

LOCAL AND VIRTUAL
RESOURCES FOR GRIEF
AFTER SUBSTANCE-
RELATED DEATH

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Virtual Support and Online Reading Material

– Substance Specific Grief

Click each link below to visit the external sites

Moms Stop the Harm – Healing Hearts Canada

<https://www.healingheartscanada.org/>

Offers virtual support groups and resources

GRASP – Grief Recovery after Substance Passing

Website: www.grasphelp.org

Look under Canada Chapters.

Talking with Children about Drug-Related Death of a Loved One

<https://whatsyourgrief.com/10-helpful-tips-talking-children-drug-related-death-loved-one/>

How You Can Support Someone Grieving a Substance Use Loss

<https://drugfree.org/parent-blog/the-grief-of-an-overdose-death-and-how-you-can-support-someone-grieving-a-substance-use-loss/>

Gone Too Soon – Navigating grief and loss as a result of substance use

<https://www.bccsu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Gone-Too-Soon-Canada-English.pdf>

Alcohol-Related Bereavement

<https://alcoholchange.org.uk/alcohol-facts/fact-sheets/alcohol-related-bereavement>

Living with Drug or Alcohol-Related Bereavement

<https://adfam.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Living-with-drug-or-alcohol-related-bereavement-2025.pdf>

Broken No More

<https://broken-no-more.org/>

Books

Substance-Specific Grief

No individual book is being recommended, as staff may not have read them personally. Individuals are encouraged to further look into each book to decide if it is appropriate for them. Please ensure to check your local library for availability (physical copies, e-books and audio-books are potential options)

Grieving your child due to overdose or substance-related death

When a Child Dies from Drugs - Pat & Russ Wittberger

A parent's account of losing a child to addiction, offering hope and understanding to other grieving families.

Losing Jonathan - Bob & Linda Waxler

A family's story of losing their son to addiction and their journey through grief, healing, and advocacy.

I Am Your Disease - Sheryl Letzgus Mc.Ginnis

A memoir exploring addiction, loss, and a mother's experience after her son's death from substance use.

From Heroin to Hope: Making Sense of the Loss of a Child - Marsha Wiggins

A mother's story of losing a child to addiction and finding meaning, hope, and purpose afterward.

Welcome to the Tribe Sorry You're with Us: Surviving the Traumatic Loss of a Child – SEK

A candid and supportive book for parents grieving the traumatic loss of a child.

Lukelove. My boy, My grief, My journal: Losing a child to opioids - Sheila Scott

A mother's deeply personal reflection on losing her son to opioids and living with grief.

Even if Your Heart Would Listen: Losing My Daughter to Heroin - Elise Schiller

A mother's memoir about losing her daughter to heroin addiction and navigating life afterward.

My New Normal: A Mother's Story of Love and Loss in the Opioid Epidemic - Charla Bocchicchino

A mother's story of love, loss, and resilience following the death of her son during the opioid epidemic.

For the Love of Daniel - Ann Goffe

A personal account of loving and losing a child to addiction and finding purpose in the aftermath.

Not in Vain: Mothers Share their Journey through their Child's Life and Loss to the Drug Pandemic - Bobbie R. Ziemer

A collection of stories from mothers sharing their experiences of losing children during the addiction and overdose crisis.

Don't Forget Me: A Lifeline of Hope for Those Touched by Substance Abuse and Addiction – Steve M. Grant

Grant shares the heartbreaking story of losing both of his sons to accidental drug overdoses within a few years of each other. He details his family's struggle through the devastation of addiction, his deep grief, and his eventual movement toward advocacy and hope. The memoir offers deep empathy and support for parents navigating the trauma of substance-related loss.

Grieving anyone due to overdose or substance-related death

Understanding Your Grief after a Drug-Overdose Death - Alan Wolfelt

Provides compassionate guidance for people grieving a loved one who died from an overdose, addressing the unique challenges of this type of loss.

