



We are Here to Help

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South Bay & Peninsula Bereavement Program Mgr	(408) 773-4329

Our Services...

Open to Pathways families and the community without charge.

- ❖ Grief support groups for all ages and losses
- ❖ Individual counseling
- ❖ Community remembrance services
- ❖ Summer grief workshops
- ❖ Holiday support workshops
- ❖ Educational workshops
- ❖ Seasonal newsletters
- ❖ Grief information

Grief services are made possible through generous donations to Pathways Hospice Foundation from the community. For information about all of Pathways services, volunteering or how to make a donation, call 888-755-7855 or visit pathwayshealth.org.

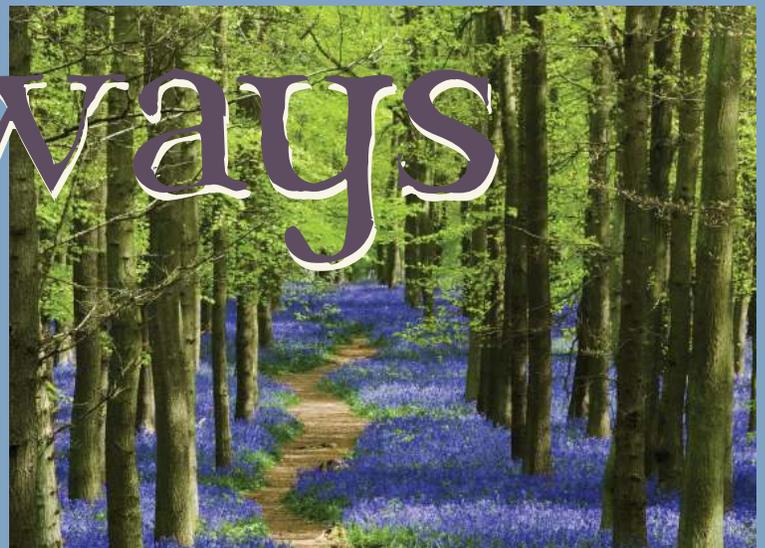


Pathways Home Health & Hospice
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Pathways

Through Grief

Pamphlet four of a four-part series to support your healing as you grieve.



Grief Bursts

A Metaphor for Understanding Grief

Grief bursts strike like a lightning bolt. You are driving, listening to the radio when a song comes on that you both liked, grief grips your heart, tears sting your eyes, and you wonder what hit you. Grief bursts may be more disorienting to those who have gone back to their normal round of activities, and who feel “okay” some of the time, although they are still grieving. Even though you have begun to accept the finality of your loved one’s death, bursts of grief are still to be expected. By acknowledging these feelings as normal you can also recognize the progress that you have made through this past year of grieving.



About Grief

As you approach the one-year anniversary you may have begun to open yourself to feelings of hope and to the gradual growth that comes with healing. However, like other anniversaries and special occasions, this time can bring a flood of feelings as you revisit the painful memories of your loved one’s death. Our culture has popularized the myth that the grieving process ends after a year’s time. In fact, many people have a series of grief bursts around the time of the one-year anniversary. At 10 to 13 months, the “new normal” pattern of your life is settling into place. You will not “get over” or “let go” of your loved one, but you will gradually become better able to cope with the loss. You may be searching for meaning: how will I carry into the future what I have learned from my loved one, how will I be changed by our lives together and the love we shared? This exploration is part of the healing process.

Helping Yourself to Heal

There is no right way to find meaning as your life continues with your loved one still present in your heart and thoughts. Here are a few questions to consider: What will you keep from your life together? What will you incorporate that is new? Continuing to practice self-care in the form of exercise, good eating and sleeping habits, finding ways to overcome isolation, and seeking spiritual support will continue to be critical for your healing. At this point in your journey, you may have new friends that never met your loved one. You may have tried new activities or returned to interests you had before you met your loved one. These changes may be a little unnerving to you, as they all seem to underline the passage of time and the absence of your loved one. Yet becoming open to new possibilities, reorganizing your life, and making healthy changes are part of the healing and growth processes. You honor your loved one through your participation in these processes. Know that we are here even at this stage, if you need support.

You may be looking for ways to contribute something as a means of expressing thanks for the help you received while grieving. If you are interested in contributing or volunteering at Pathways, please contact us. Many of our contributors and volunteers have lost loved ones, and say that helping Pathways is a way of paying tribute to their loved one’s memory. We are honored to have their support.

To Love What Death Can Touch

*‘Tis a fearful thing
To love
What death can touch,
To love, to hope, to dream,
And oh, to lose.
A thing for fools, this,
Love,
But a holy thing
To love what death
can touch.*

*For your life has
lived in me;
Your laugh once lifted me;
Your word was a gift to me.*

*To remember this brings
painful joy.*

*‘Tis a human thing, love.
A holy thing.
To love
What death can touch.*

Author unknown
12th Century