organizations are losing productivity and revenue.

For the most part, our society is uncomfortable with openly talking about grief. Many people report going out of their way to avoid the person grieving because they fear saying the "wrong thing." This can lead to feelings of isolation at a time when support is essential. An employee who is grieving and who is not supported at work may spend their work day trying to suppress their emotions and ultimately may find calling off work is easier.

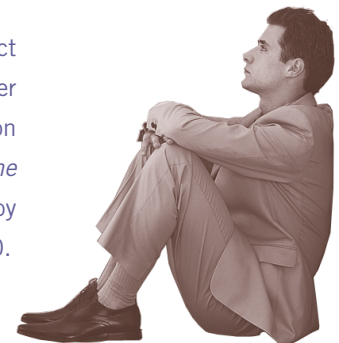
The good news is that there are ways to eliminate the "avoidance approach" to grief within an organization

and replace it with a process of ongoing employee support from supervisors and co-workers that will not only assist the employee in a positive way, but also alleviate many of the costs to the company identified in the above study. Employers who create a supportive workplace environment will find employees appreciate their employer's efforts. Often they feel a heightened sense of loyalty knowing that their employer views them as a whole person.

The Good Grief Center understands an employer's responsibility to meet operational goals while providing their employees with direction, encouragement, and guidance. Grief in the Workplace from the Good Grief Center strikes an effective balance between compassion and good business sense. Our educational and support programs are designed to strengthen the health and well being of each and every employee and the organization as a whole.

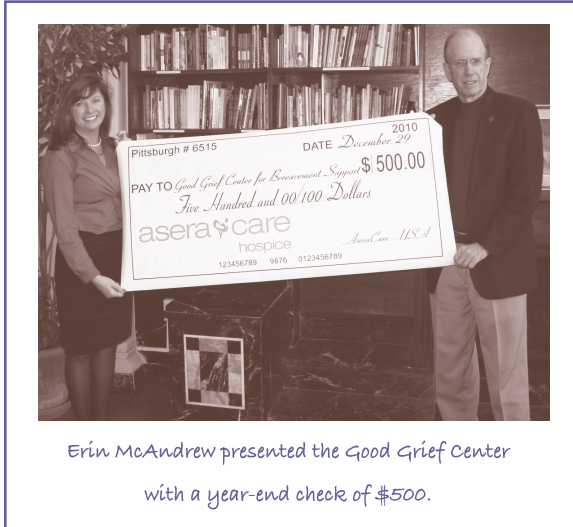
It is the only fully comprehensive bereavement support system in the Greater Pittsburgh region. The program was developed by bereavement specialists to offer both proactive education and support sessions after a death to organizations and their employees. Programs can be tailored to the needs of each organization. Individual or group education and support may be done at the workplace or off sight at the Good Grief Center.

Employers may contact the Good Grief Center for further information about our *Grief in the Workplace* programs, by calling 412-224-4700.



asera^{care} Supports GGC

On December 29, 2010, Erin McAndrew, Executive Director of AseraCare Hospice, presented Interim Executive Director of the Good Grief Center, Geoffrey Stillson, with a year-end check of \$500. Erin stated,



Erin McAndrew presented the Good Grief Center with a year-end check of \$500.

“We feel that the Good Grief Center is aligned with the mission of the AseraCare Foundation which is to enhance the quality of life related to end-of-life issues in the communities that we serve. As community partners AseraCare feels it is important to work together. Our financial commitment to the Good Grief Center is tied directly to the people who are grieving in our local communities and the wonderful job the Center does in offering them support, education, and hope. Contributing financial support to the Good Grief Center ensures that our community is stronger because the Good Grief Center touches so many lives.”

Since 2004, AseraCare has contributed over \$17,000 to the Good Grief Center. AseraCare is one of many countless organizations who turns to the Good Grief Center for additional support on behalf of the families that they serve to ensure that grief support is comprehensive and serves every individual's need, whether that is in the form of community resources, peer support, or support groups. The Good Grief Center is very grateful for the on-going support of the AseraCare Hospice Foundation.

comcast[®] A NEW CORPORATE PARTNER

The Good Grief Center for Bereavement Support (GGC) is pleased to announce its new Corporate Partnership with Comcast. This new initiative of GGC is to seek out partnerships with private corporations in the region who will help support GGC's mission of grief education and support throughout the community.

