



The Community NEWSLETTER

A Family Serving Families Worldwide Since 1980

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Letter from Gregory Bernard Levett, Jr.

For many years my family and I have assisted thousands of families in their time of need. Once their services have been completed, many people try to move forward with their daily routine without taking the necessary steps to continue healing. The emotional upheaval these trying times can cause, is sometimes so overwhelming that even the support of friends and family may not help relieve the amount of sadness and grief you feel. It is our mission to help individuals in their time of need and in their aftercare journey. To be "bereaved" literally means to be torn apart. You are on a journey that is often frightening, painful, and lonely. No words, written or spoken, can take away the pain you now feel. We hope that the resources by Dr. Wolfelt in this newsletter will help bring you comfort and encouragement as you make a commitment to help yourself heal. Grief is powerful, but so is your capacity to help yourself heal. We encourage you to begin today, and trust that genuinely encountering and expressing your grief each and every day will lead you to living and loving fully again.



4 COMMON MYTHS ABOUT GRIEF

Myth #1:

Grief and Mourning are the Same Experience

There is an important distinction between grief and mourning. We have learned that people move toward healing not by just grieving, but through mourning. Grief is the internal thoughts and feelings we experience when someone we love dies. Mourning, on the other hand, is taking the internal experience of grief and expressing it outside ourselves. Many people in our culture grieve, but they do not mourn. Instead of being encouraged to express their grief outwardly, they are often told to "carry on," or "keep your chin up and keep busy." So, they end up grieving within themselves in isolation, instead of mourning outside of themselves.

Myth #2:

It is Best to Move Away From Grief and Mourning Instead of Toward It.

Many grievers do not give themselves permission to mourn. We live in a society that encourages people to prematurely move away from their grief instead of toward it. The result is that many of us either grieve in isolation or attempt to run away from our grief. People who express their grief outwardly to mourn are viewed as "weak," or "self-pitying." Refusing to allow

tears, suffering in silence, and being strong are thought to be admirable behaviors. Attempting to mask or move away from grief results in internal anxiety and confusion. In order to heal they must move toward their grief through continued mourning, not away from it through repression and denial.

Myth 3:

Tears Expressing Grief are Only a Sign of Weakness

Unfortunately, many people associate tears of grief with personal inadequacy and weakness. Crying on the part of the mourner generates feelings of helplessness in friends and family. Out of a wish to protect mourners from pain, friends and family may try to stop the tears. Yet crying is nature's way of releasing internal tension in the body and allows the mourner to communicate a need to be comforted. Crying makes people feel better, emotionally and physically. Tears are not a sign of weakness. In fact, crying is an indication of the griever's willingness to do the "work of the mourning."

Myth 4:

The Goal is to "Get Over Your Grief"

We have all heard people ask, "Are you over it yet?" To think that we "get over" grief is ridiculous! We never "get over" our grief but instead become reconciled to it. We do not resolve or recover from our grief. These terms suggest a total return to "normalcy," but we are all forever changed by the experience of grief. For the mourner to assume that life will be exactly as it was prior to the death is unrealistic and damaging. Mourners do, however, learn to reconcile their grief. We learn to integrate the new reality of moving forward without our loved one and with that comes a renewed sense of confidence in the ability to acknowledge the reality of death. The sense of loss does not completely disappear, yet softens, and the intense pangs of grief become less frequent. Hope for a continued life emerges as we are able to make commitments to the future, realizing that the person who died will never be forgotten, yet knowing that one's own life can and will move forward.

GWINNETT CHAPEL

914 Scenic Hwy, Lawrenceville, GA 30045
(770) 338-5558

SOUTH DEKALB CHAPEL

4347 Flat Shoals Pkwy, Decatur, GA 30034
(404) 241-5656

CREMATION CARE OF GEORGIA

1114 Brett Drive SW
Conyers, GA 30094
(770) 388-0012

AVONDALE-SCOTTDALE CHAPEL

351 N. Clarendon Ave, Scottdale, GA 30079
(404) 294-5500

ROCKDALE CHAPEL

1999 Hwy 138 SE, Conyers, GA 30013
(770) 285-6673

CremationCareOfGeorgia.com

HELPING YOURSELF HEAL WHEN SOMEONE DIES



Realize Your Grief is Unique

No one will grieve in exactly the same way. Your experience will be influenced by a variety of factors: the relationship you had, the circumstances surrounding the death, your emotional support system and your cultural and religious background. Don't try to compare your experience with that of other people or to adopt assumptions about just how long your grief should last. Consider taking a "one-day-at-a-time" approach that allows you to grieve at your own pace.

