

SPRING 2023 Bereavement Newsletter



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

EVENTS

Open Grief Support Groups:

Wednesday 2:00—3:00 pm
Every 2nd Wed of the month
Forsyth Township Senior
Center
165 N Maple St.
Gwinn, MI

Wednesday 5:30—6:30 pm
Every 3rd Wed of the month
Lake Superior Life Care and
Hospice Office
914 W Baraga Ave
Marquette, MI

Thursday 3:00 - 4:00 pm
Every 3rd Thurs of the month
Negaunee Senior Center
410 Jackson St.
Negaunee, MI

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Going forward, newsletters
will be printed and mailed in
the months of April, July, Oc-
tober, December and January

Individual Grief Counseling:

Please Call or Email for an
appointment 906-225-7760 or
[lmarttila@](mailto:lmarttila@lakesuperiorhospice.org)
lakesuperiorhospice.org

Losing a loved one and grieving are painful at any time of the year. However, the spirit of reawakening that marks spring's return may increase the challenge of dealing with our grief. Death and grief are like winter; they can freeze our world. So when spring returns with warmth, renewal, and rebirth, it can conflict with our painful feelings of loss.

Spring marks a thaw. Things begin to move once again, and it can be helpful to move with them. Yes, the pain is there and it is real. But exploring and participating in springtime activities can nurture and warm our spirit. They can help us cope with the pain.

Hopefully, the arrival of spring will bring with it a welcome variety of events that can brighten our days and help us lessen our heartache. Even though it takes fortitude, we can make every effort to attend special occasions that are important parts of life, and frequently happen in the spring— weddings and graduations. Yes, there will be people celebrating at a time when we are feeling low, and it will be bittersweet to think of the person who should be at the happy event with us. However, allowing ourselves to be a part of happiness is okay. We do not have to feel guilty. We can hold both celebration and grief together in our hearts. We can, also, give ourselves permission to leave the celebration, if it becomes too overwhelming.

Spring activities such as planting a small garden, going on a short trip, taking a nature walk, starting a new hobby, spending time with family and friends, meditating or even cleaning can help foster our healing. When we take part in life, we allow it to take ahold of us and help it start to diminish our sorrow. Remember, we are in control, not grief (even when it doesn't feel this way).

Springtime is upon us. It is OK to make it our time to re-embrace life and start healing and adjusting to our loss. Consider making this change of season an opportunity to give yourself permission to start or to continue to mend your broken heart. *It is also important to remember that we do this at whatever pace is comfortable for ourselves.*



The “Continuing Bonds” theory of grief may help ease us into springtime and healing. This theory was introduced by researchers in 1996 to question the previous models of grief which embraced “stages”, “acceptance”, “closure”, and goals of “letting go” “getting over” and “moving on” from grief.

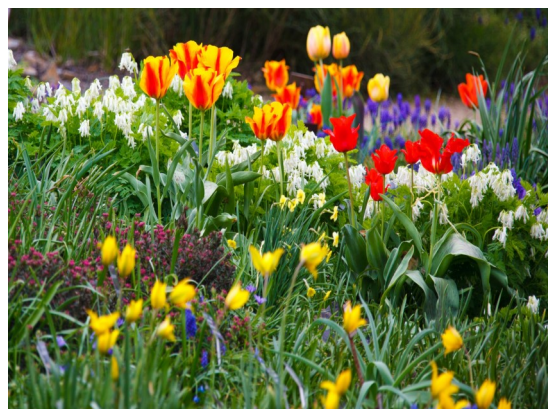
The continuing bonds theory, does *not* focus on moving on, starting over, compartmentalizing our loss, or detaching. Rather, when a loved one dies, we slowly find ways to adjust and redefine our relationship with them. We allow and foster a continued bond with them that will endure, albeit in different ways and to varying degrees, throughout our life. Everyone does this in their own way, but continuing our relationship is seen as a healthy and normal part of the grief process. *Our loved one has died, our love for them hasn't.* Our relationship with them can continue in a modified way. This lasting attachment is seen as a natural and human response to loss. It is natural for human beings to be attached, even in death. With all of this said, at times, if a relationship has been harmful, hurtful or troubling, detachment may be best for healing. Again, everyone's needs and relationships are unique.

The continuing bonds theory has four main takeaways. First, it acknowledges that grief is ongoing. It becomes a part of us. With time and attention, it mellows and becomes a more peaceful and less painful presence. However, complete “closure” is rare. Secondly, it supports and validates the idea that we, as bereaved people, remain connected with our loved ones, often for our entire lives. We don't leave them behind—they are in our hearts always, even as we continue to live and enjoy our lives again. Thirdly, continuing bonds theory may describe many of our grief-related behaviors. We frequently, naturally find ourselves holding on to our loved ones possessions, conversing with our deceased loved one, being in places where we feel close to them, thinking and dreaming about them and asking for their guidance. These are not pathologic responses, nor do they mean we're crazy in any way. Finally, continuing bonds theory research says that not only are these behaviors normal, but they may actually help us cope with grief. We don't need to be worried or think that we are “stuck” either in the past or on our grief journey. Rather, we are processing, doing what comes naturally as human beings and healing our broken hearts.

Please keep this in mind as you progress from the frozen, grayness of winter and grief into spring. Also, know that we at

Lake Superior Life Care and Hospice

wish you continued peace and healing.



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.