



# Bereavement Newsletter

October 2013

200 Fourth Circle • Dodge City, KS

Tel: (620) 227-7209 • Fax: (620) 227-7429

## *The Fall season and grief*

**By Rebecca Young**  
[www.examiner.com](http://www.examiner.com)

It's no secret that the weather affects our mood; so, too, does the fall season affect our feelings of grief. For some, it may be that our loved one passed in the fall and memories are triggered. For others, it may be the sense of loss as the air turns crisper and the days grow shorter. It may be childhood memories of school back in session or perhaps it's the trees shedding their leaves and earth preparing for winter. Some of us may experience depression, anxiety, sleeplessness or restlessness dur-

ing this time of year. Whatever it is, we are inherently sympathetic to our environment.

I listened the other day as some young girls were saying that they loved the comforting feeling they had from pulling on favorite old sweaters, hats and coats. Maybe that's what it is – the familiar comfort of the season, the memories stirred by wrapping ourselves in sweaters worn in years past that cause this season to be difficult for those who grieve. I have often found myself comparing my grief to a heavy coat that I wear all the time. Perhaps it is just that familiarity and the fact that for those

who are grieving, reality sets in that we have lost someone close to us that we thought would always be there.

Fall is the time of year that I lost my daughter – right when school was starting and right when she always pulled out the hooded sweat-shirts, sweaters and jeans. So, on the first day of fall, I will do what I feel honors her and comforts me the most – I will pull on one of her favorite hoodies and feel the familiar warmth that it brings. I hope you, too, wrap yourself in something that your loved one wore and experience all the love that it brings. Do not be afraid of it – embrace it.



## *—Children's Grief Part 4— Sharing Memories*

**By Nancy Renner LBSW CT**

After a loss, its human nature to recall memories. We review our time spent with our special person, think about the “good ol’ days” before our lives changed, summarize for ourselves what that relationship consisted of and re-live the special, happy times and even the more difficult times. This happens naturally for both adults and children.

As we privately process those memories, its important to share them with others. In grief counseling, sharing memories is one of the

cornerstones of healing. Grieving individuals will do well to “tell their story” as a way of making it real and tangible so they can begin to heal.

For children to share memories openly, they must feel accepted and safe, and they must have an example to follow. It is critical that parents, or whoever cares for the child, provide a healthy example of sharing memories.

Although you may experience emotional pain when you share memories, don't avoid discussion about them. Avoidance of emotions associated with grief doesn't make

grief go away, it just delays its effects. Allow your child to see you cry and tell him why you are crying. Talk openly about it. Tell your child you are okay, you just feel sad and he doesn't need to worry about you. Tell him you won't cry long. Hug or physically touch your child during this conversation. Also allow smiles and laughter to surface as you talk about the good times.

You can be a healthy grief role model for your child! As you become comfortable with sharing, so will your child!

# *Men's Grief: It's Time to Get it Out*

By Ron Villano

The emotions of grief are the same for men and women. How and when these emotions surface is what defines each journey. But what I am struck with the most in my practice as a psychotherapist is how powerful this journey is for men.

Men fight showing their emotions under normal circumstances. Now, they have to fight to keep a hold of the emotion when the emotions themselves are mostly out of control.

Women can and often grieve as a group. They can publicly cry, be angry, sad — and then be happy, joyful, upbeat. And when someone asks them why, they are more than willing to let someone in because it is what they have always done. They are used to sharing personal stuff with each other either one-to-one or in groups.

Women bond by talking. Men typically do not.

During the worst parts of my journey, I kept the darkness to myself and now I can see why. The darkness, the questions, the doubt and lack of faith in living was way too scary to look at.

It was just easier to pack it inside.

But packing it into what I call the mind's Garage was no answer either. Eventually, this Garage gets filled and then life is twice as bad as it was when the loss happened.

How can that be possible? On the surface, a father may feel like he is functioning but he is living with only a small percent of his potential. Unconscious energy is being used to keep a tight lid on the grief and all those harsh emotions. And as more energy gets used, less energy is available to keep the conscious living in check.

So, what's the result? Men start to show negative behavior. Anger at little things, frustration at insignificant problems, and bad health habits (addictions, over-active violence) start to become the everyday living. The internal conflict between trying to keep the grief in check and trying to live life again becomes the battle.

Imagine if the strength being consumed by this battle between grief and living was focused on just working through the grief in the first place?

Getting together in groups is an important part of grief for men. Bowl-

ing, cards, movies, sports events. The more time spent outside the home with others will prevent men from feeding into the isolation instinct that will lead to stuffing the grief in the Garage. Unlike women, men bond over shared activities because it always gives a go-to topic and diversion when conversation gets uncomfortable.

Once you begin to open up your Garage, you will find a great relief in letting just a speck of that grief out. Keep on doing things that will give you the opportunity to get together with others and open up, even if it's just for a second. That relief feels good. That good feeling will lead you in the right direction toward living. And in the direction toward peace.