Surviving the Grief of an Overdose Death - Eleanor Haley

Helps readers understand and cope with the complex emotions that often follow an overdose loss.

Grief Diaries Surviving Loss by Overdose - Lynda Cheldelin Fell, Shannie Jenkins, Whitney O'Brien

A collection of personal stories from individuals and families affected by overdose loss.

The Grief Chronicles: With You in My Eyes Like Flaming Flowers: A Survivors Guide to Death by Overdose - Marie Minnich

A survivor's account of grieving a loved one lost to overdose and finding a path forward.

Addiction and Overdose – Connie Goldsmith

Goldsmith offers an informative, accessible overview of the science of substance use disorders and the mechanics of drug overdoses. She outlines the historical context, social impacts, and medical realities driving current addiction rates. It serves as an essential, non-judgmental educational resource for families trying to understand the disease.

Overdose – Benjamin Perrin

Perrin provides an urgent, deeply researched examination of the public health crisis surrounding opioid overdoses and toxic drug supplies. Blending investigative reporting with stories from frontline workers and grieving families, he highlights systemic failures and human costs. The book calls for compassionate, evidence-based policy shifts to prevent further preventable deaths.

Age of Fentanyl – Brodie Ramin

Dr. Ramin, an addiction medicine physician, offers a firsthand perspective on how synthetic opioids transformed the landscape of substance use. He explains the biology of addiction, the lethal potency of fentanyl, and the human lives behind the statistics. It provides a realistic yet hopeful look at modern treatment approaches and harm-reduction strategies.

Substance-Specific Grief Books for Children

All the Pieces: When a Loved One Dies from Substance Use - Hallie Riggs, MSW, LICSW (ages 5-11)

Often, children who lose a loved one to overdose are not truthfully told what happened to the person who died, because of the stigma associated with this type of death. They often assume that the death was their fault (rather than that it was the symptom of a disease) and that it's not okay to remember their loved one, nor is it okay to feel angry about the death. This book aims to help parents and practitioners address these specific areas and provide validation/ normalization of these grief response

A Kids Book About Overdose - Lee S. Varon, LICSW (ages 5-11)

This book is carefully written for children and grownups to read together about drug overdoses, the disease of addiction, how to get help when someone experiences an overdose, and validation for a variety of grief responses.

Local In-Person Supports non-specific grief

Hospice Niagara

Email: info@hospiceniagara.ca Phone: 905-984-8766

Website: www.hospiceniagara.ca

Bereavement support is available to anyone in the Niagara region regardless of cause of death. Hospice Niagara provides facilitated peer support groups for adults, teens, children and families. Some groups they have are grief walks, mindfulness hikes, peer support groups, processing group through music and photography.

Wind Phone is for anyone who has lost someone special in their life. It provides a way to express feelings, share memories and say the goodbyes you never had the opportunity to say. The concept is simple, yet incredibly profound. While the actual phone is not connected to anything, it offers an opportunity for people who are grieving to talk with their special person — to say what they need to say, and release it to the wind (directions are available on the Hospice Niagara Website, it is located along twenty-mile creek).

Walk with Me Niagara

Phone: 289-686-5133

Run by Judy & Joe Micieli

12-week program providing support for those who have lost a child of any age, from any cause.

Loving Outreach - St. Catharines

Website: www.lovingoutreach.org Email: lovingoutreach@becon.org

Location: Bethany Community Church 1388 Third St, St. Catharines Room #117

2nd Monday of each month at 7pm (excluding stat holidays as well as the months of June, July & August)

A support group for people who are living with the loss of a loved one through suicide.

Rose Cottage Visiting Volunteers

Phone: 289-566-9588 Website: www.rosecottagevolunteers.com

Email: info@rcvv@gmail.com

Supporting families dealing with loss or life-threatening illness. Provides bereavement support, drop-in programs and visiting volunteers.

A Hand Along the Way is a bereavement support group that provides a place to share your grief with others who understand and have also experienced grief.