Talk About Your Grief

By sharing your grief outside yourself, healing occurs. Ignoring your grief won't make it go away, talking about it often makes you feel better, even though you may not feel like talking. Find caring friends and relatives who will listen without judging. Seek out those persons who will "walk with you" in your journey through grief. Avoid persons who are critical or who try to tell you to "carry on and be happy." You have a right to express your grief; no one has the right to take it away.

Expect to Feel a Multitude of Emotions

Experiencing a loss affects your head, heart and spirit. So you may experience a variety of emotions as part of your grief work. Confusion, disorganization, fear, guilt, relief or explosive emotions are just a few of the emotions you may feel. As strange as some of these emotions may seem, they are normal and healthy. Don't be surprised if out of nowhere you suddenly experience surges of grief, even at unexpected times. They are, however, a natural response to the death of someone loved. Find someone who understands your feelings and talk about them.

Be Tolerant of Your Physical and Emotional Limits

Your Feelings of loss and sadness will probably leave you fatigued. Your ability to think clearly and make decisions may be impaired. Respect what your body and mind are telling you. Nurture yourself. Get daily rest, Eat balanced meals. Lighten your schedule as much as possible. Caring for yourself doesn't mean feeling sorry for yourself; it means you are using survival skills. Remember grief is a process not an event.

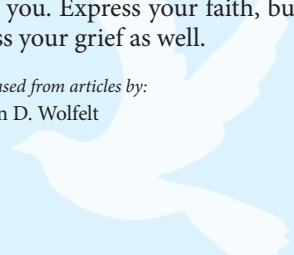
Make Use of Ritual

The funeral ritual does more than acknowledge the death of someone loved. It helps provide you with the support of caring people. Most importantly, the funeral is a way for you to express your grief outside yourself. If you eliminate this ritual, you often set yourself up to repress your feelings and you cheat everyone who cares for a chance to pay tribute to someone who was, and always will be, loved.

Embrace your Spirituality

If faith is a part of your life express it in ways that seem appropriate to you. If you are angry at God because of the death of someone you loved, realize this feeling as a normal part of your grief work. Having personal faith does not insulate you from needing to talk it out and explore your thoughts and feelings. To deny your grief is to invite problems that build up inside you. Express your faith, but express your grief as well.

*Paraphrased from articles by:
Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt*



Testimonial

" I am grateful for the chance to have met Dr. Green at a difficult time in my life. I recently lost my mother and was having a hard time dealing with it. Even though I had several siblings, my mother and I were very close. I was her caregiver. I felt like I had no one to talk to and no one to listen to how I was feeling. Dr. Green opened up her arms to me, was patient with me and most of all listened to me. She allowed me to cry, to get mad and most of all, work through my pain. Thank you Dr. Green for your wonderful spirit and your help."



Dr. Anita Louise Hancock Green

Grief Counseling

Circle, a grief consulting firm she launched a year ago. She is also currently finishing her first book, "The Mourning After: A 30 Day Challenge Towards Healthy Grieving." Her company partners with local funeral homes to provide grief support services and training to individuals, families, companies and funeral home staff. She will be on hand every Thursday in September beginning on the 8th at 6pm

working alongside our funeral home. We are offering a free grief seminar to the public at our Rockdale Chapel. The purpose of the event is to give participants an opportunity to speak with a professional counselor, as well as meet others on the same journey. Gregory B. Levett & Sons Funeral Home & Crematory Inc. is fully committed to creating healthy outlets for the community to come together and heal.

Making it her mission to assist others with moving forward from grief and pain, Dr. Anita Louise Hancock Green is constantly looking for ways to teach people how to find comfort in life's darkest moments. Dr. Green is the CEO of The Grief

Please join us for free grief counseling sessions

**Thursday, Sept. 8th,
15th, 22nd & 29th at 6pm at**

**Gregory B. Levett & Sons
Funeral Homes & Crematory
Rockdale Chapel
1999 Hwy 138 SE, Conyers, GA 30013**

Don't miss this free opportunity to speak with

Dr. Anita Green

and meet other people on the same journey of healing.

*For more information call
404-294-5500*