After losing a loved one, some survivors may find that the pain associated with that loss doesn’t always lessen with time. Support groups provide a safe place to express feelings, share experiences, learn about grief and move ahead in the grief process. HPH Hospice provides various support groups throughout the year.

We hope you will take advantage of the group that best suits your needs and circumstances. You don’t have to be the loved one of an HPH Hospice patient to participate in these support groups. We offer our programs to anyone residing in Pasco, Hernando or Citrus County who has experienced the death of a loved one.

Ongoing Adult Grief Support Groups
HPH Hospice offers these ongoing, free support groups for adults. There is no need to register. For more details, please call the Bereavement Department at 727-816-3647.

**PASCO COUNTY**
First and third Wednesdays, 3 – 4 p.m.
HPH Hospice, 6807 Rowan Road
New Port Richey

First and third Thursdays, 1 – 2 p.m.
St. Mark’s Church, 7922 State Rd. 52, Hudson

Second and fourth Mondays, 4 – 5 p.m.
HPH Hospice, 37445 Clinton Ave., Dade City

Second and fourth Tuesdays, 6 – 7 p.m.
HPH Hospice, 6807 Rowan Road
New Port Richey

**HERNANDO COUNTY**
Second and fourth Tuesdays, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
HPH Hospice, 12254 Cortez Boulevard
Brooksville

Second and fourth Thursdays, 3 – 4 p.m.
HPH Hospice, 12254 Cortez Boulevard
Brooksville

**CITRUS COUNTY**
First and third Tuesdays, 11 a.m. – noon
HPH Hospice, 2939 W. Gulf to Lake Hwy.
Lecanto

Grief’s Journey Group
This eight-week grief support group is intended for newly bereaved adults. Registration is required. Please call 727-816-3647.

**PASCO**
Wednesdays, noon – 2 p.m.
July 10 – September 28, 2019

Wednesdays, 6 – 8 p.m.
September 11 – October 30, 2019

**HERNANDO**
Mondays, 6 – 8 p.m.
July 8 – August 26, 2019

Tuesdays, 2 – 4 p.m.
September 10 – October 29, 2019

Child and Teen Grief Support Groups
These ongoing support group meetings are for young grievers, ages 5 to 17, and their families. There is no charge. Pre-registration is required. To register, please contact the Bereavement Department at 727-816-3647.

First and third Thursdays, 6 – 7:30 p.m.
HPH Hospice Center for Grieving Children
Hudson

Second and fourth Thursdays, 6 – 7:30 p.m.
Hernando Grief Center, Brooksville

Second Tuesday, 6 – 7:30 p.m.
Citrus Family Workshop, Lecanto
Anger, hate, blame, terror, resentment, rage and jealousy are explosive emotions that may be a volatile yet natural part of your grief journey. It helps to understand that all these feelings are, at bottom, a form of protest. Think of a toddler whose favorite toy is yanked out of his hands. This toddler wants the toy; when it’s taken, his instinctive reaction may be to scream or cry or hit. When someone loved is taken from you, your instinctive reaction may be much the same.

Explosive emotions may surface at any time when someone you have loved dies. You cry out in anguish, “How could this happen? This isn’t fair! I hate this!” You may direct these emotions at the person who died, at friends and family members, at doctors, at people who haven’t experienced loss, at God.

Unfortunately, our society doesn’t understand how normal and necessary these feelings can be. Demonstrating emotional hurts is wrong. The implicit message is that you should try to “keep it together.” When you’re raging or terrified, others may get upset. The intensity of your own emotions may even upset you. Still, you must give yourself permission to feel whatever you feel and to express those feelings. If you collaborate with the well-intentioned but misinformed people around you, your body, mind and spirit will probably be damaged in the process.

Some people may tell you that explosive emotions are not logical. “Anger won’t bring him back,” they might say. “He didn’t mean to die, so don’t be mad at him.” Watch out. You might find yourself buying into this rational thinking. That’s just the problem – thinking is logical; feeling is not. Another problem is that people oversimplify explosive emotions by talking only about anger. Actually, you may experience a whole range of intense feelings such as those listed above. Underneath these emotions are usually feelings of pain, helplessness, fear and hurt.

If explosive emotions are part of your journey (and they aren’t for everyone), be aware that you have two avenues for expression – outward or inward. The outward avenue leads to healing; the inward avenue does not. Keeping your explosive emotions inside leads to low self-esteem, depression, guilt, physical complaints and sometimes even persistent thoughts of suicide.

Experiencing explosive emotions is normal. They should, however, change in intensity and duration as you do the work of mourning. Again, I want to emphasize that the key is finding someone who will help you understand what you are feeling and allow you to embrace your grief. Remember – you can’t go around your grief, or over it, or under it, you must go through it. I hope that as you journey through grief you will be surrounded by people who understand, support and love you and will help you explore your emotions without trying to stifle you.

**Self-Care Guidelines** Explosive emotions must be expressed, not repressed or worse yet, totally denied. Don’t prescribe these feelings for yourself but do be alert for them. You will need a supportive listener who can tolerate, encourage and validate your explosive emotions without judging, retaliating or arguing with you. The comforting presence of someone who cares about you will help you seek continued self-understanding of your grief experience.

Be aware, though, of the difference between the right to feel explosive emotions and the right to act out these emotions in harmful ways. It’s okay, sometimes even necessary, to feel angry. But if you hurt others or yourself or destroy property, the people who care about you will need to set limits on your behavior. Also, remind yourself that explosive emotions can often indicate underlying feelings of pain, helplessness, frustration, fear and hurt. Listen to your explosive emotions and you may discover the need to embrace what’s beneath.

Keep telling yourself that explosive emotions are not good or bad, right or wrong. They just are. They are your feelings and they are symptoms of an injury that needs nurturing, not judging. Paradoxically, the way to diminish explosive emotions is to experience them, even if they feel irrational to you.

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