



My Grief Support Group

Journal

Each member of the Grief Support Group should have a copy of this Journal. It provides information and preparation suggestions for each of the seven weeks of a basic grief support group. Group members should bring their Journal to each meeting. Members will be given preparation for the next meeting each week.

This Journal is one of three documents of a Grief Support Group package prepared by Jane Powell, a member of L'Arche Toronto. These documents are made available by L'Arche Canada (www.larche.ca) on its Aging and Disability website: www.aging-and-disability.org/grief_support_kit.

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Photo of Greg Lannan
by Marion de Couto

A note about Greg Lannan's cover artwork

"The clouds and rain are a symbol for being sad in your heart.

The sun represents the light of God and choosing to be open to new things as well as sad.

The heart reminds of being loved and listening.

The tree can be a sign of protection, spending time together, and forgiveness.

The flower invites us to be light and love for others and reminds us we cannot do it alone."

Greg Lannan is a member of L'Arche Toronto

Week 1 Thinking about loss



Get to know the group a bit.

Talk about grief in general terms.

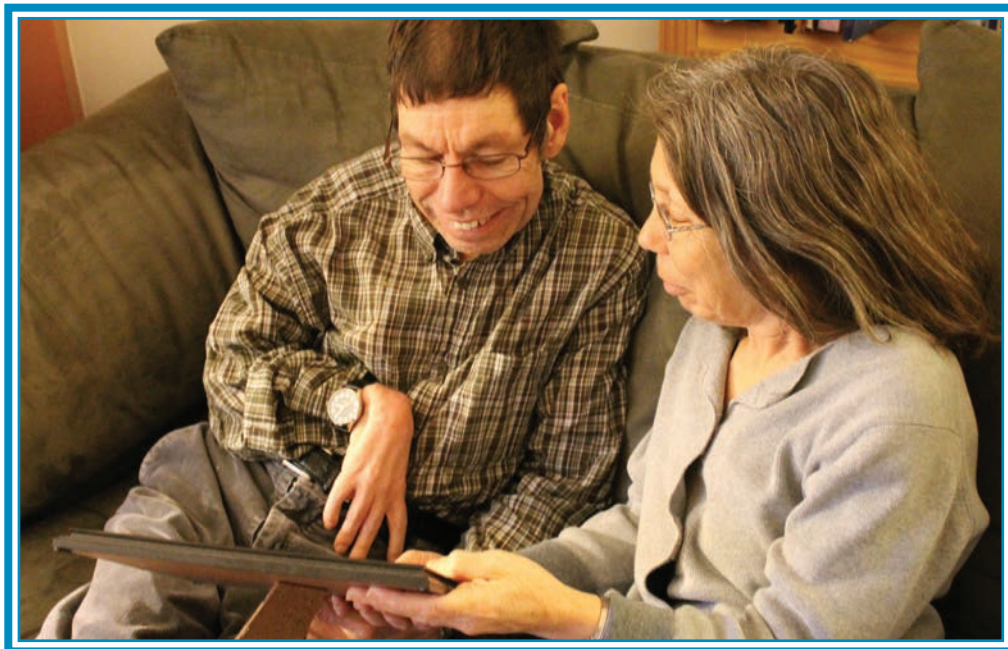
Do an activity together—decorate a mandala.



Next week

come prepared to tell the story of your loved one's death. Bring a picture of this person.

Week 2 **Sharing your story**



Share the story of your loved one's death and show their picture.

Share why this loved one was important to you.

Share in a way that is comfortable for you.

Listen to others.



Next week

be prepared to share about the funeral or memorial service for your loved one and how you said goodbye to them.

Week 3 **Saying goodbye**



Talk about your loved one's funeral or memorial service and how you said goodbye to them.

Listen to others share.

Make a card for your loved one.

Bring home the pictures of the four main feelings that your group leader will give you this week.



Next week

we will talk about some of the feelings and other experiences we might have while we are grieving. Look at the pictures of the four main feelings. Can you identify them?

Week 4 What is grief?



Talk about the different feelings and other experiences we might have while grieving.

Identify what have been your most common ways of reacting to loss.

Bring home the page "What has stayed the same and what is different since your loved one died?" Your group leader will give you this.



Next week

For next week look at the page "What has stayed the same and what is different since your loved one died?" We will talk about this. We will talk about looking after ourselves.

Week 5 What do you need to do now?



Talk about what has stayed the same and what is different for you since your loved one died.

Look together at some of the things we need to do while we are grieving? Look at ways you need to take care of yourself.

Activity: Create a path together to see where you are now as a group in your grief work.



Next week

Do one special thing for yourself this week. Come ready to tell the group about it.

Week 6 Looking after yourself



Dominik Karolak

Talk about some ways to look after yourself.

Talk about why this is important while you are grieving.

Share one nice thing you did for yourself this week.

Activity: Practise some self-care techniques together.



Next week

For next week set one or two goals for yourself. Come prepared to share about your goals. Bring an item for the potluck if you are asked.

Week 7 A celebration of life



Enjoy dinner or dessert together.

Talk about the goals you set for yourself.

Decide as a group if you want to get together again.