Grief Share (Faith Based)

Website: www.griefshare.org

Can search by your city for local support groups with different days and times available.

\$20 cost for the workbook. There are several local in person meetings available.

Grief Recovery Outreach Program – St. Catharines

Phone: 905-937-4444 Website: www.dartefuneralhome.com

Email: susan@dartefuneralhome.com

Once a week for 2 hours for 6 weeks. All bereaved welcome, offers practical coping skills for adults and children.

Cost - \$20 for the handbook

Virtual Supports non-specific grief

Bereaved Families of Ontario – South Central Region

24/7 Crisis Line: 1-833-456-4566

Texting available 4pm – 12am ET: 45645

Main Phone: 905-318-0070

Bereavement support groups for children, teens and parents in Niagara, Hamilton, Brant, Brantford, Burlington and Haldimand Norfolk areas.

Website: <https://www.bfoscr.com/>

Email: programming@bfoscr.com

Phone and Online Support through Digital Memorial Compassion Hotline

Phone: 800-343-4464

A toll free number available 24/7 with registered grief counselors. It's available in all languages (by request) as well as via email (after initial phone call) for those people who would rather write their feelings out and communicate that way.

Helpful Websites non-specific grief

MyGrief

www.mygrief.ca

Offers resources to help you understand grief and work through some of the difficult issues you may be facing. Developed by a team of national and international grief experts together with people who have experienced significant loss in their own lives. Not meant to replace professional counselling or other health care services. The program is set up in modules that you can work through at your own pace.

What's Your Grief

www.whatsyourgrief.com

Offers articles, courses, creativity, community sharing and more.

David Kessler – Grief Expert

<https://grief.com/>

Offers education, resources, online communities and workshops to support yourself through the grieving process.

Grief Yoga – Paul Denniston

www.griefyoga.com

Free (virtual) grief yoga classes, online community, grief movement training

Kids Grief

www.kidsgrief.ca

Free online resource to help parents support their children when someone has died or is dying
Activity books, resources, online community

Books non-specific grief

No individual book is being recommended, as staff may not have read them personally. Individuals are encouraged to further look into each book to decide if it is appropriate for them. Please ensure to check your local library for availability (physical copies, e-books and audio-books are potential options)

Grieving your child

The Voice of an Angel: A Mother's guide to grief and how to thrive after the loss of a child - Marcy Stone

A mother's guide to surviving grief and finding ways to live fully after the death of a child.

Letters to Kelsea: Life After Death - Tracy Lyn Lawler

A collection of letters and reflections written by a mother after the death of her daughter.

Letters to Matt - MaryBeth Cichocki, R.N.

A mother's heartfelt letters to her son after his death, reflecting on grief, love, and remembrance.

Knock, Knock, It's Me, Mom: The Awakening of my Spirituality After Losing An Only Child - Carol Cooper

A mother's story of spiritual awakening and healing after the death of her only child.

Shattered: Surviving the Loss of a Child (Good Grief Series) - Gary Roe

Offers support, validation, and practical guidance for parents grieving the death of a child.

Bearing the Unbearable – Joanne Cacciatore

Written by a grief counselor and researcher who lost her own child, this book frames grief not as a condition to be fixed, but as a sacred process of love. Through short reflections and real stories, Cacciatore encourages readers to fully inhabit their pain rather than push it away. It serves as a deeply compassionate guide to living alongside profound sorrow.

Grieving your Sibling

Healing the Adult Siblings Grieving Heart: 100 Practical Ideas After Your Brother or Sister Dies - Alan Wolfelt

Provides practical ideas and support for adults grieving the death of a brother or sister.

Grieving your Parent

Wild – Cheryl Strayed

Following the sudden loss of her mother and the tailspin that ensued, Strayed embarks on a solo 1,100-mile hike along the Pacific Crest Trail. The journey serves as a raw, physical processing of grief, addiction, and self-discovery. Through extreme physical challenge, she gradually pieced her identity back together.

