

Center Highlights

From the Founders-



Fatigue, stomach aches, shortness of breath, loss of hope, restlessness, withdrawal, forgetfulness, irritation, anxiety, disbelief, boredom, despair, avoidance, nightmares, paranoia, self-blame, inability to concentrate, sleep and appetite difficulties, aggressiveness, increased illness, reevaluation of life's priorities... this is a partial list of grief symptoms that could go on and on. When you ask a person to define grief, they usually describe it as sadness and crying. Every now and then they mention anger or depression. Grief is so much more than that.

The above list reflects a few of the multiple reactions that most people experience when grieving the death of someone they love. The ripple effects of the grief response filter into all areas of a person's life. Physical reactions, behavioral and cognitive changes, emotional responses and a crisis of the spirit are often what grief demands of us. It is part of the human condition to grieve, nearly all of us will at some point in our lives. The question is, "Will we pay attention to what is happening and make taking care of ourselves a priority?"

It is a known fact that unaddressed grief results in lower productivity at work, difficulties in school (both academically and behaviorally), increased medical concerns and a higher dissatisfaction with life in general. We also know that 'grief waits for you', meaning you cannot ignore it long term without it negatively impacting your life.

Sometimes grief can be helped with warm cups of tea between friends, long jogs in the park, projects involving hammers and nails or counseling sessions/group support meetings with trusted professionals. Whichever way one chooses to deal with grief, know that it is much, much more than just sadness and crying.

Shirley and Christine

Shirley and Christine
Fellows in Thanatology -
Death, Dying and Bereavement



Center for Loss and Bereavement's
Inaugural Golf Outing
September 15, 2008

The Center is looking forward to hosting our first annual golf outing at the Lederach Golf Course. You are invited to our website, www.bereavementcenter.org, to access additional information about this event.

A follow-up about the event will be included in our Spring 2009 newsletter.



LEDERACH
GOLF CLUB

SEASONAL SUPPORT GROUP PROGRAM for ADULTS

Support groups gather individuals with similar circumstances and types of loss into a circle of support and encouragement. Specific groups offered at the Center are determined by the number of adults registered (at least 6) and are not limited to the categories listed below. Most meetings are scheduled once a week for six weeks with some offered once a month. Structure includes discussion and supportive sharing in an atmosphere of mutual respect and hope.

Fall Session: Begins 9/29
Holiday Session: Begins 11/17

Late Winter Session: Begins: 2/23
Spring Session: Begins 4/27

Loss of Spouse or Partner – Various groups based on age or circumstances for men and women.

Support for Suicide Loss – For any adult whose life has been affected by suicide.

Adult Loss of a Parent – For adults who have experienced the death of a parent or parental figure.

Motherless Daughters – For women, ages 21 and older, who have experienced the death of a mother.

Young Adult Loss – For young men and women of post high school age to late 20's who have experienced a death.

Grieving the Loss of a Sibling – For adults who have experienced the death of a sibling.

Support for Caregivers – For adults who are or have been in the role of caring for another.

Chronic Illness and Disability Support - For adults who are affected by chronic illness or disability

Monthly Men's Loss of Spouse or Partner Support – For men who are coping with the death of a spouse/partner.

NEW!

Monthly Loss of a Child Support– For parent(s) who have experienced the death of a child who was an older teen or adult. 3rd Thursdays: 9/18, 10/16, 11/20, 12/18, 1/22, 2/19, 3/19, 4/16, 5/21, 6/18 7:00 pm - 8:15 pm

Companions for the Holidays – A general bereavement group for any adult coping with a death, providing support and encouragement during the holiday season. Mondays: 11/17, 11/24, 12/1, 12/15, 12/22, 1/5 7:00 pm – 8:15 pm

There is a screening process before entering a group. A registration form and fee for the session are required. In our experience, a support group program tends to be most beneficial to a participant if at least 4 to 6 months has passed since the time of death. This may vary due to individual circumstances. Counseling is available at any time.

Call 610-222-4110, ext. 118 for a brochure or to register.

Also at the Center:

Local chapter of **Parents of Murdered Children** – Held the 1st Sunday of every month, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Call for contact name and number.



The Center uses volunteers to help with several mailings throughout the year.



Camp Millie, held in June, gives trained volunteers, like Jake Marron, an opportunity to be Buddies to grieving children.

Looking for a different kind of Volunteer Experience?

Reasons to Volunteer at the Center for Loss and Bereavement

- Meet new people
- Learn something new
- Explore career possibilities
- Fulfill education requirements
- Feel good about yourself

For more information about volunteer opportunities at the Center, please contact Beth Douglass
610-222-4110, ext. 101
bad@bereavementcenter.org.



Two Nello's Corner volunteers, John Shane and Elizabeth Lerch, are honored for three years of service as group facilitators at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner.



