

goodwords

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

Grief and the Holidays: Managing an Often Difficult Time

At the Good Grief Center, something we often hear at this time of year is, "How am I going to make it through the holidays?" Just as everyone's grief is unique, so is the way you work through the holidays. Acknowledging and accepting that there will be changes this year are positive first steps to making the upcoming season more manageable.



Acknowledge that the holidays will be different this year and that you are feeling different. You are grieving. Anticipation and worry about the upcoming holiday season is often more troubling than the holiday itself.

Choose what is comfortable for you. You have choices. If attending a big party makes you feel panicky, it's OK. Maybe you will want to skip the party this year. If you choose to attend, planning for some alone time before or during the event can help you work through it.

Communicate with your family and friends. Tell them how you feel, what your fears and concerns are and what you need. Listen to what their thoughts are. You may be surprised to learn your fears and concerns are the same. Talking about options will set the stage for compromise and planning. If Dad always carved the turkey, waiting until mealtime to talk about who should do it now will create tension for everyone. Talking about it and planning before the holiday will make everyone feel more at ease. Communicate that being with everyone may make you emotional, that you may cry and that it is OK if you do.

Expect and prepare for changes. Holding onto expectations that this holiday season will be the same may leave you feeling disappointed. Adjusting your expectations may be helpful. Relax your ideas of "what should be" so that you can make a realistic plan to do what is comfortable for you. Be gentle with yourself.

If you are the one who always prepared the family meal and you're feeling overwhelmed by the thought of cooking, you may consider passing this responsibility to another family member this year.

Preserve the traditions you wish to keep. Consider adding a new tradition and combine the old with the new. Preserving a remembrance of your loved one, whether through a toast or a story of something he or she did, is a lovely way to honor his or her memory while acknowledging his or her absence.

Trust that you will make it through the holidays this year. Even with the differences, you will find the experience bittersweet. There will be moments of joy in celebration of the season. Trust that while this holiday season will be tinged with many emotions, you will be able to join in the celebration more fully in the future. Trust that you will experience joyous holidays again.



Be mindful of the energy grieving and the holidays take. Both are hard work and exhausting. You can take care of yourself by spending your energy wisely, by getting enough rest and by being careful not to overbook yourself with activities. It is OK to say no.

You will get through the holidays but they will be different this year and you may need additional support. Our core service at the Good Grief Center is peer support. Our staff and volunteers are here to listen and support you as you navigate your way through the grieving process and the holidays. It is very easy to access our services and there is no fee. To talk with us on the phone or make an appointment to come into the Center, call 412-461-1776 or 888-GRIEF88 (888-474-3388).





Picture This...In Pictures

We thought the best way to capture the spirit of our Fifth anniversary event was with pictures. For more fun photos please go to www.goodgriefcenter.com and click on our Fifth anniversary celebration.



Emcees Sally Wiggin and Ken Rice excite the crowd by auctioning a Superbowl XL football generously donated and signed by Dan Rooney.



Guest of honor, Martha Perry, laughs at her Warhol-ed picture.



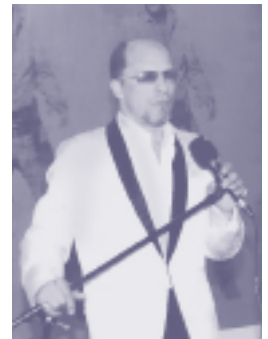
A very successful silent auction featured an eclectic mix of photography donated by local and national photographers.



The top bids for frames went to the ones decorated by Jerome Bettis, Elsie Hillman, Donald Trump and John Irving.



Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl and Lulu Orr.



Dr. Vinnie Vegas entertains us.



Elsie Hillman, Bob Antonelli and Lois Pruitt.



Korkey Noah Kibbey Design created the GGC Logo in a floral design.



Our friends from the Highmark Foundation and The Caring Place with Martha Perry.

message from the executive director

Dear Friends,

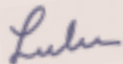
Happy Anniversary GGC! Five years and so much has happened along the way. As I look back, I am amazed by all that we have been able to accomplish together. The Good Grief Center started out as a dream for many of us and now it's a reality that is accomplishing its mission to help those who are grieving.

Our Fifth anniversary celebration, *Picture This*, at the Andy Warhol Museum was a great success. I hope you enjoy the pictures on the previous page. These capture a small portion of this magical night. With over 400 people in attendance, we were able to celebrate the past, bring awareness to our mission and raise funds to support our future endeavors.

