

# See the Good in Grief

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Good Grief!

Hello,

The Baptist Centers for Good Grief, with the National Alliance for Grieving Children, recognizes November as Children's Grief Awareness Month and Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> as Children's Grief Awareness Day. Children are often referred to as "forgotten mourners." We know that children grieve when people in their lives die. They grieve in unique ways appropriate to their personalities and development. They grieve in the context of their own families and their environment. Grieving children feel well supported when they are given love and encouragement from family and friends, when they are prepared for things they might experience after the death, when they express their grief, and when the adults in their lives are using good coping skills.



It has been our privilege to be able to support grieving children and their families in our community. Since starting Camp Good Grief in 1999, we have provided over 45,000 sessions for grieving children. When grieving children are supported well following a loss, it helps them become healthy, expressive adults. As we approach the holiday season, keep in mind that children experience many of the same challenges that adults will during this stressful time. The Center for Good Grief is here for grieving children and adults alike. We know that, just like adults, children's grief is real, it is BIG, and it is better shared.

Sincerely,

Angela Hamblen Kelly, LCSW  
Executive Director  
Baptist Centers for Good Grief

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## Why Are The Holidays So Hard for Grievers?

As you are probably acutely aware, grief is difficult on an average, “normal” day. Special days tend to magnify and intensify those already difficult feelings – the weight of sadness feels heavier, the emptiness more acute, the anger more intense, and the joy and spirit of gratitude harder to access. Family is the central focus of the holiday season, and there is a key member of your family or friend group missing. Your loss is immediately highlighted. Past traditions cannot necessarily exist in the same way, and this is a loss in and of itself.



Have you noticed that the holiday season has become longer and more intense over the last several years? It creates added stress and requires so much energy. Often, grieving people do not have energy to spare – they are doing their best just to get through each moment of each day. The season starts immediately after Halloween, and feels like it goes on and on. The build-up lasts for many weeks, and the air of festivity can be elusive for the griever. For non-grieving people, this feels stressful; for the grieving person, it can feel unmanageable. In addition, this holiday season, the COVID-19 pandemic presents some unique challenges to the usual methods of coping. Take heart and hold on to hope. The Center for Good Grief is here for you and your family as you face the challenges of the holiday season.

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## Thanksgiving and Grief

You may find it difficult to access a spirit of gratitude while coping with loss at Thanksgiving time. Frankly, sometimes it feels hard to be thankful when your world has suffered such a change. Remember, it is ok to feel whatever you feel – happy, sad, angry, grateful, resentful. This is just a picture of your grief at the moment. Scale back your expectations of what you should be doing or thinking. Try to find some gratitude in the small things. For example, “Today, I am grateful for being able to get out of bed, have a slice of pie, or take a nap.

One of the key elements of coping with grief during a difficult time is ensuring support. Support can and does look a lot of different ways, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.



It may be that your usual Thanksgiving plan was disrupted, first by your loss, and then again by the pandemic. It is all right if things look and feel very different this year. If you are not able to be with all of your support people directly at the holiday, find other ways to connect. Participate in a Zoom dinner with friends, call or text your family members, or have 2 people to your house instead of 12. Acknowledge that you are grieving this year and there is a missing part of your holiday – other family and friends feel it also, in different ways. Sometimes that

acknowledgement, while it brings the grief to the forefront, also allows you to breathe through the moment. As always, the Center is available for support before and after Thanksgiving, so reach out when needed.

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## Be The Good In Grief

In the words of Dr. Alan Wolfelt, “any child that is old enough to love is old enough to mourn.” Children’s Grief Awareness Day, recognized on November 19, is a special day to raise awareness of the unique aspects and needs of grieving children.

Since our beginning in 1999, we have worked tirelessly to provide grieving children opportunities to express their love and loss. We remain committed to providing safe spaces for children, teens and adults to learn how to thrive in a world without their special person, but we need your help.

“...any child that is old enough to love. is old enough to mourn.”

- Dr. Alan Wolfelt



**CHILDREN'S GRIEF  
AWARENESS DAY**  
November 19, 2020

Will you recognize Children’s Grief Awareness Day on Thursday, November 19, 2020 by donating to support the Baptist Centers for Good Grief? You can visit <https://baptistgriefcenters.org/give/> to make a gift in honor of the brave children in our community navigating grief.