Always Too Soon – Allison Gilbert

Gilbert interviews a wide array of notable figures about how losing one or both parents shaped their adult lives. The book highlights the long-term impact of parental loss, emphasizing that grief does not end when adulthood begins. It provides both comfort and validation, proving that even as adults, we are never fully prepared to be orphaned.

I'm Not a Mourning Person – Kris Carr

Carr shares her real-time experience of caring for and ultimately losing her father while managing her own chronic health conditions. Blending signature wit with practical guidance, she challenges standard conventions of how grief "should" look. The result is a grounded roadmap for navigating heavy loss without losing oneself in the process.

Death of a Parent: Transitions to a New Adult Identity – Debra Umberson

Sociologist Debra Umberson examines how the death of a parent acts as a major psychological pivot point in an adult's life. Drawing on extensive research, she details how this loss reshapes personal identity, marital bonds, and family dynamics. It offers a structured, evidence-based look at the profound internal changes that occur after a parent dies.

Forgiving Our Parents, Forgiving Ourselves: Healing Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families – David A. Stoop

Stoop addresses the challenge of grieving a parent when the childhood relationship was damaged, dysfunctional, or abusive. He walks readers through understanding family patterns, releasing long-held resentments, and finding personal peace. The book offers a therapeutic blueprint for healing the past so adults can live freely in the present.

Healing the Adult Child's Grieving Heart: 100 Practical Ideas after Your Parent Dies – Dr. Alan Wolfelt

Wolfelt provides a compassionate, easy-to-digest guide structured around 100 practical, actionable ideas for processing a parent's death. Each short entry focuses on a specific aspect of mourning, such as handling holidays, honoring memories, or managing physical fatigue. It is designed to offer accessible comfort for readers who feel overwhelmed by lengthy texts.

How to Survive the Loss of a Parent – Ackner & Whitney

Focusing on the unique weight of losing a parent in adulthood, this book acts as a steady handbook through the immediate aftermath and long-term adjustments. Akner draws on her clinical experience to address identity shifts, guilt, and family conflicts that often surface. It provides practical tools for navigating emotional turmoil while keeping everyday life intact.

Losing Your Parents, Finding Yourself: The Defining Turning Point of Adult Life – Victoria Secunda

Secunda explores how the death of a parent—even an abusive or distant one—forces an adult child into a powerful stage of identity transformation. She breaks down different family dynamics and offers guidance on how to claim full independence after the ultimate safety net is gone. The book helps readers step out of their parents' shadows into a mature self-concept.

Midlife Orphan – Jane Brooks

Brooks specifically examines the experience of losing parents during middle age, when individuals are often simultaneously raising their own children and managing peak career demands. She frames parental loss at this stage as a critical crossroads that forces a reevaluation of mortality, marriage, and legacy. The text provides empathetic validation for the distinct loneliness of midlife bereavement.

The Orphaned Adult – Alexander Levy

Levy tackles the unacknowledged reality that losing your parents as a grown adult is a profound, life-altering milestone. He explores the sudden vulnerability of having no generation standing between oneself and death, alongside the shifts in identity that follow. With warmth and psychological insight, it validates the deep grief that society often expects adults to quickly minimize.

Notes on Grief – Chimanda Ngozi Adichie

Adichie writes with raw urgency in the immediate aftermath of her father's sudden death during the COVID-19 pandemic. The text captures the disorienting, visceral shock of losing a parent when physical connection and traditional mourning rituals are disrupted. It offers an exquisite, vulnerable meditation on family dynamics, memory, and the sharp edges of loss.

Nobody's Child Anymore: Grieving, Caring, and Comforting when a Parent Dies – Barbara Bartocci

Bartocci blends personal stories and practical tips to guide adults through caring for aging parents, managing end-of-life logistics, and grieving their deaths. She offers gentle advice on managing sibling friction, sorting through childhood homes, and processing complex emotions. It serves as a practical, reassuring guide through the messy realities of midlife loss.

