



Good Grief NEWS

PO Box 12865 Wichita, Ks 67277

316-612-0700

August 2026

Bittersweet Wonder

There is an odd thing that happens in our grieving, and there is an odd thing that happens in our mending amid grief. The memories and emotions that emerge in our grieving-those memories and emotions that lead us into sorrow-lead us full-circle through the pain into a tender peace.



It is an odd gift that loss has left us. We find that the very memory walking hand in hand with our loved one makes us cry in the absence of them and those moments, but that very remembrance of them and those moments opens our hearts to a deep awe and gratitude as well. We miss them, but oh how sweet it was to have had them at all.

We have come across bittersweetness throughout our lives. It is the sense we have when we realize that our own gifts are often our own curse; or the very wounds that we carry through our lives are the very place where we are able to touch others and bring deep healing. Pleasure and pain; at once a bittersweet wonder.

I remember holding Mary's hand as she went on and on about gardens she and her husband had planted. Through her sobbing she told me of the gathering of plants and rocks from all her many trips with their children. "This one is Pennsylvania, and that one from China. It hurts so much to see them, but they are so beautiful and they remind me of all that we shared. When I think of the memories, it actually gives me the strength I felt when we were there together, doing those things."

You have sensed the oddness of having your tears actually be your nourishment.

Ask me how it works; I do not know-but that it aids the mending, I do know that.

If there is no bittersweet wonder in our grief, then we are stuck. But if there is a bittersweetness to our healing, then we are mending.

If our grief is dry and arid, we probably just need to listen a bit more-listen to our minds and our hearts tell the thousand memories they hold of our loved ones. We need to look at pictures and cry. This bittersweetness is present in our perceptions of those who offer to help us mend. What people say often alarms us and we feel it not the right thing. And then we have the feeling that we are glad they cared enough to try.

Back and forth, up and down, around and around is the process of mending amid grief. Sometimes we laugh when we think of Uncle Harry's crazy hat collection, and then we sob because we don't get to watch him make those crazy faces anymore. We cry when we think about our mother having cared for us as children when we were sick with chicken pox, and we breathe a sigh of relief when we realize she no longer is suffering with her confusion and horrible labored breathing.

These memories and these emotions are both our bridge to the people we have lost and our bridge to our own healing. They enable us to arrive at a place where we may mend and do it slowly, tenderly and with grace.

All of the things that we have done together; all of the love and conflict and growth meld into one and give us pain in their absence, and strength to go on ahead. Try to figure out how the trees and roses can make you cry and laugh at the same time. I cannot. See if you can imagine how blue skies and white clouds can remind you of a loved one's death. I cannot; but they do. And somehow, the colors of the rainbow, and people's faces, and friends shaking hands, and babies crying all give us sadness and hope at the same time. (Thank you Louie Armstrong, *What A Wonderful World*).

****ALL MEETINGS ARE FOR THOSE THAT HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE,
BE IT A SPOUSE, CHILD, PARENT, SIBLING OR FRIEND.
YOU ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND ANY OR ALL MEETINGS AS NEEDED. ****

**If you would be interested in training to be a facilitator for one of
our groups please contact the Good Grief office at 316-612-0700**

PLEASE NOTE :All meetings begin at the designated times

Mondays: 7:00 - 8:30 pm

SOUTH WICHITA

Discover Church (1826 W Maple)

Facilitators: Deona Madrigal, Jim Denning

Tuesdays: 10:00 - 11:30 am

CENTRAL WICHITA

RiverWalk Church of Christ - (225 N Waco)

Use **South Office Entrance**, Fireside Room

Facilitators: Marjorie Watkins, Donald Septer

Tuesdays: 6:30 - 8:00 pm

WEST WICHITA

West Heights UMC—(745 N Westlink Ave) Conference Room

Building **Entance B** on west side of building

Facilitators: Tom Downer, Christy Swigert, Gary Swigert

1st and 3rd Wednesday: 7:00 - 8:30 pm

W.A.Y. Widowed and Young (Ages 20's, 30's, 40's, 50's)

