

Winter 2025 Edition

UPCOMING "APPETIZER & DESSERT POTLUCK INFORMATION

FEBRUARY 22, 2025 3-5pm

Please sign up for your dish in advance so we are sure to have a variety of food, and we can enjoy our time together. Be on the lookout for your email for the sign up link.

Where: 1177 Remington Trace Drive, Port Charlotte, FL 33953

We know the Holidays and the New Year is not an easy thing to navigate with such profound grief, but.....YOU DID IT!

"You're braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think." -A. A. Milne.

New Year's Resolutions for the Bereaved
By Tanya Lord

This year I resolve to:

- ♥ Not put a time limit on my grief. Loving someone means loving them for my life time whether they are physically present or not.
- ♥ Tell their stories, the happy and the sad, they will live on through me.
- ♥ Encourage others to share memories.
- ♥ Teach others that they cannot "make" me cry, tears are only an external expression of how I am feeling all the time.
- ♥ Understand that crying or otherwise expressing my pain is healthy and normal. "Doing well" means expressing my feelings.
- ♥ Understand that others will not understand my pain and it isn't fair to expect them to do anything but listen.
- ♥ Recognize that asking for help from those that love us is a really a gift that we give to them.
- ♥ Help others, reaching out to others in pain will help me to heal.
- ♥ Do something nice for myself every day.
- ♥ Know that if today I can not do everything that needs to be done, tomorrow is another chance to get it done.
- ♥ Cry when I need to, laugh when I can and to not feel guilty about either one.
- ♥ Let go, bit by bit, of the guilt, regret and anger because I know holding on to these emotions can be so damaging.
- ♥ Take a risk and let others into my life and heart.
- ♥ Take care of my physical, emotional and spiritual health.
- ♥ Reinvest in life a little bit each day...

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MONTHLY MEETINGS

Third Tuesday of the month
Next Meeting:
January 21, 2025
6pm

LOCATION:

Westport Community Room
1177 Remington Trace Drive
Port Charlotte, FL 33953

LEADER:

Beth Wooten

bethwootenlcsw@gmail.com

(469)-475-1650

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Dawn Stephens

Morningofthesun@aol.com

Our meetings provide a supportive space to grieve, remember, and honor your child, grandchild, or sibling. We are happy to have you in attendance!

Therapy....with a Twist!

Back in November, Group Members Dawn, Valerie, Karla, Beth, and Heather took a trip to SMASH IT PC!

They all had a blast getting out their emotions and smashing dishes, bottles, furniture, doors, and more. Yes - you can throw it at the wall! Yes - you can smash things into bits! Yes - you can listen to rage music and get your anger out! It was very therapeutic for all!

We encourage you to utilize this local tool.