Fatherloss: How Sons of All Ages Come to Terms with the Deaths of Their Dads – Neil Chethik

Chethik presents an in-depth study specifically focused on how men grieve the loss of their fathers. Based on interviews with over 300 sons, he highlights the different ways men process sorrow—often through action, solitude, or quietly honoring a legacy. The book provides a valuable framework for understanding male emotional responses to paternal loss.

H is for Hawk – Helen Macdonald

Paralyzed by grief after her father's unexpected death, Macdonald decides to train one of nature's most ferocious predators—a goshawk named Mabel. The intense, solitary process of taming the bird becomes a metaphor for her own wild, fierce mourning. It is a striking blend of nature writing, biography, and deep emotional recovery.

Longing for Dad: Father Loss and Its Impact – Beth M. Erickson, PH.D.

Erickson investigates the deep psychological footprint left by the loss of a father, whether through death, absence, or emotional distance. She explains how paternal loss influences self-esteem, relationship choices, and authority dynamics throughout an adult daughter's or son's life. The book provides actionable therapeutic steps to help heal father wounds and build emotional resilience.

Cradled All the While: The Unexpected Gifts of a Mother's Death – Sara Corse

Corse shares her intimate journey through her mother's terminal illness and passing, highlighting the spiritual and emotional transformations that occurred along the way. She frames the end-of-life caregiving process as a sacred, albeit painful, period of connection. The book offers solace to those seeking deeper meaning within the hardship of loss.

A Grace Disguised – Jerry Sittser

After losing his wife, mother, and daughter in a single tragic car accident, Sittser reflects on catastrophic loss from a theological and human perspective. He argues that pain is not something to simply survive or move past, but a transformative force that can expand the soul's capacity for compassion. The work provides profound insight into finding purpose within unimaginable tragedy.

In My Mother's Kitchen: An Introduction to the Healing Power of Reminiscence – Robin A. Edgar

Edgar focuses on using shared memories, family recipes, and sensory storytelling as tools to process the loss of a mother. She outlines practical techniques for capturing family oral histories and preserving traditions before and after a parent passes. It serves as an uplifting guide to celebrating a mother's legacy through conscious reflection.

The Dead Moms Club – Kate Spencer

Written with irreverent humor and frank honesty, Spencer shares her experience of losing her mother to cancer when she was 27. She offers a compassionate, non-preachy field guide for anyone thrust into the club no child wants to join. The book validates the weird, uncomfortable, and surprisingly funny moments that accompany deep heartbreak.

In the Letting Go: Words to Heal the Heart on the Death of a Mother – Jonathon Lazear

Lazear offers a quiet collection of reflections, quotes, and gentle meditations tailored specifically for those mourning a mother's death. Designed to be read in short bursts, it targets the sharp, quiet ache of maternal loss without demanding heavy concentration. It acts as a supportive companion for moments of acute loneliness.

The Last Violet: Mourning My Mother – Lois Tschetter Hjelmstad

Hjelmstad offers a tender, poetic account of her journey through the death of her elderly mother. Through reflections, letters, and memories, she processes the complex emotions of filial love, legacy, and final goodbyes. It serves as a gentle companion for adult children navigating the quiet void left by a parent's passing.

Mother and Two Daughters – Gail Godwin

This novel opens with the sudden death of family patriarch Nell Strickland's husband, forcing Nell and her two adult daughters to renegotiate their lives and relationships. As the three women mourn, they must navigate their own distinct life crises while confronting long-held family patterns. It provides a nuanced, fictional exploration of how loss reorganizes female relationships within a family.

Motherloss – Lynn Davidman

Davidman presents a sociological study examining how the early loss of a mother shapes a girl's transition into adulthood. Through interviews with women who lost their mothers in childhood or adolescence, she reveals long-term effects on self-image, mothering styles, and independence. It offers valuable insight into how grief weaves itself into the core of one's ongoing development.