CENTRAL WICHITA

RiverWalk Church of Christ—(225 N Waco) **SW Entrance**, Fireside Room

Facilitator: Kendra Spencer

**** COMING SOON ****

A new group will soon be available in El Dorado

SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE LOSS

Mondays: 6:30 - 8:00 pm

CENTRAL WICHITA

RiverWalk Church of Christ in downtown Wichita (225 N Waco) Note: **Go to the NW door #7 closest to the river.** If the door is locked, please knock loudly. The Monday night meetings begin at **6:30 pm**

If you have questions or plan to attend this group, **please call the facilitator** prior to attending your 1st meeting so session handouts may be prepared you.

Facilitator: Jim Yoder 316-727-0663

***If you or someone you know is in need of help, be sure to contact the
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-8255.***

You are welcome to attend any support group of your choice.

It is normal to feel confused, forgetful, crazy, lost and alone, plus a wide range of other emotions.

It may not feel like it just now, but it does get better . . . let us help. **Please commit to attend at least three times.**

The first two times may be difficult but you will begin to feel a difference in your grieving as you are able to share about your loss and other issues that come along at this time.

You might want to visit several groups until you find the one you feel most comfortable with.

BAD WEATHER POLICY

Wichita:

If there is a threat of severe weather...

If EARP (Emergency Accident Reporting Plan) is in effect no meeting will be held.

Outside Wichita:

Check with your facilitator.

Never put yourself at risk.

If you think the weather too dangerous, do not attend the meeting.

Office Hours:

Mon and Tues 8 am - 4 pm

Mailing address:

PO Box 12865

Wichita KS 67277

Office Supply Needs:

Envelopes:

#6 Security (\$Tree envelopes are fine)

Copy Paper:

White 8.5x11 White 11x17



Schedule of Regular Socials:

Tuesdays: East Side Breakfast 9:00 am

Livingstons - Webb & 21st

Hosts: Cindy Swan, Mike Hertzler

Thursdays: South Side Lunch/Brunch 10:00 am

Country Breakfast Café—2804 S Seneca St

Host: Lois Pardee

Saturdays: Breakfast 10:00 am

Spears Restaurant - 4830 W Maple

Host: Janet Cook

August 2026

*May your day feel like all the
flowers in your garden are blooming*



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant
2	3 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm South Group 7:00 pm	4 Central Group 10 am West Group 6:00 pm East Side Breakfast 9 am Livingston's	5 W.A.Y. Group 7:00 pm	6 South Side Brunch 10 am Country Café <u>TLC 5 pm</u>	7	8 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant
9	10 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm South Group 7:00 pm	11 Central Group 10 am West Group 6:00 pm East Side Breakfast 9 am Livingston's Board Mtg 5:00 pm	12	13 South Side Brunch 10 am Country Café	14	15 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant
16	17 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm South Group 7:00 pm	18 Central Group 10 am West Group 6:00 pm East Side Breakfast 9 am Livingston's	19 W.A.Y. Group 7:00 pm	20 South Side Brunch 10 am Country Café	21	22 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant
23	24 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm South Group 7:00 pm	25 Central Group 10 am West Group 6:00 pm East Side Breakfast 9 am Livingston's	26	27 South Side Brunch 10 am Country Café	28	29 Breakfast 10 am Spears Restaurant
30	31 SOSL Wichita 6:30 pm South Group 7:00 pm					

Contributions for last month(s) totaled \$ 1140.00

THANK YOU for your donation which makes it possible for
Good Grief of Kansas to continue to serve the bereaved.

July Contributions

Janet Cunningham

Mike Tate

Jim Denning

Mary Evans

Jennifer Romano

Debbie & Duane Book

A big thank you to
Papa's General Store
in Clifton Square for their
donation of Ice Cream and all
the accessories for our Ice
Cream Social. It was so kind
of you an greatly appreciated.

**Remember to send
your donation to:**

Good Grief of Kansas
PO Box 12865
Wichita, KS 67277



Memorial Gifts



Love Gifts

At this time there are no dues or fees to belong to Good Grief of Kansas. However, your gift is very important.

