

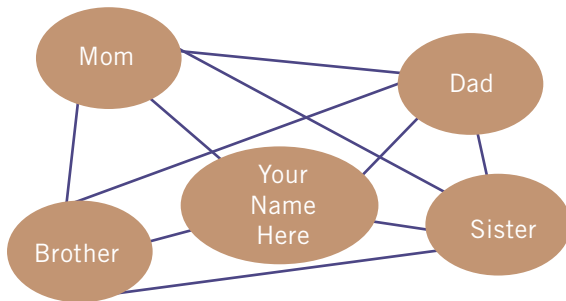


goodwords

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

Grieving as a Family

The death of a loved one will happen to all of us in our lifetime. This universal experience is not only shared on an individual basis, but often within families. Sharing a common loss within the family may be where the commonalities end. Each individual within the family circle will experience their grief in their own unique way. Each member of the family had their own distinctive relationship with the person who died and will respond to the death in their own way.



The above image helps us to understand how the death of a family member can cause a ripple effect throughout the entire family system. Erase one name from the image, representing the family member who died, then erase all of the lines that connect from that person to all of the other family members. The death of that one person can throw the entire family off balance and the family stability can be shaken.

Identities and roles within the family can also be thrown off when a family member dies. For example, if a parent dies the surviving spouse is instantly a single-parent, children may question their safety and may become fearful about the health of the surviving parent. Financial issues may come into play, older children may need to take on more responsibilities, and younger children may express their concerns and fears by acting out.

How can a family cope with such inevitable changes in the life cycle?

- **Be flexible.** The family's ability to be flexible and open to new ideas is important and will effect how the entire family copes and adapts.
- **Communicate.** Communication among family members, how it is exchanged, and with whom is key.
- **Awareness.** Realize that everyone's pain is different and don't expect that everyone in the family is going to feel the same way at the same time.
- **Acceptance.** Accept that children grieve differently than adults; and that age, developmental stage, and life experience all play a role in the mourning process.

We cannot protect children or ourselves from the pain or changes after a death. However, we can teach our children how to feel less overwhelmed. We can find support systems for ourselves and children through relatives, friends, and supportive organizations.

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***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.*

Welcome to GGC's New Home!

If this is the first chance you've had to visit, **come on in.** We've worked long and hard to create a warm, welcoming place where everyone will feel safe and supported in their grief journey.

A picture can say a thousand words and we can't think of a better way to share our new look and our excitement than to show you a few photographs.

Our common area, complete with fireplace, is large enough for our support groups and cozy enough for



Executive Director, Board Members and City Council President Douglas Shields



Library and Common Area



Children's Corner

people who simply walk in and want to use our ever-growing library. Our children's corner provides an area for children to do what kids do best – be themselves.

Our consultation room is private and a perfect setting for staff or volunteers to meet with an individual or a family. Our conference room gives us the perfect venue for trainings and all the wonderful workshops that we will be offering in the coming months.

Remember, if you or someone you know is grieving, the Good Grief Center is here for you at 2717 Murray Avenue in the Shops at the Morrowfield in Squirrel Hill.

(Continued from page 1)

- Model for your children that it is okay to express emotion as part of the grieving process.
- Take advantage of teachable moments to prepare your child to understand death. For example, by caring for a sick family pet and developing rituals around the death.
- Offer your children permission to grieve in their own time and their own way.

Create some family traditions that will help you heal together, allow for family members to grieve openly, accept your child's emotional responses even if they cannot be articulated. Teach your child that it is okay to express emotions of sadness as well as happy memories of the person that died. Remember to find support for yourself as well ~ the kids need taken care of and so do you!

Each family member will carry in their hearts a preserved memory of the person who died. As you and your family learn to reach out to one another in your grief, you can work toward reinventing a "new" family. Remember grief is a process. Be gentle and patient with each other as you ease into new roles and responsibilities within the family. The death of someone loved changes our lives forever.

"What we have once enjoyed and deeply loved we can never lose, for all that we love deeply becomes a part of us."

- Helen Keller

message from the executive director

Dear Friends,

As I sit at my computer writing this letter, I'm keenly aware of the increased activity around me and I'm thrilled to see it. There are many days when I still can't believe it, but here we are – finally all moved in! As you well know this renovation and move took a lot longer than anticipated but I'll say the final result was worth the wait. As you saw in the photos on the previous page, our new home is gorgeous.