Motherless Mothers – Hope Edelman

Edelman focuses on the distinct challenge faced by women who become mothers themselves after having lost their own mothers earlier in life. Drawing on research and personal interviews, she explores how mothering without a maternal guide brings up fresh waves of grief and anxiety. The book offers reassurance and practical coping strategies for parenting through the void of loss.

Crying in H Mart – Michelle Zauner

Zauner explores her complicated relationship with her mother, who was diagnosed with terminal cancer when Zauner was in her early twenties. Through the lens of food, language, and Korean culture, she explores identity, regret, and maternal love. The narrative follows her attempt to preserve her mother's memory by learning to cook the traditional dishes they once shared.

The Long Goodbye: A Memoir – Meghan O'Rourke

O'Rourke details her mother's battle with cancer and the profound, isolating grief that followed her death. She integrates personal experience with cultural analysis to examine how modern society often fails to accommodate mourning. It stands as a candid look at the physical and emotional disorientation of losing a foundational parent.

Grieving your Spouse

The Hot Young Widows Club – Nora McInerny

Based on her popular TED Talk and community work, McInerny offers a short, honest, and humor-infused guide to navigating the loss of a partner. She dismantles societal expectations around "moving on," encouraging readers to embrace the messy reality of living alongside loss. It is a quick, modern lifeline for anyone grieving a spouse, particularly at an early age.

The Loss of a Life Partner: Narratives of the Bereaved – Carolyn Amber Walter

Walter presents a research-backed collection of stories illustrating how individuals navigate the profound identity rupture caused by losing a spouse. She examines key factors such as gender, duration of relationship, and age to show how widowhood alters daily reality. It provides both academic perspective and personal comfort to those processing partner loss.

Lost My Partner – What'll I do? – Laurie J. Spector, M.S.W & Ruth Spector Webster, M.S.W

Written by social workers, this practical manual breaks down the immediate logistical, financial, and emotional decisions following a partner's death. It covers everything from managing legal paperwork to coping with severe loneliness in the first year. The book acts as a clear, step-by-step workbook for rebuilding an independent life.

On the Road: Surviving the Loss of a Spouse – Sheryl Garrett

Garrett shares her personal journey of navigating widowhood, offering direct advice on surviving the acute early stages of grief. She focuses on the practical realities of managing day-to-day life, finances, and emotional health after losing a partner. The book serves as a straightforward guide for moving forward while honoring your shared history.

The Tender Scar: Life After the Death of a Spouse – Richard L. Mabry

Written by a physician following the unexpected death of his wife, this book combines personal experience with medical and spiritual insights. Mabry addresses the physical symptoms of grief, spiritual doubts, and the realistic timeline of emotional recovery. It offers gentle, clear comfort for individuals navigating the deep ache of spousal loss.

Waking Up Alone: Grief & Healing – Julie Cicero

Cicero outlines the specific emotional landscape of adjusting to single life after the death of a long-term partner. She offers practical advice for dealing with empty routines, managing social isolation, and rediscovering personal identity. The book emphasizes patience and self-compassion as key elements of long-term healing.

Widow to Widow: Thoughtful, Practical Ideas for Rebuilding Your Life – Genevieve Davis Ginsburg

A classic reference in grief literature, Ginsburg—a widow herself—offers sensible, warm advice on rebuilding a life after losing a husband. She touches on every stage of widowhood, including handling financial decisions, managing friendships, and eventually considering dating again. It serves as a comprehensive, peer-led handbook for women adjusting to life on their own.

The Widowed Self: The Older Woman's Journey through Widowhood – Deborah Kestin van den Hoonaard

This sociological study explores how older women experience the transition to widowhood, focusing on changes in identity, social networks, and independence. Based on in-depth interviews, the author illuminates how society treats widows and how women rebuild their daily routines. It gives voice to the subtle, everyday adjustments of aging through loss.

