

Press Release

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Coping with grief in today's society

(GAINESVILLE, Fla.) - Facing the challenges of grief can be very difficult. Coping with the death of a loved one due to an illness, accident or tragedy can be devastating. It can cause grief on multiple levels; emotionally, physically and spiritually. Individuals, families, communities and nations can grieve.

Just as loss is experienced in different ways, there are also different types of grief after a loss. Normal grief, complicated grief, and disenfranchised grief can all happen.

Normal grief is the most common of grief reactions. It can last up to two years. Normal grief can be resolved through employing good coping strategies, effective use of rituals and having good support from family, friends and the community. Although there are not manuals on how to grieve effectively, societal and cultural norms can provide some direction.

Complicated grief is more challenging to process. The complications come from not having enough time to grieve, taking care of others, handling details, multiple losses or the death occurring around a holiday. It can also be an exaggerated grief reaction where the grief becomes chronic and resolution is difficult to achieve.

Disenfranchised grief is the type of grief that can be experienced after a suicide, loss of spouse or partner, loss of a child, AIDS, murder, or if the loved one is killed while a crime is being committed. This type of grief may need specific, continuous support for the griever to move towards resolution.

The recent weather events in Alabama show that when tragedy strikes it may not only include loss of life, but also loss of property, livelihood, and safety. Each type of grief can be felt not only by those directly experiencing the event, but those who are connected simply by humanity.

The United States has experienced this phenomenon at different points in its history as a nation, but most recently we are reminded of our experience on September 11, 2001. The entire nation was

affected by this tragedy. Images of destruction, devastation and despair scrolled on the television. America responded with determination to pursue justice. In light of recent events, some have described feeling a sense of closure; however, others are still working to manage their grief reactions. Learning what emotions are taking place is a good start on the road to recovery. In times like these we learn that we can come together and support one another.

When individuals, families, communities and nations face their greatest times of need, a multitude of grief support services may be needed. For information on Haven's bereavement support services, such as Camp Safe Haven, please contact Vonceil Levine, at 352.392.5105.

For information on the spring memorial services in your area, please visit www.havenhospice.org.

About Haven Hospice

Haven Hospice is North Florida's expert in end-of-life and palliative care and is one of three 2008 Circle of Life Award® winners nationwide to be recognized as leaders in improving the care of patients near the end of life or with life-threatening conditions. Haven Hospice has also been recognized as a Florida Pacesetter for its leadership in promoting living wills. Haven Hospice has served more than 50,000 patients and families since 1979 and has been licensed in Florida as a not-for-profit hospice since 1980. For more information, visit www.havenhospice.org, or call 800.727.1889.

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