



HOSPICE RENFREW

Grief & Bereavement

SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to Hospice Renfrew's **grief & bereavement newsletter**, where we share monthly updates about our services, events, and resources to assist you in your grief or to share with others in their bereavement.

Introducing

A New Continuum of Grief Support Groups

Our Renfrew-based grief support groups have evolved to better meet the needs of our grieving community (Arnprior and Cobden groups are unchanged).



Drop-In Bereavement Café

Gather with others navigating loss in an informal environment. Enjoy coffee, tea and baked goods. All are welcome, no registration required, facilitated by a trained Grief & Bereavement Volunteer.

3rd Thursday of the Month (Sept 17), 1pm - 2:30pm
Lower level of Hospice Renfrew



Monthly Peer Support Groups

Structured gatherings facilitated by our Grief & Bereavement Volunteers, providing a space to share, listen and connect with others grieving after the death of a loved one. Spaces are limited, please RSVP.

Renfrew - *Hospice Renfrew*

- 2nd Wednesday of the month, 4:30pm - 6pm
- Wednesday, September 9, 2026

Cobden - *Cobden Legion*

- Last Wednesday of the month, 5pm - 6:30pm



- Wednesday, September 30, 2026

Arnprior - *Arnprior Public Library*

- 1st Thursday of the month, 4:30pm - 6pm
- Thursday, September 3, 2026

Grief Group Therapy

Therapist-led, closed group therapy for support with specific types of loss, running for 6-8 weeks intermittently throughout the calendar year.

Next Session:

Surviving Suicide Loss

- Beginning September 21, 2026 and gathering on Mondays at 6:30pm for 8 weeks



For more information or to attend, contact grief@hospicerenfrew.ca
or call **(613) 433-3993 ext. 2237**

Register

Upcoming Events



Surviving Suicide Loss

8-Week Grief Support Group

Therapist-led, closed
support group running for 8 weeks
beginning Monday, September 21,
2026



Monday at 6:30-8pm



Hospice Renfrew

459 Albert St.
Renfrew, ON

Participants will be guided through a therapeutic 8-week series involving psychoeducation on grief after suicide, a safe, confidential space to share your story and an opportunity to connect with others facing similar losses.

To complete an intake assessment and reserve your spot:



613-433-3993 x.2237



grief@hospicerenfrew.ca

Beginning September 21, 2026 and running for 8 weeks, we will be offering a **closed therapeutic support group** at Hospice Renfrew for people navigating a death by suicide. Spaces are limited and filling fast - if you are interested in joining, please contact 613-433-3993 x. 2237 or grief@hospicerenfrew.ca to complete an intake assessment and discuss your eligibility.

[Learn More](#)



National Day for Truth and Reconciliation: Honouring Collective Grief

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30 invites us to remember that grief is not only personal, it can also be collective, intergenerational, and woven into the story of a people.

For Indigenous communities, the legacy of residential schools, colonization and assimilation has left profound losses of children, language, culture, identity, family connections, and a sense of safety. These losses continue to be carried across generations, shaping families and communities and creating grief that is both personal and collective.

As we pause on September 30, we honour those who never came home, those who survived, and the families and communities who continue to live with this grief. We also recognize that healing begins with listening, learning, and acknowledging the truth.

May this day remind us that every story deserves to be heard, every loss deserves to be witnessed, and that compassion is an essential part of reconciliation.

The Healing Nature of Photography in Navigating Grief

Grief has a way of pulling our attention toward what has been lost. Photography invites us, even for a few moments, to gently return to what is still here.

When she first retired, Carol Carter began using photography as a way to focus her newly unstructured days. Photography inspired her to learn something new while taking a deep dive into the technical and creative aspects of using a camera. However, her relationship with photography changed after finding a photography teacher who guided his students from the technical, to a more spiritual perspective. It was then that Carol learned to use photography as a mindfulness practice in helping her through the heaviness of carrying grief.

