

Bereavement Group Guidelines

The basic “rules” or guidelines for how our group will run and what is expected. Group will be via Zoom for 1 hour per week. It is expected everyone leave their videos on and mic muted until asked to speak. The group meets for 8 sessions. You are encouraged to attend all 8 sessions regardless of when you join the group as this is an opened group.

- 1. Confidentiality: Whatever is shared within the group remains confidential. Share with others outside the group only what you have learned about yourself.**
- 2. Respect:** It is important to respect your own grief as well as others. Every relationship and loss is different and therefore people will respond differently. This is ok but is also why grief can be a lonely process. There is no one or simple path to follow. It is important to respect everyone’s right to grieve in their own way. We can compare, but cannot judge. It is also important to respect the time you and others are giving to work on your grief by joining a group.
- 3. Advice:** We are here to share personal feelings and current concerns but are not here to fix problems. You are welcome to ask questions, make suggestions.
- 4. Freedom of Speech:** You may choose to share or remain silent. No one will be put on the spot or forced to talk, but everyone who feels comfortable sharing will be given that chance. Make every effort not to interrupt when someone is speaking. At times, the leader may interrupt so that everyone has the opportunity to share.
- 5. Feelings:** Feelings are neither right nor wrong; they just are.
- 6. Concern and Caring:** Because concern and caring for each other is an integral part of the group process, please let us know if you will be missing a session or if you decide not to continue. The phone number to call is
- 7. Each person’s grief is unique.** While you may share some commonalities in your experiences, no two of you are exactly alike. Consequently, respect and accept both what you have in common with others and what is unique to each of you.
- 8. Grief is not a disease, and no “quick-fix” exists for what you are feeling.** Don’t set a specific timetable for how long it should take you or others to heal.
- 9. Feel free to talk about your grief.** If, however, someone in the group decides to listen without sharing, please respect his or her preference.

10. **There is a difference between actively listening** to what another person is saying and expressing your own grief. Make every effort not to interrupt when someone else is speaking.
11. **Thoughts, feelings and experiences shared in this group will stay in this group.** Respect others' right to confidentiality. Do not use names of fellow participants in discussions outside the group.
12. **Allow each person equal time** to express himself or herself so a few people don't monopolize the group's time.
13. **Attend each group meeting and be on time.** If you decide to leave the group before this series is complete, be willing to discuss your decision with the group.
- 14 **Avoid "advice giving" unless it is specifically requested by a group member.** If advice is not solicited, don't give it. If a group member poses a question, share ideas that helped you if you experienced a similar situation. Remember that this group is for support, not therapy.
15. **Recognize that thoughts and feelings are neither right nor wrong.** Enter into the thoughts and feelings of other group members without trying to change them.
16. **Create an atmosphere of willing, invited sharing.** If you feel pressured to talk but don't want to, say so. Your right to quiet contemplation will be respected by the group