

Our Purpose

To connect, reflect, and share companionship and resources together, as a community. We strive to sow seeds of connection, amongst the wide range of losses that brought us here. Through education, compassion, understanding, and respect we aim to broaden our capacity to honor all of our unique stories of love and loss.

The Golden Rule

All grievors are welcome. All losses are respected.

Gathering Structure

6:00–6:15pm | Meet & Greet

- Say hello, grab some tea, settle in.

6:15–7:15pm | Program

- Opening Ritual: Breathe & Focus
- Facilitator Intros, Roles & Duties
- Gathering Guidelines
- Participant Introductions
- The Three Questions

7:15–7:30pm | Closing

- Closing Thoughts
- One-word Takeaways
- Closing Ritual
- Resources, clean-up, goodbyes

The Three Questions reflect on the past, present, and future. Think of one loss that comes up for you right now:

- 1. Question No. 1:**
What did you feel when you first heard the news?
- 2. Question No. 2:**
What needs to be honored today?
- 3. Question No. 3:**
What would you like to release today? What is one small step you can take to do so?

Community Grief Gathering | Six Important Guidelines

1. Honor privacy and confidentiality.

This is crucial for creating emotional safety. What is said in the gathering, stays there.

This looks like: Not sharing any names or identifying information about participants. Recordings, notes, or pictures are allowed. Electronics must be silenced or turned off.

2. Grief is not a competition.

No two relationships are the same. While it's natural to compare experiences, remember that all grief is unique, valid, and experienced 100% by the person. No grief is "better or worse." *It's all different.* Thoughts and feelings are neither right nor wrong. They just are.

This might look like: Invalidating, criticizing, interrupting, minimizing, or elevating anyone's feelings, or experiences. It's common to see a wide range of intensities and responses to grief, for different things.

3. Participation is important, and everyone has the right to pass.

Reciprocity is an important part of the healing process. We encourage stretching towards deeper awareness, trust, and vulnerability with oneself and others. Sometimes there are no words. A hand on the heart or a simple nod goes a long way to validate someone's experience.

This looks like: Sharing according to the degree of your comfort level while respecting another's right to listen quietly. Being mindful of equal sharing time while practicing moments of stillness and silence.

4. Keep an open mind & curious heart.

The willingness to sit quietly without judgment in the presence of pain is one of the most valuable ways to show up for ourselves and others. Open-hearted presence is the magic salve for reducing feelings of isolation and loneliness.

This looks like: No side talk, distracting or disruptive behaviors. Speaking only for yourself and experience by using "I" statements. Avoiding "should" statements toward yourself or others. Not giving advice, unless someone specifically and clearly asks for guidance or suggestions.

5. Tears and tissues are optional.

Grief is messy and we invite you to show up exactly as you are. If tears come, please let them fall. Runny noses and smeared makeup are perfectly okay. Also, not all grief shows up as tears and sadness. Anger and laughter often sit directly on top of deep sorrow. Let that be okay for yourself and others. Trust that your body will do what it needs to do, when it needs to do it.

This might look like: Reach for tissues for yourself, not others. Handing tissues too early relays the message to "hurry up and stop crying" or "now it's time for you to cry." Reaching for one's own tissues conveys ownership of individual feelings and is a small, but important act of self-care.

6. Ask permission to give, or receive supportive touch.

Physical touch plays a part in healing, but in a group setting, timing and consent are key. Comforting touch *after the body's natural release of tension* can feel validating, but don't assume that's for everyone. Respect personal boundaries at all times.

This might look like:
"May I have a hug?"
"May I offer a hug, or a high five?"
"Would you like a hand to hold?"