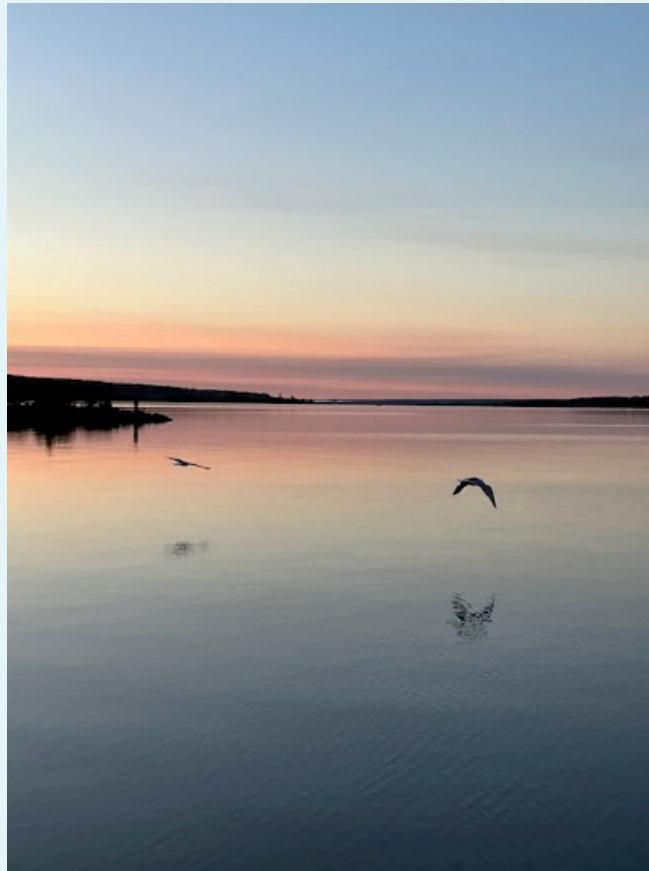
Since then, Carol has come to appreciate the healing quality of resting in the awareness of breath and moving more slowly in the world.

"In a few breaths, I return to the present moment where there is quiet in my mind and where I am released from sorrows of the past. The present moment is where I connect with that still point within me and when I encounter things exactly as they are. I see with eyes uncontaminated by judgement. I hear the small voice inside

guiding me and if I listen, I always find myself in a place where I am surprised by the beauty that arises from what I perceive. All of this is mine when I stop and breathe."

The process of photography as a mindfulness practice encourages us to slow down. It isn't about taking the perfect photo, it's about becoming fully present. For those who are grieving, photography can become a gentle act of self-care. It offers a reason to step outside, to take a breath, to find beauty in the unexpected and to reconnect with the world that doesn't ask you to "move on" or feel differently than you do. It reminds us that even alongside sorrow, beauty still exists.

Over time, photographs become more than images. They become a visual journal of healing.



Photograph: C.Carter

A selection of Carol's photographs are currently on display in the art corridor at the Arnprior Library on the lower level.

What Autumn Can Teach Us About Grief

There is something about autumn that naturally draws us inward. The warmth and brightness of summer slowly softening into cooler days, changing leaves, and earlier sunsets. Nature begins to turn quiet, reminding us that change is woven into the rhythm of life.

For someone who is grieving, the arrival of autumn can carry a particular tenderness. The changing season may awaken memories, deepen a sense of absence, or bring moments of longing for someone. Sometimes, the world changing

around us makes us more aware of everything that has changed within our own lives.

Grief has seasons of its own. There may be times when it feels heavy and consuming, and others when moments of peace begin to find their way in. There is no predictable path through it. Like the natural world, grief asks us

to find our own rhythm and to offer ourselves patience as we navigate what has changed.



Perhaps one of autumn's most profound lessons is that change does not erase what came before it. The leaves may fall, but the tree still carries everything that shaped its growth. Carrying grief, can be much the same.

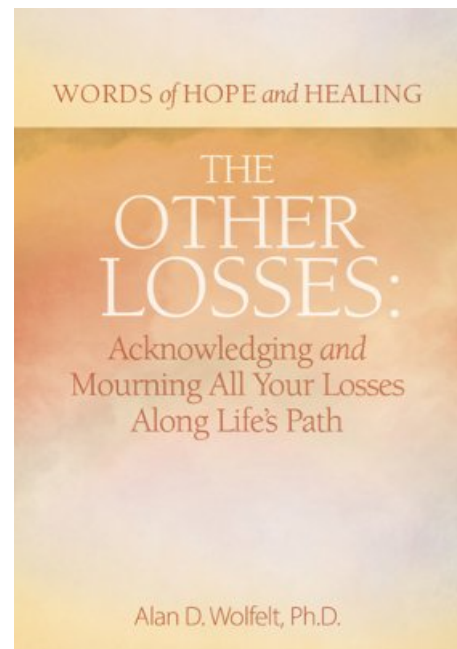
Book Recommendation

The Other Losses: Acknowledging and Mourning All Your Losses Along Life's Path

by Alan Wolfelt

We often equate the death of a loved one with the term "loss," but really it's just one kind of loss. Many other losses are deeply consequential as well, from health and financial problems to divorce, estranged relationships, abuse, betrayals, traumatic events, moves from beloved places, lost or broken dreams, and more.

When these losses arise, we naturally grieve inside. But most of us haven't learned that it's essential to mourn or express our grief over them. It is through mourning that we heal and learn to live well, with ever-deeper joy and meaning. This book will help you do just that.



Don't forget you can preview a copy of this and many other books on bereavement at Hospice Renfrew's resource and loaning library.

Grieving the loss of a loved one?

Researchers are trying to better understand how to support those experiencing grief from a behavioural perspective.