A Decembered Grief: Living with Loss While Others are Celebrating – Harold Ivan Smith

Smith addresses the intense emotional challenge of navigating holidays, family traditions, and end-of-year celebrations while grieving a significant loss. He offers practical strategies for managing societal expectations, setting boundaries, and creating low-pressure rituals. It provides a comforting guide for anyone dreading the holiday season after a death.

Healing a Spouse's Grieving Heart: 100 Practical Ideas After Your Husband or Wife Dies – Dr. Alan Wolfelt

Wolfelt presents 100 practical, brief strategies specifically aimed at individuals mourning the death of a husband, wife, or life partner. The concise suggestions cover managing intense emotions, establishing new routines, and handling anniversary dates. Its accessible format is designed for readers who are experiencing the cognitive fog of acute grief.

I'm Grieving as Fast as I Can: How Young Widows and Widowers Can Cope and Heal – Linda Feinberg

Feinberg focuses on the unique challenges faced by young widows and widowers, who often feel isolated from peers of the same age. She addresses single parenting, career demands, societal expectations, and the awkwardness of early widowhood. It offers validating guidance for those forced to completely redesign their life plan far sooner than expected.

Loss and Found: How We Survived the Loss of a Young Spouse – Kathy & Gary Young

This co-authored book shares the perspectives of two individuals who lost their young spouses and eventually found love again together. They candidly discuss the initial shock of young widowhood, raising grieving children, and the delicate dynamics of remarriage. It offers hope that life can expand to hold new happiness alongside enduring memories.

Widowed Too Soon: A Young Widow's Journey through Grief, Healing, and Spiritual Transformation – Laura Hirsch

Hirsch details her experience of losing her husband at a young age, charting her path through acute trauma toward spiritual renewal and peace. She focuses on how tragic loss can become a catalyst for deep internal transformation and renewed faith. The memoir offers comfort to young widows seeking meaning amid sudden upheaval.

Widows Wear Stilettos: A Practical and Emotional Guide for the Young Widow – Carole Brody Fleet & Syd Harriet

This book delivers a modern, upbeat guide for young widows who feel out of place in traditional support groups. The authors address complex topics like handling well-meaning but insensitive comments, managing finances, solo parenting, and re-entering the dating world. It empowers women to navigate their grief with strength, humor, and self-respect.

Come As You Are: Five Years Later – G. Scott Graham

Graham reflects on the long-term arc of grief five years after losing his partner, challenging the idea that recovery follows a neat timeline. He provides a reflective look at how loss shapes identity over time and how to create a meaningful life around the void. The book is ideal for those looking past the immediate crisis into long-term adjustment.

Feeling Left Behind: Permission to Grieve – Kim Murdock

Murdock addresses the distinct, often unacknowledged feeling of being left behind by a partner who died young. She gives readers explicit permission to feel angry, confused, and overwhelmed without judgment. The text offers validation and gentle steps to help build a life that honors the past while step-by-step embracing the present.

The Widow's Comeback – Lisa Woolery

Woolery offers an encouraging guide aimed at helping widows regain their personal power, confidence, and joy after losing a life partner. She combines personal anecdotes with actionable steps for emotional healing, physical wellness, and goal-setting. It acts as an empowering roadmap for designing a fulfilling new chapter.

A Grief Observed – C.S Lewis

Originally published under a pseudonym, Lewis records his devastating crisis of faith and emotional unraveling after the death of his wife, Joy Davidman. The short book traces his journey through anger, doubt, and raw despair toward a redefined sense of spirituality. It remains one of the classic texts on the visceral realities of bereavement.

Grieving anyone

Living When a Loved One Has Died - Earl A Grollman

Offers practical and emotional support for navigating life after the death of someone important.

The Next Place - Warren Hanson

A beautifully illustrated book that imagines a peaceful and comforting place after death.

Permission to Mourn: A New Way to Do Grief - Tom Zuba

Encourages readers to embrace grief rather than avoid it, offering a compassionate approach to healing.