We depend on donations from individuals and organizations to meet our program expenses and to keep the Good Grief office open.

Please help make sure that others who need Good Grief will hear the message that we can and will help them through their grief. Gifts may be designated in honor or memory of a special individual or occasion. We also appreciate monetary gifts to help with the expense of producing and mailing this newsletter.

Note: For memorials with a special remembrance date, submit information one month early for timely publication.

Donations can be sent to:

Good Grief of Kansas
PO Box 12865
Wichita, Ks 67277

August Birthdays

Lori Bradley.....	1
Randy L Rowe	2
Lois Siemers	2
Anita Downey.....	3
Dawn Easley	3
Laura Elliott.....	4
Margie Gwinn.....	12
Barbara Schremmer.....	13
Alisha Tinoco	16
Linda Tillman	17
Beverly Whitman.....	18
Hannah Mouser	22
Velena Hamilton.....	29
Cherri Alderson.....	30
Donald Septer	30



A NEW NORMAL

I wanted my life to return to normal. Then I realized what I wanted was for my life to return to what it once was.

A year ago I found hope one night when I heard my wife and my youngest son laughing in our bedroom. I thought my life was returning to normal.

I played cards with my youngest son after supper, with much fun and laughter. After a few cartoons, he and my wife were off to bed. It was then that I realized my life was not returning to the normal that it was when Greg was alive, but changing to a new normal.

I cannot return to what I once was, because all of the parts are no longer there. I have the choice, consciously, and subconsciously to carry on with my life, thus creating a new normal.

Hope lies in accepting what you now have — looking with joy, not sorrow, looking ahead with optimism not pessimism.

*By Daryl Hutson, Crawfordsville, IN
Bereavement Publications, Inc.*



Ways to help support Good Grief of Kansas:

- 1) Donate online at www.goodgriefokansas.org
- 2) Dillons Community Rewards at www.dillons.com
- 3) Facebook Fundraiser
- 4) Mail the coupon below with a donation in the envelope found in your monthly newsletter

Donate Online



I Want To Help Support Good Grief of Kansas

Enclosed is a memorial gift in memory of (Name) _____

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift in the amount of \$ _____

Enclosed is my monthly support of:

\$20 ___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$75 ___ \$100 \$ _____

Send Memorial acknowledgment to:

Name _____

Address _____

City State, Zip _____

☐ **ANONYMOUS PLEASE**

I would like more information

My phone # is () _____

My Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____



When Does Grief End?

Grief hits us like a tone of bricks,
flattens us like a steamroller,
hurls us into the depths of despair.

We know in a flash when grief hits,
but when does it end?

Like the month of March,
grief rushes in like a lion
and tiptoes out like a lamb.

Sometimes, we don't know when grief leaves,
because we won't let go of the lion's tail.
Why do we hold on so long?
Grief offers us safety, protection from the
world.

We don't want to let go because we secretly
fear that we'll forget our loved ones,
and we don't want to forget — ever.

We don't want to let go because we fear the future and having to face life without
our loved ones.

We don't want to let go because we make the mistake of measuring our grief with
the depth of our love — when neither has anything to do with the other.

How do we know when grief has run its course? How do we know when we've
grieved enough? Cried enough? "Died" enough?

How do we know when it's time to let go of the tail?
We know when we feel joy again, in something or someone. Joy in living. Joy in life.

We know when we wake up in the morning and our first thought is on something
other than our loss.

We know when we look ahead with a smile and back with fond memories,
and when we no longer dread the nights.

We know when our life starts filling up with new interests and people,
and we start reaching for the stars

Grief ends when we let go of the tail.



“ If I Could See The Hope ”

I slipped backwards today. I ate a cookie. I did not run my 2.5 miles. I did not cross off every item on my “to do” list. In fact, I added things.

I slipped backwards today. I put on a record, got out the scrapbook and slipped backwards into yesterday . . . into a hundred yesterdays where life was different than it is now. I slipped backwards as I “forgot” to do my exercises. And my whole “improvement project” was lost.