Helping Hands volunteers assist with behind-the-scenes preparations for groups, camp or special events.



THE CENTER FOR LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

Children's Bereavement Program - Nello's Corner



Nello's Corner Family Picnic - A Celebration of Thanks and Memories

The Center for Loss & Bereavement held its annual *Nello's Corner* Family Picnic on May 28th at the Central Perkiomen Valley Park in Schwenksville, PA. This year's event marked a 5 year milestone as we honored Nello and Andrea Naticchione, whose son, Nello IV, is the inspiration for our children's bereavement program and whose Memorial Committee continues to help the Center to provide the program free of charge. Past and present *Nello's Corner* families and volunteers gathered at the park to meet the Naticchione family, hear the touching story of Nello and reconnect with old friends. A wonderful picnic dinner was provided by All About Catering. At dusk, the group gathered in a large circle to light candles, held by Nello's family members, in memory of those who have died. Families expressed sincere appreciation for the occasion and the opportunity to share about the impact the Center has had on those who support and participate in the program.



Pete Naticchione passes the light of Nello's candle to a program participant.



The family of Nello Naticchione, IV



Group participant shares a poem he wrote in memory of his wife.

What children find most helpful about peer support:

"Talking about my person who died"

"Talking to other kids"

"Feeling like other people are going through what I'm going through"

"Feeling others understand"

The *Nello's Corner* bereavement program of the Center provides a safe place for children, teens and their families to give and receive support, validate feelings and thoughts, and find hope for healing. Groups are held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for specific ages. Call to register.

What adult participants find helpful about the program:

"Open discussion and support"

"Being with others who are going through a loss"

"The group was small enough to be intimate and share feelings in a non-judgmental way"

"Learning my child's behaviors since the death were normal"

WISH LIST

Our Children's programs are currently in need of the following items to help replenish our craft and game supplies:

- Avery Dark T-Shirt transfers
- Colored tissue paper
- Construction paper
- Boxing gloves
- Beads
- Clear contact paper
- Model Magic clay
- Rice
- Tea lights
- Dress up clothes
- Nerf basketball set
- Balloons (assorted colors)
- Tempera paints
- Fabric markers/paint
- Giftcards to Michael's or AC Moore craft stores; Walmart

THANK YOU!

Coming Up - Volunteer Facilitator Training Course

October 10th, 11th and 18th
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

For all who wish to volunteer with the children of *Nello's Corner* and Camp Millie

"Volunteering... is a very rewarding experience. I love being here and hope I can be here for years to come. Just knowing I can help the kids even a little bit is very rewarding for me."

-*Nello's Corner* Volunteer

Application is available on the website or by calling 610-222-4115

Please consider joining our team!



THE CENTER FOR LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

Children's Summer Camp - **Camp Millie**

One of our Center's Summer Highlights- CAMP MILLIE 2008 – It was a BLAST!

*"Some children went to camp to see
Just what goes on at Camp Millie.
It's lots of fun for you and me.
It's Beach Blast time at Camp Millie."*



Thirty-two campers "surf" into camp, getting to know one another and their stories of loss with the support of twenty-eight volunteers.



*"The friends right here with you and me,
They understand and help us see.
We're not alone, we all agree!
It's Beach Blast time at Camp Millie."*



Campers dove into the "Ocean of Emotions" that can accompany grief. Much support and comfort was found in spending time with *Clara*, the Center's certified therapy dog, who participated daily in camp activities and offered unconditional love, licks and hugs!



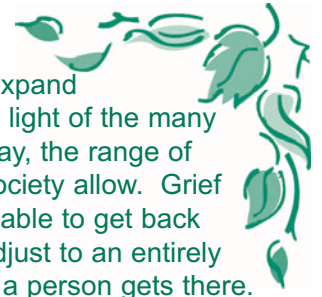
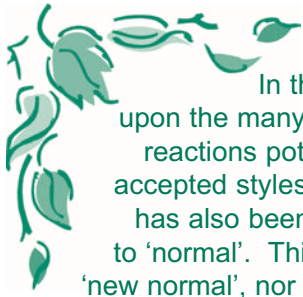
In addition to eight staff members, the Center welcomed Ashley March as camp intern. Ashley is a sophomore studying psychology at Stonehill College in MA. She participated in all aspects of camp and facilitated several activities during the week.

Our campers were encouraged to use time at camp to express creatively what their special person means to them. Some chose to create a hula dance, do scrapbooking, decorate a cement stepping stone or write "messages or poetry in a bottle". Such activities promoted conversation and connection.

Saying goodbye is a significant part of Camp Millie. A celebration lunch was provided by the Center's Board of Directors on the last day and enjoyed by all. One week following camp, the preview of the Camp Millie DVD was shown during an ice cream social. It captured the essence of what this unique bereavement camp experience is all about and gave the campers a final chance to say goodbye.

