



**LIVING  
WITH**  
*Grief*

**When you lose a loved one, you  
don't just lose a person, you lose  
the relationship, your way of life,  
your hopes and dreams...**

**WOODS COUNSELING & CARE CENTER  
WOODS MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
410-261-3289**

Everyone's grief is unique; it can be an unfamiliar and complex experience, especially if you have lost a beloved family member or an intimate friend.

Grieving involves nothing less than relearning the world of our experience (Thomas Attig, 1996), for we have lost our sense of wholeness -- our connection to our loved one has been severed, leaving a gaping wound.

Grief has its own timetable. For the heartbroken, there is no time-frame for its duration. You cannot "fix" grief, check it off of a to-do list, wish it away, or think (as many who try to be helpful do) that it will go away in months, or a year, or even two. Yes, the pain of loss lessens over time, but grieving is a process. And everyone grieves differently.

You are quite possibly reading this because you are experiencing the very real human pain of grief — the loss of one deeply loved — who helped define your life.

## *Ecclesiastes 3*

**1- For everything there is a season,  
and a time for every matter under heaven:  
2a - A time to be born, and a time to die;  
4 - A time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance...**



Some refer to the three "N's" of grief (it's normal, it's natural, it's necessary) (Kenneth Hauck, Stephen Ministries, St. Louis, MO). We add to these the three "F's (Family, Friends, Faith); three components that will help you navigate the difficult task of grieving.

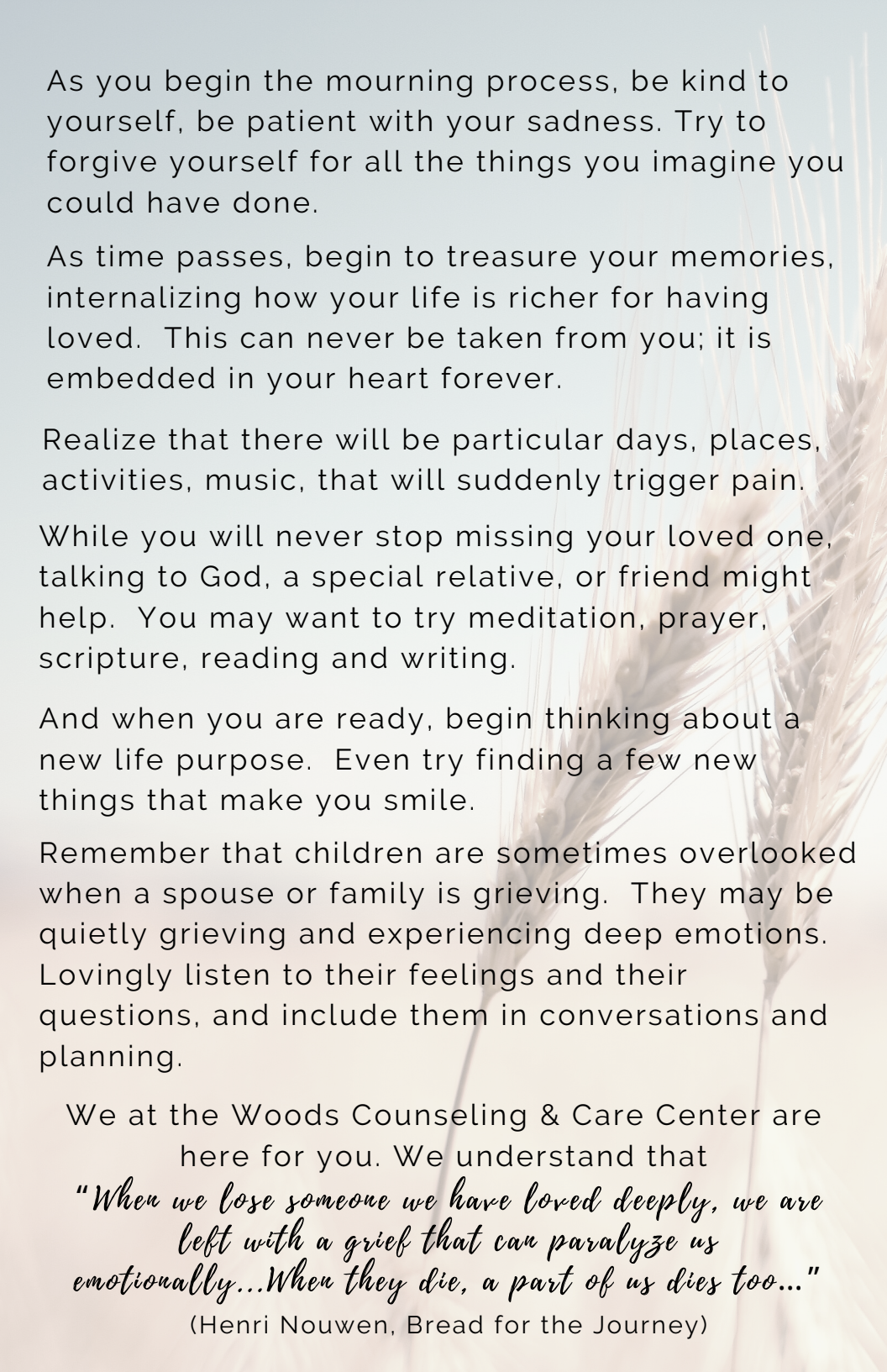
Emotions felt over the loss of a loved one can include:

- Overwhelming sadness
- Anger (at God, at medical failures)
- Guilt (if only I had...)
- Shock, numbness, disbelief (it's a bad dream...)
- Wrenching emotional sorrow (this isn't real; you sense the loved one's presence)
- An inability to focus or concentrate
- Difficulty sleeping (or difficulty staying awake)
- Unpredictable, and sometimes uncontrollable, crying
- Confusion, disorganization

*These feelings, although seemingly overwhelming, are normal.*

If your loss is the result of an accidental death, you may experience more complex feelings — in addition to shock, the loss can feel random, unfair, and cause a raft of "what if, or if only" recriminations.

When grief involves a death by suicide, the process may be complicated by questions and confusion. The therapists and other resources listed in this booklet can offer additional compassionate support.



As you begin the mourning process, be kind to yourself, be patient with your sadness. Try to forgive yourself for all the things you imagine you could have done.

As time passes, begin to treasure your memories, internalizing how your life is richer for having loved. This can never be taken from you; it is embedded in your heart forever.

Realize that there will be particular days, places, activities, music, that will suddenly trigger pain.

While you will never stop missing your loved one, talking to God, a special relative, or friend might help. You may want to try meditation, prayer, scripture, reading and writing.

And when you are ready, begin thinking about a new life purpose. Even try finding a few new things that make you smile.

Remember that children are sometimes overlooked when a spouse or family is grieving. They may be quietly grieving and experiencing deep emotions. Lovingly listen to their feelings and their questions, and include them in conversations and planning.

We at the Woods Counseling & Care Center are here for you. We understand that

*"When we lose someone we have loved deeply, we are left with a grief that can paralyze us emotionally...When they die, a part of us dies too..."*

(Henri Nouwen, Bread for the Journey)



# *Local Resources:*

## **WOODS COUNSELING & CARE CENTER COUNSELORS:**

- Nancy Lincoln Reynolds, M.Div., 410-991-3919  
Licensed Clinical Marriage and Family Therapist
- Tanise Stevens, 202-818-8712  
Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor
- Michael Louis Applebaum, 410-870-5871  
Licensed Certified Social Worker-Clinical
- John Gibbons, Ph.D. 410-544-8507  
Psychologist

## **WOODS COUNSELING & CARE CENTER GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP:**

- Bill Hocking, M.A., Spiritual Director and Grief Counseling  
410-349-0329, bill.hocking@woodsccc.org
- Nancy Sullivan, M.A., Care Coordinator  
443-261-3289, nancy.sullivan@woodsccc.org
- Barbara Gass, M.A. Community Liaison  
443-261-3289, barb.gass@woodsccc.org

## **WOODS MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH:**

- Nancy Lincoln Reynolds, M.Div.  
410-647-2550, nreynolds@woodschurch.org

## **CHESAPEAKE LIFE CENTER:**

- <https://www.hospicechesapeake.org/family-support/about-chesapeake-life-center/>

# *Additional Resources:*

## **BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Loss, Trauma, & Resilience by Pauline Boss
- Here If You Need Me by Kate Braestrup
- Final Gifts by Maggie Callahan
- The Time is Now by Joan Chittister
- Being Mortal by Atul Gawande
- Stephen Ministries Grief Booklets (Series of 4) by Kenneth C. Hauck
- A Grief Observed by C. S. Lewis
- Bread for the Journey by Henri Nouwen
- Understanding Your Grief by Alan D. Wolfelt

## **WEBSITE:**

- [www.grief.com](http://www.grief.com) by David Kessler

## **PODCAST RESOURCES:**

- What's Your Grief with Eleanor Haley and Litsa Williams
- Grief & Rebirth: Finding the Joy in Life with Irene Weinberg
- Grief Works with Julia Samuel
- Grief Out Loud (The Dougy Center) hosted by Jana DeCristofar
- The Mary Mac Show
- Where's the Grief with Jordon Ferber

The thoughts expressed within these resources are those of the providers. They are kindly offered by the Woods Counseling & Care Center as a possible means of enlightening your journey.