Today was just like any other day, except that I slipped. It started out okay, like most days do. Nothing special or extraordinary – just a day, another step in the endless succession of days. There were things to do, places to be, people to talk with, plans to dream about. It didn't feel especially different than any other day . . . but apparently it was, and I slipped.

I've been doing “pretty good.” In fact, I've become rather proud of myself in the last few months – beginning to take control of my actions, thoughts and life. I had finally figured out what it is I want to do and had developed a plan. . . I even wrote IT (THE PLAN) down on a sheet of paper and taped it to the refrigerator so I could inspire myself every time I looked at it (and every time I went in search of something to nibble).

It was working, too. I've spent the summer living in POSITIVE POWER and things had begun to change. Productivity was up. Tissue use was down. Healthy choices were being made. Cookie raids were almost nonexistent. I WAS MAKING IT! Until today . . . when I slipped.

Maybe it was because the weather wasn't cooperating. It was supposed to be cooler and it wasn't. I'm weary of summer's heat and I was looking forward to the weatherman's promise of “slightly cooler.” I seem to have more “courage” (will power?) when it's “slightly cooler” outside. The calendar says “almost Fall” and today, I guess I couldn't wait for “almost.”

I am tired of being “kissed by the sun.” I am tired of eating fruit and of sunny days. I'm tired of sand in my shoes and I'm tired of trying not to cry whenever I remember.

I slipped backwards today. I ran out of energy to keep up the GOOD WORK and I slipped. I lost control and ate a cookie. I slipped off the bandwagon of healthy and positive power and “I CAN,” and I landed squarely in the middle of “I DON'T WANT TO” and “I CAN'T.”

I lost control and wept the tears of grief . . . mourned for the life I no longer live and grieved for the happiness I could only remember.

There are times when one grows weary of surviving,

of being STRONG. There are times when cookies taste better than seaweed and there are times when I WANT what I can no longer have . . . food-wise, life-style wise, people- wise. I KNOW I can't have those things, but I can still WANT them, can't I?



Usually, I am pretty responsible, but sometimes that means I am my own worst enemy . . . my own worst critic . . . my own judge, jury and jail term. I've lived in the LAND OF OUGHTS for a whole summer now and the results are amazing when I look in the mirror. But, sometimes, when I look in the heart, I wonder? If life is supposed to be so wonderful, then how come chocolate has calories, memories sometimes hurt and whatever I want to do, eat, think or be isn't what I'm SUPPOSED to do, eat, think or be?

By now I SHOULD be happy and I usually am, although that has nothing to do with my memorizing THE BOOK OF SHOULD. It has to do with living each moment, rather than wishing those moments would fade.

And today, I got tired and I slipped.

Today I slipped and ate a cookie.

I went backwards, but this time I knew it, and it knew it was only for tonight . . . when the moon is full and the memories are warm. I knew it was only for the moment. I only ate one cookie – not an entire bag. I only cried for a few minutes – not an entire evening. I only let go of the shoulds for a little while . . . in order to discover the magic of memory.

I did the GRIEF SHUFFLE today and learned that even when we slip backwards, stumble, fall down or drift sideways for a time, we are making progress through the valley. ANY MOVEMENT is progress in the journey through THE VALLEY, even if that movement is in the opposite direction of where we thought we SHOULD BE GOING.

I slipped backwards. Today I celebrated my pain as a measure of my love instead of counting it as being a failure or an indication that I'm not okay yet. Today, I ate the cookie and tasted victory. I CHOSE to eat the cookie, to remember the moments, to cry, to hurt and to laugh.

Today I slipped backwards in THE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM and moved ahead in living.

by Darcie Sims



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MISSION STATEMENT

Good Grief of Kansas provides grief support for persons who have lost a loved one through death.

Program Outreach:

- Widowed Support Group
- Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group
- Other Adult Family Loss Support (parent/child)
- Social Support
- Seminars/Workshops
- Community Presentations
- Counseling Referrals



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- **Memorials, Gifts & Donations**

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