Becoming Radiant: A New Way to Do Life Following the Death of a Beloved - Tom Zuba

Explores how people can rebuild their lives and find meaning after profound loss.

Only Gone from Your Sight: A Love Letter from Heaven - Kate McGahan, LMSW

A comforting book written from the perspective of a loved one who has died, offering messages of love and reassurance.

Signs The Secret Language of the Universe - Laura Lynne Jackson

Explores stories and experiences of people who believe they have received signs and messages from loved ones who have died.

It's Ok That You're Not Ok - Megan Devine

Challenges common myths about grief and validates the reality that grief is a natural response to loss, not something to "fix."

Grief Day By Day: Simple Practices and Daily Guidance for Living with Loss - Jan Warner

Provides daily reflections, coping tools, and gentle guidance for people living with grief.

Tears to Ink - Fred di Marco

Explores grief through writing and personal reflection as a tool for healing.

Maybe You Should Talk to Someone - Lori Gottlieb

A therapist's memoir that combines stories of clients and her own experiences in therapy, exploring loss, healing, and being human.

Understanding Guilt During Bereavement - Bob Baugher, PHD

Helps grieving individuals understand and work through feelings of guilt that often accompany loss.

Nature Heals: Reconciling Your Grief Through Engaging with the Natural World - Alan Wolfelt

Explores how connecting with nature can support healing and growth during the grieving process.

The Memory Book: A Grief Journal for Children and Families - Joanna Rowland

A guided journal that helps children and families remember loved ones and express their grief together.

No Happy Endings: A Memoir – An Unconventional and Hilarious Tragicomic Memoir of Life, Love, Loss, and Moving Forward to Joy – Nora McInerny

McInerny navigates the complex aftermath of losing her husband, her father, and an unborn child all within a single month. With humor and vulnerability, she rejects the notion that grief comes with neat resolution or clean endings. Instead, she illustrates how to hold deep sorrow alongside new love and joy without needing to erase the past.

Books for Children

Badger's Parting Gifts - Susan Varley (ages 4-10)

When Badger dies, his friends are sad and miss him, but they gradually find comfort in the memories, lessons, and gifts he left behind. A gentle introduction to death and remembrance.

I Miss You - Pat Thomas (ages 4-8)

A straightforward, child-friendly book that explains death, grief, funerals, and the feelings that can come with losing someone important.

When Someone Very Special Dies - Marge Heegaard (ages 6-12)

An interactive workbook that uses drawing, writing, and activities to help children express their feelings and process grief after a loss.

Tear Soup - Pat Schwiebert and Chuck DeKlyern (ages 10+)

Uses the metaphor of making soup to explain grief, showing that everyone grieves differently and that healing takes time. A comforting resource for all ages.

The Invisible String - Patricia Karst (ages 4-10)

A comforting story that teaches children that love connects us to the people we care about, even when they are far away or have died.

Straight Talk About Death for Teenagers: How to Cope with Losing Someone You Love - Earl A. Grollman (ages 13+)

A practical and compassionate guide that helps teens understand grief, normalize their feelings, and navigate life after a significant loss.

How I Feel, A Coloring Book for Grieving Children - Alan D. Wolfelt, PHD (ages 5-12)

An interactive coloring book that helps children identify, express, and process difficult emotions related to grief and loss.

The Memory Book: A Grief Journal for Children and Families - Joanna Rowland (ages 6+)

A guided journal that encourages children and families to remember loved ones, share memories, and process grief together.

Healing Your Grieving Heart for Teens: 100 Practical Ideas - Alan D. Wolfelt, PHD (ages 13+)

A collection of simple activities, coping strategies, and reflections designed to help teens work through grief in healthy ways.

Something Very Sad Happened: A Toddlers Guide to Understanding Death – Bonnie Zucker (ages 2-3)

Gentle picture book that helps toddlers understand death and grief.