There are so many people that helped to make this happen but there is not enough room to thank them all. Just know we are so appreciative to all of you who donated time, talents, funds, furniture, building materials and every little thing that helped to create this warm, welcoming and safe environment.

With all the boxes unpacked and staff and volunteers feeling at home in their work area, we understand now the real work begins! A concentrated effort to spread the word that we are in this new, accessible location happens on a daily basis. However, we need your help, too. Please let your family, friends, neighbors and co-workers know about us – our free services, our compassionate staff and volunteers, the Care Package, Grief in the Workplace, the extensive database of resources throughout the region, Compassionate Connections and of course, our new location. Our website hosts a wealth of information on grief and is a great place to find a listing of all that we offer ~ www.goodgriefcenter.com.

We all experience death, multiple times usually, so please remember that nobody needs to go through it alone – GGC is here for all. Please stop by and visit and know we are most grateful for all your support!

With many thanks to oh so many,

In honor of our opening, Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh proclaimed June 23, 2008 as Good Grief Center Day!

Comments? Suggestions?

Send us an email at support@goodgriefcenter.com or visit our website at www.goodgriefcenter.com 412.224.4700

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THANK YOU.THANK YOU.THANK YOU.THANK YOU

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We couldn't have done it without you! A very special thanks to all of our In Kind Donors.

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|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Renovations: | Opening Celebration: |
| Architectural Clay Products | Bloom's Florist |
| Babcock Lumber Company | Coco's Cupcake Café |
| Bennett Supply | Dreadnought Wines |
| Crescent Supply | The Fluted Mushroom |
| Kress Brothers Builders | FedEx Kinkos – Squirrel Hill |
| Lowe's Waterfront | MCM Communications |
| Service Master | Pipitone Group |
| Sherwin Williams – Aspinwall | Pittsburgh Valet |
| Weisshouse | PRWerks |
| Wellie Interiors | Ryan Sigesmund |
| | Photography |

A very special thank you to Comcast for spotlighting GGC in their Newsmakers Interview. The interview aired approximately 60 times in July and had the potential to reach 675,000 households.



THANK YOU.THANK YOU.THANK YOU.THANK YOU

GGC Volunteers make a difference and so can you!

Congratulations to our Spring Volunteer Class and welcome to the GGC team! Orientation is complete and we are gearing up for our Fall Training and Education Sessions.

Have you thought about volunteering? Is now the time? Is GGC the place? For more information about GGC volunteer opportunities, please visit our web site at www.goodgriefcenter.com or contact:

Marilyn at 412.224.4700, or email her at: Marilyn@goodgriefcenter.com

Applications are now being accepted for our Fall Volunteer Education and Training Sessions Peer Support Volunteers and Organizational Support Volunteers **Sessions begin on October 16th**

To help us give the gift of listening, or to lend support in other ways, please consider joining our Good Grief Center team.

Thanks to the combined efforts and commitment of our new and seasoned volunteers, GGC received more than 900 hours of service since moving into our new home in Squirrel Hill.

We are truly grateful to all our volunteers!



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

3rd Wednesday
of each month
3-4:30p.m.

Daughters without Mothers Group

1st 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.

Be a Good Friend to the Good Grief Center

Now that we're "at home" in our beautiful new facility, with our trademark 'g' on the front door and a compassionate welcome extended to all who come in, it's time for the real work to begin.

The move to our highly visible and easily accessible location on Murray Avenue brings with it a golden opportunity. More than ever before in our history, we have the ability to help build a truly compassionate community. Now we can serve an ever-widening circle of those in need, offering them compassion, education, support and hope - all free of charge.

Won't you be a "good friend" and help us take the next step forward? Your contribution will touch many individuals and families and thereby create a more compassionate community.

Please give as generously as you can and share the story of the Good Grief Center with a friend. It may be the best and most wonderful gift you will ever give!

With great affection and gratitude,

GGC Board of Directors:

Tamara Balliet, LSW

Cheryl Bean

Carole Davis

Maryanne Fello, RN, MEd

Howard Kline, JD

Marguerite Jarrett Marks

Cynthia McCormick

Mark D. Miller, MD

Alex Moser

Ann Plunkett

Janet Simon

Jean Robinson

Melissa Tabbarah, PhD, MPH

Rachel Walton, MSN, CRNP

Barry Young, RPh

Family Bereavement Support Program...In Time for the Holidays

This free program is for families with children and teens to help re-establish and strengthen family bonds including ways to cope with the holidays.

Series begins in November; please call Diana to register – 412.224.4700



good grief center
for bereavement support

2717 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa 15217