You can also like, comment, and share our messages on social media. Follow along on Facebook at *Baptist Centers for Good Grief – Kemmons Wilson Family Ctr & Milla’s House and NEA Baptist Center for Good Grief.*

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## Dates to Remember: Grief Support Groups

### **Adult Grief Groups**

**Pregnancy and Infant Loss –**  
Monthly Virtual Support Group  
November 12 & December 17 from  
11:00am-12:00pm

**Registration Required:**

TN/MS call 901-861-5656  
AR/MO call 870-936-7719



### **Teen Grief Groups**

Monthly Virtual Support Group for 13-17 year olds.  
November 19 & December 17 from 5:30-7:00pm

**Registration Required:**

TN/MS call 901-861-5656  
AR/MO call 870-936-7719

### **Children's Grief Groups**

#### **8-12 year olds Bi-weekly Virtual Support Group**

November 16 & December 7 from 4:00-5:00pm

**Registration Required:**

TN/MS call 901-861-5656  
AR/MO call 870-936-7719

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## Hunt for Fun. Compete for Good. Win for NEA.

Duck Classic is the largest, and we think the most fun, charity fundraiser in Northeast Arkansas for the past 17 years.

December 10-11, 2020 will be the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Duck Classic event. Through this event, thousands of dollars are raised to help bring healing and hope to so many in our community. The Mission of the NEA Baptist Charitable Foundation is to change lives in our region through

the six programs of the foundation: Medicine Assistance Program, HopeCircle, Center for Healthy Children, Wellness Works, Center for Good Grief, and ShareHope. It is only through generous gifts of donors and the participants in our Duck Classic event that we are able to impact so many lives in our area. Join us for the silent and live auction, banquet dinner, and hunting competition, all while raising funds to help those in Northeast Arkansas and Southeast Missouri. The NEA Baptist Center for Good Grief cannot say “thank you” enough to those who support the fundraising efforts. For more information, visit [www.duckclassic.com](http://www.duckclassic.com).

# DUCK CLASSIC

NEA BAPTIST   
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

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## Take Five!

Here are five resources to help you along your journey.

1. *What's Your Grief* – “64 tips for Coping with Grief at the Holidays” <https://whatsyourgrief.com/64-tips-grief-at-the-holidays/>
2. “Grief for Beginners” – 20 min listen on *NPR Life Kit*  
<https://www.npr.org/2020/05/12/854905033/grief-for-beginners-5-things-to-know-about-processing-loss>
3. See the Facebook page for the Center For Good Grief for “Tips on Coping with the Holidays” and “Grief Breaks”
4. National Alliance for Grieving Children – “Holiday Toolkit”  
<https://childrengrieve.org/resources/holiday-toolkit>
5. *Healing your Holiday Grief: 100 Practical Ideas for Blending Mourning and Celebration During the Holiday Season* – by Alan Wolfelt, PhD





## The Next Step

This is an activity to complete on your own as a way of expressing your grief and coping.

Create a gratitude list for this season, much like the poem by Darci Sims below. Focus yourself on the small victories and/or achievements of little goals. You may find yourself grateful for your favorite sweater on a cold day, a phone call from a trusted friend, or a halfway decent night's sleep. Try to come up with at least 10 things great or small. Recognize that sometimes it is the small things that are the greatest achievements while grieving. Give yourself credit for those small victories.

### **THANKS**

By Darci D. Sims

#### **FOR THAT, I AM THANKFUL**

It doesn't seem to get any better!  
But it doesn't get any worse, either.  
For that, I am thankful.

There are no more pictures to be taken...  
But there are memories to be cherished.  
For that, I am thankful.

There is a missing chair at the table...  
But the circle of family gathers close.  
For that, I am thankful.

The turkey is smaller...  
But there is still stuffing.  
For that, I am thankful.

The days are shorter...  
But the nights are softer.  
For that, I am thankful.

The pain is still there...  
But it lasts only moments.  
For that, I am thankful.

The calendar still turns,  
The holidays still appear  
And they still cost too much...  
But I am still here.  
For that, I am thankful.

The room is still empty,  
The soul still aches...  
But the heart remembers  
For that, I am thankful.

The guests still come,  
The dishes pile up...  
But the dishwasher works.  
For that, I am thankful.

The name is still missing,  
The words still unspoken...  
But the silence is shared.  
For that, I am thankful.

The snow still falls,  
The sled still waits,  
And the spirit still wants to...  
For that, I am thankful.

The stillness remains...  
But the sadness is smaller.  
For that, I am thankful.

The moment is gone...  
But the love is forever.  
For that, I am blessed.  
For that, I am grateful...

Love was once  
(and still is)  
A part of my being...  
*For that, I am living.*

I am LIVING...  
And, for that, I am thankful.

May your days be filled with reasons to be thankful. Having loved and having been loved is perhaps that most wondrous reason of all.

 **BAPTIST** | **CENTERS FOR  
GOOD GRIEF**

[baptistgriefcenters.org](http://baptistgriefcenters.org)

**KEMMONS WILSON FAMILY  
CENTER FOR GOOD GRIEF**  
1520 W. Poplar Ave.  
Collierville, TN 38017

**MILLA'S HOUSE**  
326 Ellsworth  
Memphis, TN 38111

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CENTER FOR GOOD GRIEF**  
1717 Executive Square  
Jonesboro, AR 72401