Smash it PC

3280 Tamiami Trail Unit 23

Port Charlotte, Florida 33952

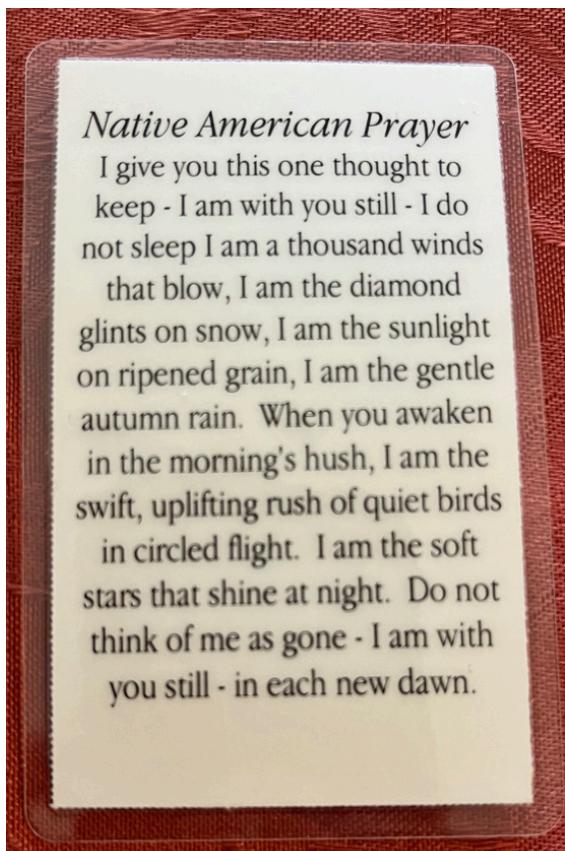
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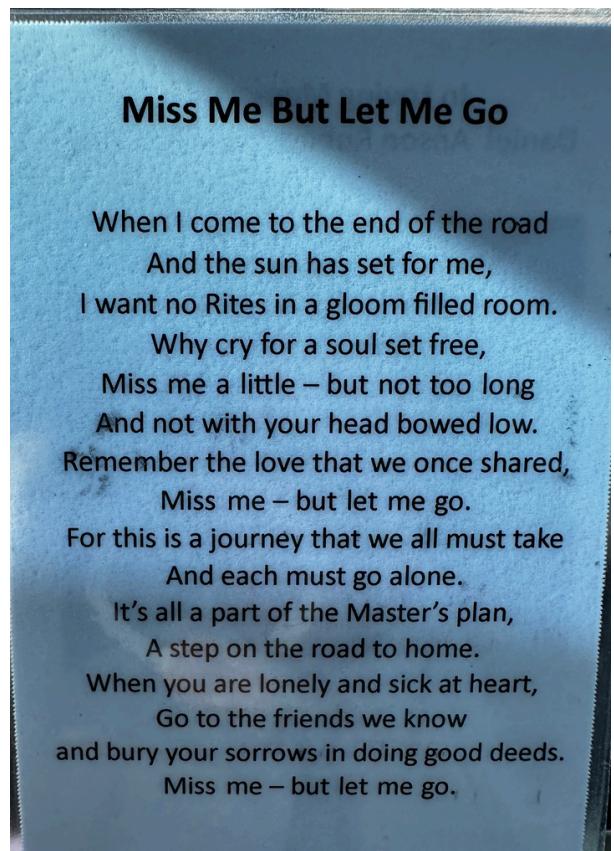
Thank you to everyone who attended our Candlelight Service to honor all our beloved Children, Grandchildren, and Siblings. Your presence brought warmth and comfort, reminding us that we are not alone in our grief.



Heather Pope's Reading at the Candlelight Ceremony.



Valerie LaBoy's Reading at the Candlelight Ceremony.





ALWAYS WITH LOVE, WE REMEMBER THEM



Jenn and Eric Winship honor their son, **Jakeb**.

Arlene Spadone honors her granddaughter, **Olivia**.

Briana Murphy honors her daughter, **Lexi**.

Karla Relyea honors her daughter, **Megan**.

Beth & Steve Wooten honor their daughter, **Kenna** and unborn **grandchild**.

Gail and Ken honor their sons and grandson, **Tony**, **Jason**, and **Jay**.

Heather Pope honors her son, **Eric**.

Pat Haupt honors her granddaughter, **Lauren**.

Kim and Pat honor **John** and **Jesse**.

Christine honors **Jakeb**.

Irene Ploskina honors her son, **Mikey**.

Dawn Stephens honors her son, **Spencer**.

Valerie LaBoy honors her son, **Daniel**.

Linda Goodwin honors her son, **Trey**.

Cynthia Mascola honors her son, **Michael**.

Dorothy Gray honors her son, **Chuck**.

Pamela McMinn honors her daughter, **Danielle**.

Bonnie Car honors her son, **Troy**.

Denise Rado Amendola honors her daughter, **Dana**.

Linda Wildes honors her son, **Max**.

Francisco Villafane honors his son, **Jomar**.

Robin and Richard Server honor their daughter, **Brooke**.

Sherri Pinna honors her son, **Ryan**.

Angela Daubaras honors her daughter, **Melanie**.

Irene Ploskina honors her son, **Michael**.

Harry Moore honors **Buster**.

Beverly Mott honors **Benjamin**.

Chuck Henneke honors his daughter, **Kelly**.

Jo Marie Cook honors her sons, **Gregory** and **James**.

