



Lake Superior
LIFE CARE & HOSPICE

914 W. Baraga Ave.
Marquette, MI 49855
906.225.7760
www.lakesuperiorhospice.org

September Calendar of Events:

Open Grief Support Groups:

Wednesday, Sept. 8
2:00-3:00 pm
Forsyth Township Senior
Center
Gwinn, MI

Wednesday, Sept. 15
5:30 - 6:30 pm
Lake Superior Life Care and
Hospice Office
914 W Baraga Ave
Marquette, MI

Individual Grief Counseling:

Please Call or email for an
appointment -
906-225-7760
or
Imarttila@
lakesuperiorhospice.org

September 2021 Bereavement Newsletter

This newsletter is usually written for those of us who have lost a loved one and are grieving. This month it is going to be similar - but different. This is a newsletter that can assist people who are supporting the grieving. All of us experiencing grief can either hand it to our supports directly – the straightforward approach, or leave it out for all to see – softer, yet equally beneficial.

Frequently, friends and family are uncomfortable around grieving people. They don't know what to do or say to help and be supportive. This can lead to encounters that can be awkward, or worse, hurtful. At times like this a little education can be a very good thing. We don't know what we don't know.

Dr. Alan Wolfelt has a philosophy he calls "companioning" the grieving. Actually, it isn't really education as much as it is about remembering what to do for each other at all times. We need to be companions to each other. We don't have to be brilliant, an expert, a teacher, a fixer, a judge, the police, or responsible for each other (thank goodness). We just have to be responsible TO each other and there for each other. He puts it very eloquently in his beautiful concept of healing.

"Companioning is about honoring the spirit --- it is not about focusing on the intellect.

Companioning is about curiosity --- it is not about expertise.

Companioning is about learning from others --- it is not about teaching them.

Companioning is about walking alongside --- it is not about leading or being led.

Companioning is about being still --- it is not about frantic movement forward.

Companioning is about discovering the gifts of sacred silence --- it is not about filling every painful moment with talk.

Companioning is about listening with the heart --- it is not about analyzing with the head.

Companioning is about bearing witness to the struggles of others --- it is not about judging or directing those struggles.

Companioning is about being present to another person's pain --- it is not about taking it away.

Companioning is about respecting disorder and confusion --- it is not about imposing order and logic.

Companioning is about going to the wilderness of the soul with another human being --- it is not about thinking you are responsible for finding a way out. "

If we're dealing with grief or not --- *couldn't* we all be better companions?

Another good concept to remember when supporting someone who is grieving, is to ***meet people where they are at***.
Do this by:

Letting go of expectations — allow people to be who they are and to feel what they feel.

Not minimizing or discounting how people feel or what they think — Grief isn't always rational.

Just listening - *REALLY actually listen* — don't feel the need to come up with comforting, helpful or inspiring words.

Not trying to fix, offer solutions, offer different perspectives, judge, shame, or force/rush healing.

Being willing to let pain exist and being willing to sit quietly with the broken-hearted in their pain when needed.

Having patience, offering to do the hard things with or for them, asking what they need and giving space.

Knowing that the smallest things (sending a text or "liking" a social media post) mean a lot and are helpful.

Accepting if a griever is unable to participate in social situations—give them grace to change their minds guilt free.

Not expecting them to explain themselves or provide rationale — ask only with the expectation of understanding.

Staying in touch and contact with the grieving — *Please do not walk away or abandon the broken-hearted.*

With all of this said, PLEASE, as someone who is supporting, remember to be as gentle with yourselves as you are with the grieving. Everyone involved is tender and deserves loving care. *We are all doing the very best we can.*

Peace and Blessings

Lake Superior Life Care and Hospice



PS: If your loved one was in the care of LSLCH, you will receive a phone call from "Arbor Survey" asking for your feedback on our services. The call will appear on your phone from Petoskey, MI. The number will be from 231-347-7110. Your participation and input would be greatly appreciated, so we can continue to improve our care, support and services. Thank you.