



Welcome to “Grief Journey: Explorations”, a two page quarterly newsletter created by Eastern Health Grief and Bereavement Services.

**Topic:** Traumatic Grief

**Case Study:** It’s been a month since Fred’s best friend died by suicide. He didn’t find his friend, but he might as well have, given the images that keep going through his head. Fred’s experience of these images were traumatic. He also experienced grief after having lost his best friend.

**Question:** What is best to address first, the trauma or the grief, or does it matter?

**Answer:** When a client like Fred presents himself for grief counselling, the initial assessment determines the risk for Complicated Grief Disorder (CGD). Whether the client is eventually diagnosed with CGD is secondary to the care that is necessary to address the personal trauma. The impact of the trauma on the grief process determines the necessity to provide Trauma Informed Care, which may be described as care “organized around the principles of safety/trustworthiness, choice/collaboration/empowerment, and a strengths-based approach.”<sup>1</sup>

**Article:** “The Younger Sibling of PTSD: similarities and differences between complicated grief and post-traumatic stress disorder,” by Andreas Maercker and Hansjorg Znoj, *European Journal of Psychotraumatology* 2010. Downloaded on December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3402016/>

<sup>1</sup>“Trauma Informed Care: What is it and Why Should We Care?” by Nancy Smyth, *Social Work Helper*, published December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017. <https://www.socialworkhelper.com/2017/01/27/trauma-informed-care/>

**Theory Snapshot:** According to Therese Rando, (Rando, T. (1993) *Treatment of Complicated Mourning*) often trauma needs to be partially or totally addressed before working through the grief.

A guideline for addressing trauma and grief may include the individual(s)

1. To acknowledge the lived experience of trauma.
2. To acknowledge trauma’s connection to grief, i.e. the loss and the pain of separation.
3. To acknowledge trauma’s impact on the bereaved.

## Grief and Bereavement Services News and Events

### Staff Programs

**Supporting Staff with Grief (In-service):** The Bereavement Education Committee has adapted the Saint Elizabeth Health Care, Toronto, ON, resource, “Supporting Staff with Grief: A Guide for Leaders,” into a 90 minute In-service to support Eastern Health staff with their grief in the workplace and in their personal lives. This resource is available to staff throughout the Eastern Health Region through a request to the Regional Bereavement Coordinator by telephoning 777-2167 or emailing peter.barnes@easternhealth.ca.

**Grief Counsellors Peer Support Group:** A group of EH staff who provide grief and bereavement counselling throughout the region meet once a month at Mount Pearl Square or via teleconference. This monthly one hour session consists of a 20 minute presentation on a topic, 20 minutes of discussion on that topic and 20 minutes for sharing of a case(s) that is brought forth by one or more of the participants. The meeting date varies to accommodate staff schedules. It is usually the third week of the month on a Wednesday or Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. If you wish to attend the Grief Counsellors Peer Support Group sessions, please contact Mag Snook at 777-8972.

### Programs for the Public

**Grief and Bereavement Information Session:** This two-hour session provides information on understanding grief, guides you through the grieving process, and provides tips on what you can do to help yourself and others during times of grief. There are short videos, discussions and sharing (optional) of thoughts and feelings on grief. Sessions are held the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Dr. L. A. Miller Centre, St. John’s. Sessions are free and open to the general public, including staff on their personal time. No registration required.

**Upcoming Event:** An 8-week Bereavement Information and Support Group Program will be offered at Health Science Centre Chapel (next to the cafeteria) beginning January 18, 2018. Participants will meet on Thursday afternoons from 1:30—3:30 p.m. For more information, or to register please contact Robyn Whitten at 777-6959 or Scott Parsons at 777-7611 or email RevScott.Parsons@easternhealth.ca.

### Support Groups

**Survivors of Suicide and Loss:** Contact Tina Davies, 709-726-4223.

**Compassionate Friends:** Loss of children of any age. Contact Dianna Cadigan, 709-753-3530.

**Spousal Grief Support Group:** Daffodil Place, Ropewalk Lane, St. John’s, Mondays, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

**Spousal Grief Support Group:** Upper Gullies, CBS, St. Peter’s Church Hall, Tuesdays, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

**Parent Loss Grief Support Group:** Daffodil Place, Ropewalk Lane, St. John’s, Thursdays, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

*For further information contact Peter Barnes, Regional Bereavement Coordinator at 709-777-2167 or peter.barnes@easternhealth.ca or Mag Snook at 709-777-8972 or Margaret.Snook@easternhealth.ca*

*You can also visit the Eastern Health (EH) Intranet. To find us, go to <http://pulse.easternhealth.ca> Select “Programs and Services”, ” Select “Clinical”, Select “Rehabilitation, Continuing Care, Palliative Care”.*

*Or visit us on the EH Internet at [http://www.easternhealth.ca/OurServices/Grief and Bereavement Services](http://www.easternhealth.ca/OurServices/Grief%20and%20Bereavement%20Services)*