Our thanks to the volunteers of Camp Millie 2008 for their dedication, time and talents: Brad Brady, Michaela Brass, Travis Brown, Jason Elrod, Shannon Elrod, Tom Elrod, Jean Flanagan-Termine, Barbara Frankel, Amy Gowing, Carol Hale, Stephanie Hartman, Kelly Hornack, Arlene Kilcoyne, Sarah Lebo, Stacy Lukens, Joanna MacKnight, Kathie Makowski, Jake Marron, Annie Moyer, Robb Muse, Laura Reynolds, Sandra Ritchie, Alison Seponara, Sherry Smith, Lynn Vafides, Claudia White, Jessica Wills, Connie Fretz and Karen Bottger. **Also, thanks to our behind-the-scenes helping hands volunteers:** Heidi, Rachel, Madeline, Gretchen and Dillon Alderfer, Dot Chmielewski, Christopher, Caroline and Steven Douglass, Jean Flanagan-Termine, Julie Harris, Kelly Hornack, Alison Seponara, Brooke Childress, Verna Seiler and Ginny Stone.





In the Founder's note, a wide variety of grief reactions are mentioned to expand upon the many ways a person's life can be impacted by the death of a loved one. In light of the many reactions potentially faced, how do people cope with loss? In the past and still today, the range of accepted styles to cope with grief has been frequently bound by what the norms of society allow. Grief has also been viewed as something that needs to be endured until the bereaved is able to get back to 'normal'. This view does not recognize that a bereaved individual's life needs to adjust to an entirely 'new normal', nor does it leave room for the variation in individual differences as to how a person gets there.

Today we live in a blended and culturally rich society, with much variation in social, cultural, spiritual, economic, and personal needs to be considered for each individual and family facing loss. Within each family and system of loved ones, there are bound to be different coping styles and expectations of what grief 'should' look and feel like. Given these potential differences, the counselors at the Center help individuals and families view grief through more flexible lenses, focusing less on what may seem right or wrong and more on what is adaptive or maladaptive for the individual and others affected by the loss. We support grievers in what can be an everyday struggle to find ways to experience joy in life again, while honoring the continued bonds with those who have died.

Our Center's clinicians walk alongside the bereaved on their path of grief, using contemporary theories that allow for unique differences in providing a universal guiding process for all. Our newest professional training, **Understanding the Grief Process: What's In, What's Out** is designed to take a more extensive look at these grief models and how they have refined former more restrictive views of the grief process.



ROUND TABLE PROFESSIONAL TRAININGS



Seating is limited, so be sure to contact us to reserve a space

Are We There Yet? Exploring the Path of Anticipatory Mourning and Life Threatening Illness

Thursday October 23, 2008 9:00 to 12:30

This workshop will explore the various dimensions of anticipatory mourning as it relates to coping with life threatening illness. Our discussion will focus on the characteristics of anticipatory mourning from the view of both the ill person and his/her intimates. This workshop is designed to help professionals who are engaged with persons with life threatening illness and/or their families to recognize the experience of these families as they attempt to face the prospect of the death of their loved one.



Understanding the Grief Process: What's In, What's Out

Thursday November 20, 2008 9:00-12:30

This workshop is designed for professionals who are interested in exploring current perspectives on the grief process. It will focus on new insights and attitudes regarding models of grief that have emerged in the field of death and dying. Participants will be exposed to these new perspectives in an interactive, small group environment. Cultural and gender styles of grieving will be introduced to look at how current perspectives have refined older models of grieving.

Who should attend? Counselors, social workers and medical, school or business personnel. Cost is \$50. Trainings held at Center for Loss and Bereavement. You will receive email confirmation of your registration.

REGISTRATION FORM FOR: (check one or both)

Are We There Yet?...

Thursday, October 23, 2008

Understanding the Grief Process

Thursday, November 20, 2008

Name: _____ (If paying by check) # _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Phone (where you can be reached on day of training): _____

Board of Directors:

Christine Smith, Board President

Shirley Elrod, Executive Director

Connie Fretz, RN

Anna Hillman, CPA

Marilyn Pennapacker

Carl Sensenig

Christopher Smith

Kathleen Thomas, Esq.

Ellen Watson

Thank You to the guidance counselors of North Penn School District for their recent visit to our Center. If your school district or organization would like a comprehensive look at the services we offer, please call Shirley Elrod, ext. 102.

The Center for Loss and Bereavement

Website: www.bereavementcenter.org

Phone (610) 222-4110 Fax (610) 222-4116

Staff Directory:

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Rita Porreca	Support Group Facilitator	ext. 122,	rsp@bereavementcenter.org
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