Monika Kozaka honors **Isabella**.

Pamela Scholund honors **Steven**.

Stacy Becker honors her son, **Ryan**.

Joni and Tom honor their daughter, **Kellie**.

Mae Serrano honors **John**.

Judy Dawley honors **Chris**.

Tammy Brooks honors **Tuano**.

Charise & George Augustine honor **Tiffany**.

Mialy Garcia honors her brother, **Aiden**.

Melissa Jayne honors her son, **Aiden**.

Michelle Roy honors her daughter, **Mikayla**.

Mike and Ellen Stevens honor their son, **Ryan**.

TAKE THE LOVE

Take the love you had for me
and turn it into laughter
turn it into blinding light
to shine on you thereafter

Take the love you have for me
and show it to the world
something so amazing
needs to blossom and unfurl

Take the love that made us
keep it burning bright
let that fire guide you
let it warm you through the night

Take the love you shared with me
and spread it out with gladness
my life will not have been in vain
if you can fight the sadness

Take the love my darling
it's yours to carry on
grow that love forevermore
and then I won't be gone.

Written By: Donna Ashworth

Please Don't Tell Me to Move On

Posted on September 17th, 2024

Written By: Anne Peterson on TCF Website

I have a Master's Degree in grief. Not a real one, but believe me, I should have an honorary one.
And one thing I know for sure. Grieving stinks.

All of a sudden you're invited to a party you never wanted to attend. But there are no balloons,
no confetti, the only thing being thrown around are your emotions.

There are no tears of joy, but plenty of tears nonetheless. And what makes things worse are
some of the things people will say.

“You need to move on.”

If someone lost a leg, would we expect them to walk anyway?

If they lost an arm, would we put a bag of groceries in their arms and still expect them to act as
if nothing had happened?

Moving on implies that the person is able to. Sometimes they are not. Pure and simple.

The truth is we've been fed a bunch of myths regarding grief. Books have been written with
tidy little formulas and time frames. The problem is grief doesn't fit nicely into little boxes.

Grief is messy.

“I know how you feel.”

Even if we've gone through the exact same circumstance, because we're all different people,
we don't really know how someone else feels. When someone says this, it takes the focus off of
the griefer and onto the other person.

“You can always have another child.”

This was actually told to a friend of mine who lost an infant. Brené Brown has done extensive
research on empathy. She said when we are talking to someone and we use the words “at
least...” we are minimizing the person's pain. We are silver-lining their cloud. And when that
happens, the person who is hurting no longer feels free in their feelings.

I have found that even those who have faith still can say things that are not helpful to the
griefer.

Perhaps it's just that everyone wants the person to go back to how they were before this
death.

But the truth is, they will never be the same. When you lose someone who was a big part of
your life, you are forever changed.

Grief on both sides

When a friend or family member loses a loved one, you will also feel loss because the griefer is
changed. You miss the person they used to be. You miss interacting like you used to. So, in that
sense, you are actually grieving too.

But if we would just remember that the griefer didn't choose any of this, maybe it would be
enough to get us to pause before anything is said.

Job's comforters did okay till they opened their mouths. But we still have to give them credit
for showing up. Sometimes people subtract themselves from the lives of those who are
grieving. This results in the griefer feeling abandoned on top of feeling great loss.

What should you say?

What does a person in grief need to hear? What would help?

Let me just say, there are no perfect words. But there are three things you can give the person in grief, three things that may help tremendously.

1. Give them your presence. You don't have to say anything, but just showing up says tons. Especially if you come with no expectations.
2. Give them grace. Let them talk if they need to, let them sit in silence if that will help. Just accept where they are. And if they pull back, don't take it personally. It isn't about you. They are just treading water.
3. Give them your ears. When they are ready to talk, let them talk. Let them cry. Grievers fear their loved one will be forgotten. Maybe you can share a memory you have of their special person. Or maybe you could encourage them to share one. They will never run out of things to say about him/her; they just need someone to share it with.