Comcast has donated \$37,000 in free air time and will run a five minute Newsmakers interview with our Associate Director, Marilyn Chapla. The segment will air 50 times in January at :25 and :55 minutes past the hour on Headline News. The interview may also be viewed by going to on our web site (www.goodgriefcenter.com) or on GGC's Facebook page. The Good Grief Center is most appreciative of this generous contribution by Comcast and looks forward to working with our new partner on additional future endeavors.

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.*

Dear Friends,

It is my privilege to be writing to you for the first time as the Interim Executive Director of the Good Grief Center (GGC). The Good Grief Center is a wonderful organization and community resource that founder Lulu Orr, her board and staff have developed and grown over the last 10 years. Providing a safe place where those who are grieving can receive emotional peer support, grief education, as well as access to additional bereavement support resources -- all free of charge -- is a great mission, particularly in a national culture where grief is so often misunderstood and unsupported. I know you share our passion for this mission and your support over the years has proven to be one of our greatest assets.

I am also pleased to tell you that GGC's funding is secure for this year. Once again we have our wonderful donors and the foundation community to thank for this. However, with the downturn in the economy over the last couple of years, foundations have asked that non-profits, GGC included, increase their revenue from non-foundation sources. In our case, this means that, next year, we must secure a majority of our funding from individuals and corporations. This is a significant challenge, particularly in these tough financial times. Historically, the majority of GGC's funding has come from the foundation community.

To accomplish continued long-term financial sustainability, we must greatly expand our public support base, both with individuals/families and in the corporate community. This requires that we dramatically expand the public awareness of GGC. Your continued financial support will be critical to our successfully navigating this transition. Equally important is spreading the word about what GGC does and how well it is done. If your employer, friends, or contacts have need of our services, please inform them about GGC. This not only expands GGC's support base, but also fulfills our mission of reaching more individuals who could benefit from our services. As always, we welcome your ideas and comments in this regard.

With your continued support and the dedication of our staff and Board of Directors, I am confident that we can strengthen GGC's foundation which will reassure that GGC will be here in the long-term to support those who are grieving the loss of a loved one.

With deep appreciation and gratitude,

Geoffrey Stillson
Interim Executive Director

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Ashford Castle Raffle

Thanks to our very good friends who once again made it possible for us to raffle off a five night stay at the Ashford Castle in Ireland as well as the airfare to get there.

Lulu and Prentiss Orr hosted a wonderful raffle drawing party complete with the best vodka in town – Boyd and Blair, and the best food in town provided by the Fluted Mushroom. Our winners, Paul and Barbara Cass, were not present at the party but were immediately called with the good news. Needless to say, they were thrilled.

Many thanks to everyone who bought/sold tickets or donated to this GGC “fun-raising” event.

GGC Salutes Alison Strome



A special note of thanks to Counseling Psychology Intern, Alison Strome, who joined GGC in August of 2010. Alison has accepted a second semester at GGC which means she will continue with us until late spring. Alison is the type of intern who immediately became part of the GGC team. She is untiring in her efforts to learn, as well as having the ability to offer compassionate support and education to the clients of GGC and the community at large. She continually goes above and beyond the call of duty to ensure the clients' interests are first and foremost. It is no wonder that we are so pleased and grateful to have her through another semester. We all wish Alison continued success in her studies at Chatham University and all of her future endeavors as a professional.

Bereavement Support Groups

Meeting at the Good Grief Center

Evening Open Group 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month
7-8:30 p.m.

Afternoon Open Group 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month
3-4:30 p.m.

Daughters without Mothers Group 1st & 3rd Thursday of each month
7-8:30 p.m.

GGC maintains a comprehensive listing of support groups throughout the region. Please call: 412-224-4700 for information.

Comments? Suggestions?

Send us an email at support@goodgriefcenter.com
or visit our website at www.goodgriefcenter.com

412-224-4700


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



GGC is Proud to Enter **10th** Year of Service!

Over the last 10 years GGC has served the community by providing bereavement resources, referrals, education, support, and hope. Through the years of serving the needs of grieving people in our local community and communities throughout surrounding counties, a myriad of rich history has been compiled in newspaper stories, magazine articles, photographs, and events. As we look back on our *scrapbook*, first and foremost are the people we have served. Do you have a story on how GGC has touched your life that you would like to share with us? If so, please email our Associate Director, Marilyn Chapla, marilyn@goodgriefcenter.com, or call her at 412-224-4700 to learn how your story can be part of GGC's legacy.

Please watch your snail mail/email and be sure to check GGC's web site and Facebook page periodically for updates on our 10th year celebration.