About Ron Villano

Ron Villano, M.S., LMHC, ASAC is the leading expert in working through change. As a father who lost his 17-year old son in an auto accident, he always speaks from the heart. As a licensed psychotherapist and life coach, he counsels others on how to work through difficult times. Visit [www.RonVillano.com](http://www.RonVillano.com) to listen to his featured interviews and for additional information.



## **Men's Tailgate Supper!**

*Learn how to tackle the challenges of life  
after the loss of a loved one.*

**Tuesday, Oct. 29, 2013**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Hospice of the Prairie**

**200 Fourth Circle • Dodge City**

*Jerry Hodges, Grief Coach will lead the discussion*

## *All Is Well*

Death is nothing at all,  
I have only slipped away into the  
next door room,  
I am I and you are you . . .  
Whatever we were to each other,  
that we are still.  
Call me by my old familiar name,  
speak to me in the usual way  
which you always used.  
Put no difference into your tone,  
wear no forced air  
of solemnity or sorrows.  
Laugh as we always laughed at the  
little jokes we enjoyed together.  
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.  
Let my name be ever the household  
word that it always was.  
Let it be spoken without effect,  
without the ghost of a shadow on it.  
Life means all it ever meant,  
it is the same as it ever was,  
there is absolutely  
unbroken continuity.  
Why should I be out of mind,  
because I am out of sight?  
I am but waiting for you,  
for in the interval.  
Somewhere very near  
just around the corner . . .  
All Is Well. . .

## *An Affirmation for Those Who Have Lost*

I believe there is no denying it; it  
hurts to lose.

It hurts to lose a cherished relationship  
with another, or a significant part of  
one's own self.

It can hurt to lose that which has  
united one with the past, or that  
which has beckoned one into the  
future.

It is painful to feel diminish or  
abandoned, to be left behind or left  
alone.

Yet I believe there is more to losing  
than just the hurt and the pain.

For there are other experiences that  
loss can call forth.

I believe that courage often appears,  
however quietly it is expressed,  
however easily it goes unnoticed  
by others; the courage to be strong  
enough to surrender, the fortitude  
to be firm enough to be flexible,  
the bravery to go where one has not  
gone before.

I believe a time of loss can be a  
time of learning unlike any other,  
and that it can teach some of life's

most valuable lessons:

In the act of losing, there is something  
to be found.

In the act of letting go, there is  
something to be grasped.

In the act of saying "goodbye,"  
there is a "hello" to be heard.

For I believe living with loss is  
about beginnings as well as endings.

And grieving is a matter of life  
more than of death.

And growing is a matter of mind  
and heart and soul more than of  
body.

And loving is a matter of eternity  
more than of time.

Finally, I believe in the promising  
paradoxes of loss:

In the midst of darkness, there can  
come a great Light.

At the bottom of despair, there can  
dwell a great Hope.

And deep within loneliness, there  
can dwell a great Love.

I believe these things because  
others have shown the way—others  
who have lost and then have grown  
through their losing, others who  
have suffered and then found new  
meaning.

So I know I am not alone:

I am accompanied, day after night,  
night after day.

---

Sometimes  
in tragedy  
we find our  
life's purpose  
- the eye sheds a tear  
to find its focus.  
~Robert Brault

---



Hospice of the Prairie  
& Prairie Home Health  
has a Facebook page!

"Like" us on Facebook  
to find updates on the latest events  
and programs at Hospice of the  
Prairie & Prairie Home Health  
as well as links to great stories  
and other resources.

### **JOIN US AT THE BEREAVEMENT LUNCHEON!**

Have good conversation and a good lunch with friends at  
Inn Pancake House, 1610 W. Wyatt Earp, Dodge City  
Wednesday, Sept 18, 12 noon  
See you there!

“In the  
confrontation  
between the stream  
and the rock,  
the stream  
always wins...  
not through  
strength but  
by perseverance.”  
--Unknown

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

- Oct. 10 Thursday Night Grief Support Group, 6:30 p.m.; Hospice of the Prairie Meeting Room; Jerry Hodges, facilitator
- Oct. 14 Compassionate Friends Support Group, for families who have experienced the death of a child, 7 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie, Martha McQueen, facilitator
- Oct. 16 Bereavement Luncheon, 12 noon, Inn Pancake House, 1610 W. Wyatt Earp, Dodge City; Dick Robbins, host
- Oct. 24 Thursday Night Grief Support Group, 6:30 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie Meeting Room; Jerry Hodges, facilitator
- Oct. 29 Men's Tailgate Supper, 7:00 p.m., Hospice of the Prairie Meeting Room; Jerry Hodges, Grief Coach

Coming in November—Grief and the Holidays Seminar

BEREAVEMENT NEWSLETTER is a publication of Hospice of the Prairie, Inc., 200 Fourth Circle., Dodge City, KS 67801, (620) 227-7209, [www.hospiceoftheprairie.com](http://www.hospiceoftheprairie.com). Please help us keep our printing and mailing costs down by notifying us if your address has changed or you no longer wish to be on our newsletter list.



Hospice of the Prairie, Inc.  
200 Fourth Circle  
P.O. Box 1298  
Dodge City, KS 67801

