



## We are Here to Help

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East Bay Bereavement Program Manager	(510) 613-2092
San Francisco Bereavement Program Manager	(650) 808-4603
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](http://pathwayshealth.org).

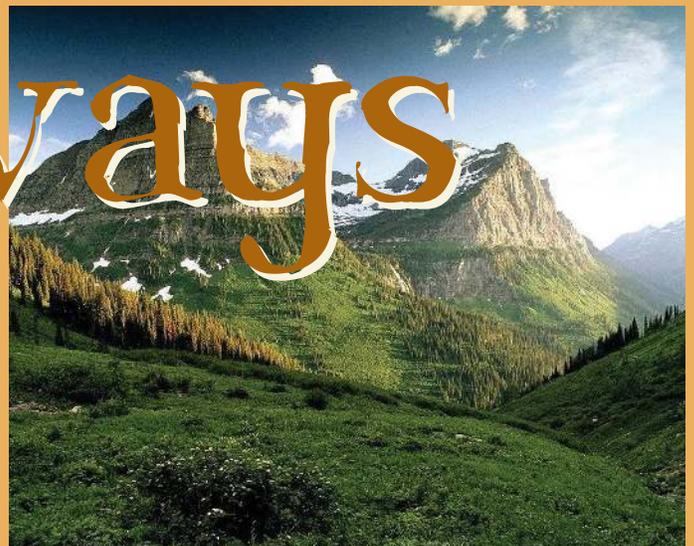


Pathways Home Health & Hospice  
585 North Mary Avenue  
Sunnyvale, CA 94085

# Pathways

*Through Grief*

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

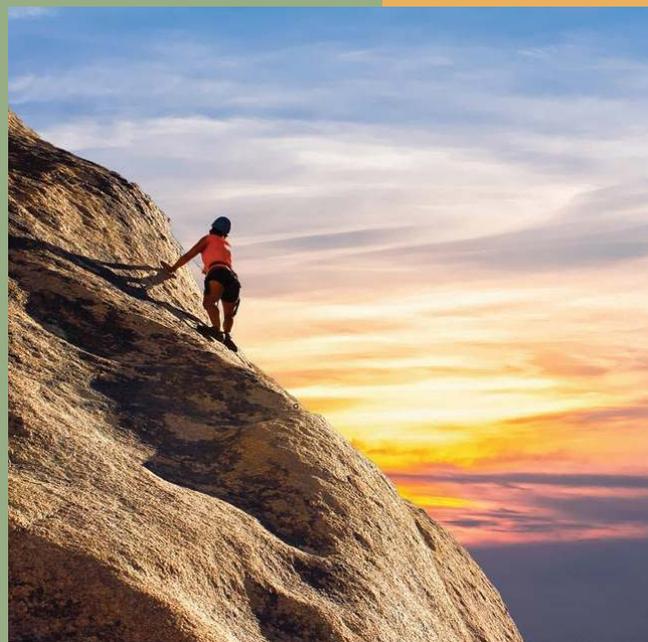


# Grief as a Mountain to Climb

## A Metaphor for Understanding Grief

Grievers often feel like they are climbing a mountain. At times you fear that you lack the endurance and skill needed to reach the mountaintop. Having to make the climb at a time when your strength and spirit may be tested makes the trip even more difficult.

At Pathways, we want you to know that grief support can be likened to the ropes that support you throughout the difficult journey up the mountain. Ropes are set in place by others that have traveled this path before you. They are there to support you as you do the slow, painful work that you need to do as you climb through the many challenges that are a part of the griever's experience. Let us be the rope. We are here for you.



## About Grief

At three to six months, the shock and numbness have mostly passed, and in its place a variety of confusing, contradictory feelings arise. You may feel helpless, powerless, or uninterested in things that used to be pleasurable or important to you. You may feel anxiety, exhaustion, depression, or nothing at all. Awareness of the death is sinking in; your loved one is really gone, and feelings of anger, guilt, regret, relief or wishful thinking may arise. Those who offered condolences early on are not around as much, although a few trusted friends or family members may still be present for you. Nevertheless, many family members and friends are uncertain of how to help you with the intense feelings that are just beginning to come to the surface at this time. All of this is normal.

Whatever your circumstances, we are here to support you. While there are many shared experiences in the grief process, each individual grieves in a unique way. In addition, an individual's grief may be complicated by many different factors, such as a sudden death, a long period of intense care-taking, a child's death, a complicated relationship with the deceased, multiple losses, mental health issues, or lack of social support. At Pathways, we recognize the importance of all these factors, and help each griever on their unique journey.

## Helping Yourself to Heal

Sharing the story of your loved one's life and death is an important task. Most people need to tell their story over and over again; this repetitive process allows the reality of the loss to gradually seep in. When those around us stop talking about our loved one, it is almost as if he or she is being erased. Ask friends and family to share stories about your loved one and to use his or her name. Let them know you're already thinking of your loved one often, and that it won't upset you for them to talk about him or her. Over time, as we tell our stories, they will shift from just painful memories to a mixture of painful and joyful memories, and eventually to mostly good memories. There's no need to feel alone in this process, because Pathways offers bereavement groups and/or individual counseling. In addition, you may want to contact your doctor or a trusted person from your faith community. Exercising, eating a healthy diet, sleeping well, and being with trusted people are also important ways to take care of yourself.

*"There's absolutely no reason for being rushed along with the rush. Everybody should be free to go very slow. What you want, what you're hanging around on the world waiting for, is for something to occur to you."*

Robert Frost