I am thrilled to report that *Picture This* brought in \$125,000 in both in-kind and direct contributions. All of this was made possible by so many generous and talented people: the GGC Board and in particular the *Picture This* Committee, the photographers who donated their pieces, corporate sponsors and contributors. We have so many supporters to whom we owe our thanks and gratitude.

Our focus throughout this anniversary year will be to strengthen and expand our programs. We need each of you, our most loyal supporters and friends, to help us do just that. When a relative, friend or colleague loses a loved one, please tell her or him about us. When you need to send an expression of sympathy, please consider our Care Package. When you notice people at your workplace reacting to grief, please call us for our Grief in the Workplace program. When we send an appeal, please respond as generously as you are able. When you think of the Good Grief Center, please remember that we are deeply appreciative of your support.

With many thanks,



Comments? Suggestions? send us an email at
support@goodgriefcenter.com
or visit our website at www.goodgriefcenter.com
412.461.1776

goodnewsgoodnewsgoodnews

Holiday Shopping to Benefit GGC

- **Ten Thousand Villages in Squirrel Hill – November 29**

Find great gifts at this most unique store featuring handmade products from around the world. Join us from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. and 15% of your total sales will go to the Good Grief Center.

- **Journey's of Life Bookstore off Walnut Street (810 Bellefonte Street) – December 2 and 3**

Mention this newsletter and GGC will receive a donation equal to 15% of your purchases throughout the weekend. This much loved, one-of-a-kind store is a wonderful resource for books, gifts, music and more to empower all on life's journey.

Pittsburgh Human Resource Association Conference



The new Care Package, with orchids from the Bidwell Training Center, drew rave reviews from over 400 human resource professionals who attended the conference. Many agreed with Malissa Liebro, of Cardholder Management Services: "I finally found what we are all searching for — how to best extend our company's sympathy." The Care Package is filled with helpful tools to manage grief. It can be sent not only immediately following a death, but also at times such as the holidays or the anniversary of the death as a way to express ongoing sympathy and support.

Making Memories in the Memory Garden

In its second season, thanks to garden volunteers Katherine Turner, Bernie Thomas and the Munhall Garden Club as well as the never-ending support of landscape architect Mark McKenzie, the Memory Garden is maturing into a beautiful, peaceful haven. Nothing proves this point more than the fact that two brides selected the garden as the site for their wedding pictures this summer!

“You alone can do it, but you can't do it alone.”

O. Hobart Mowrer, psychologist and author

Often, sharing our thoughts and feelings with others who are going through a similar experience is a great help. Grief can make us feel isolated and misunderstood even by our friends and families. Support groups offer the opportunity to be with others who are also grieving. With the gentle guidance of a trained facilitator, groups allow participants to comfort and learn from each other.

As the region's only comprehensive grief resource center, we not only sponsor the groups cited here, but we also maintain information on over 150 bereavement support groups and organizations throughout the region. Please call us at 412-461-1776. We can assist you in finding helpful resources close to your home.

*The following groups meet at
The Good Grief Center:*

**Carnegie Library of Homestead
Second Floor**

**510 10th Avenue
Munhall, PA 15120**

*Park on Louise St. (side street between
Library & Munhall Residence)*

OPEN GROUP

**2nd and 4th Thursdays
of each month
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.**

**DAUGHTERS WITHOUT
MOTHERS**

**1st Thursday of each month
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.**

L.O.S.S.

*For parents who have suffered the pain
of miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death*

**1st Monday of each month
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.**

*The groups listed below are
sponsored by The Good Grief Center
and North Hills Youth Ministry
Counseling Center and are held at
their Center at **802 McKnight Park
Drive in the North Hills.***

**YOUNG WIDOWS
AND WIDOWERS**

**1st Saturday of each month
9:30 to 11:00 a.m.**

**YOUNG ADULT
SUPPORT GROUP**

**1st Saturday of each month
11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

**For more information
call 412-461-1776.**

**Or visit our website,
www.goodgriefcenter.com.**

When donating through the United Way, please remember our Contributor Choice #222904.

*The Good Grief Center operates as a non-profit under the Pittsburgh Pastoral Institute,
a 501(c)(3) organization, which serves as our fiduciary agent.*



510 tenth avenue
munhall, pa 15120

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage Paid
Homestead PA
Permit No. 58