Loss

Life has many losses. My brother and I are the only two remaining people in our family. I have lost my sister to domestic violence, one brother to cancer, another brother to a heart attack. I've had a miscarriage, lost my father when I was 24 and my mother when I was 16.

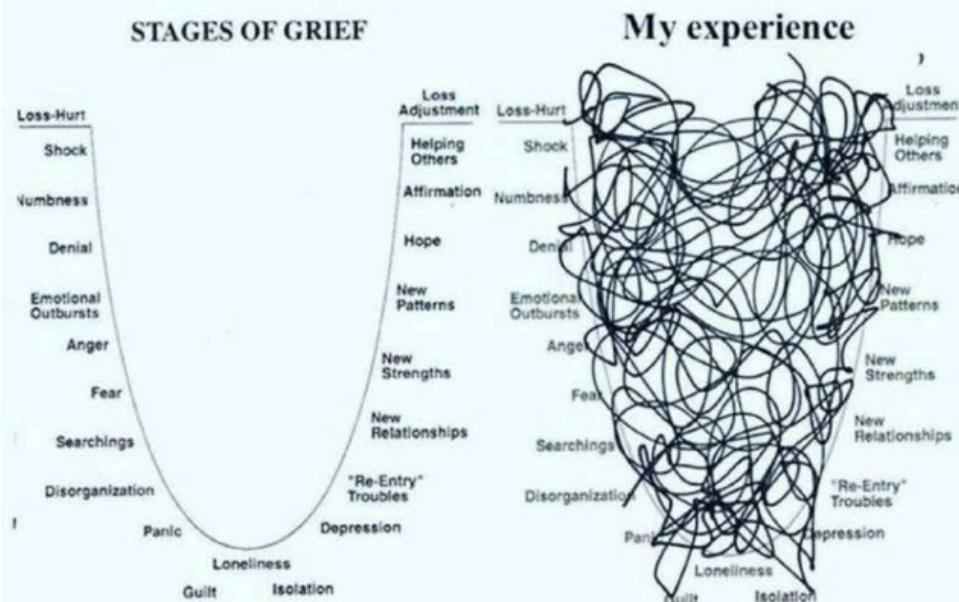
Truly, one of the hardest losses was that of my sweet granddaughter, Olivia, who was just 14 months old. They say a parent should never have to bury a child. The same can be said about a grandparent. Not only do I grieve Livie, but I watch the pain my son and his wife experience, as well as her siblings.

Grief is excruciating. There are no easy answers when those we love are hurting. But we can show up and give support to those we love who are grieving.

There's a story told of an elderly man who lost his wife. While the neighbors gathered to pay their respects, Johnnie asked if he could go next door for a little while. The parents looked over and saw their son sitting next to their friend and neighbor.

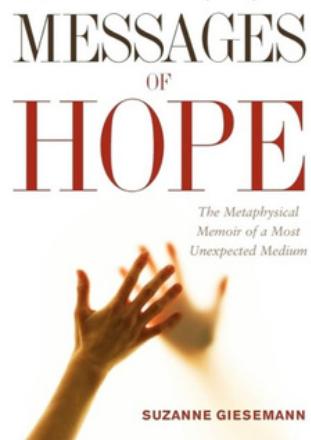
When Johnnie returned home, his parents asked him, "What did you say to our neighbor?" "Oh, I didn't say nothin'," Johnnie replied, "I just helped him cry." This little boy had the right idea. All of us can do that.

Healing Is Not Linear



The stages of grief are not linear, and there is no timeline. There is no "right" way to grieve.

Book Recommendations:



Have you tried Journaling?

We can become more self-aware through journaling. Putting our thoughts into words helps us express ourselves better by labeling how we are feeling, especially when its complicated grief. In turn, this can help us better communicate our feelings with others and be better understood.

Here are some prompts:
“Today I am really missing....”
“The hardest time of day is....”
“A comforting memory of you is....”



The North Port Chapter is now established with a bank account and Treasurer. When love gift donations are made to your local chapter in loving memory of your child, at the same time it is helping to fund the work of your local TCF chapter. Each chapter is run by Volunteers. If you wish to donate, checks can be made out to: North Port Compassionate Friends.