Learn more →



Study eligibility criteria:

- 18 years of age or older
- Vocal fluency in English
- Loss of a loved one at least 6 months prior to enrolling
- Experiencing ongoing disruption or dysregulation in everyday life



This study has been approved by Endicott College's Institutional Review Board #2427021-4

Those interested are invited to contact Cristin Shanahan via email: cshanahan@mail.endicott.edu

Participate in Research on Grief

Study conducted by Endicott College

Researchers are seeking participants to better understand how to support those experiencing grief from a behavioural perspective.

Those interested are invited to contact Cristin Shanahan via email:

cshanahan@mail.endicott.edu

[Learn More](#)

Child and Youth Resource



E-LEARNING COURSE Weathering the Storm: Parenting Grieving Children

This interactive e-learning course was created to support the caregivers of grieving children and youth to help them navigate the challenges of providing care after someone has died.

Click [here](#) to register

Children's Grief

The Memory Book

Dr. Shelley Gilbert (2025)

Interactive book helping children to record past, present and future memories.
Facilitates continuing bonds with their loved one who has died.

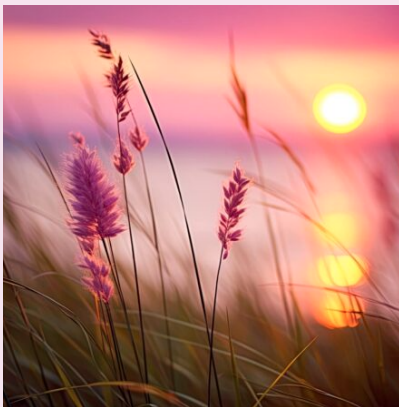
For a copy, please email:
hello@thegriefdoctor.co.uk
www.thegriefdoctor.org.uk



Quote of the Month

"Wherever a beautiful soul has been
is a trail of beautiful memories"

-Unknown



Redefining What It Means to Be “Okay” After Loss

When someone asks, “*Are you okay?*” after a significant loss, what does that even mean? For those who are grieving, “okay” doesn’t mean feeling happy again. It doesn’t mean being completely healed or returning to the person you were before your loss. Instead, perhaps being okay is something quieter and more realistic.

Maybe it means waking up and finding that the difficult days no longer outnumber the manageable ones. Perhaps it’s learning to carry painful memories with a little more ease, or discovering new ways to maintain a meaningful connection with the person who died.

Grief changes who we are. There is no going back to who we were before, rather, it is about building onto the person we are today by moving and healing through grief. Redefining “okay” can become an important part of that healing.

Imagine standing at your front door during a heavy rainstorm. At first, you wait, hoping the rain will stop before you leave. Minutes turn into hours, and eventually you realize life cannot remain on hold forever. You take an umbrella, or simply accept that you’ll get wet, and continue on your way through the rain.

Grief is much like that rain. Sometimes it softens. Sometimes it pours unexpectedly. Gradually, we learn how to live while grief continues to exist. It is about looking for

small moments that offer comfort, purpose, connection, or meaning, even while the pain is still present.

A compassionate definition of being “okay” is one that accepts:

- Grief may always be part of your story.
- That difficult days will still come.
- Meaningful moments can still be found, even in the presence of heartache

You don't have to reach this place today. Instead, simply allow yourself to wonder:
What might “okay” look like for me now?

Journaling Prompt of the Month



When you lose someone, your identity is shattered. Healing isn't about piecing your old self back together. Healing is about discovering who you are now, as you carry both love and loss together.

Grab a nice cup of tea or coffee, sit somewhere you find peaceful, and reflect and explore on;

The parts of me I've lost are...

The strengths I've discovered through grief are....

If I could speak compassionately to my new self, I'd say...

Adapted from "Ashes, Grace, and the Woman I Became: A Guide to Healing From Trauma and Grief" (Agnew, 2026)

Volunteer at Hospice Renfrew



[Learn More](#)

Hospice Renfrew is looking for caring and compassionate individuals to join our volunteer team. Volunteers play an essential role in supporting our services, including grief and bereavement support (such as follow-up calls and assisting with support groups).

No experience needed, training is provided.

To learn more: (613) 433-3993 x. 2236,
dcoelho@hospicerenfrew.ca

If you are grieving the loss of a loved one, we kindly ask that you wait at least one year before applying to volunteer. This ensures you are best prepared to support others through their grief.

Grief Counselling Service

At Hospice Renfrew, we offer compassionate **one-to-one counselling** to help you or someone you know navigate the complex emotions leading up to and following a loss. Whether you're seeking a quiet space to talk, guidance in understanding your grief, or simply someone to walk beside you, our counselling team is here to support you in a way that feels comfortable and meaningful. Counselling support is free, confidential and available to all residents of Renfrew County.

We also invite you to explore our **Grief Resource Library**, where you'll find books, articles, and tools designed to support individuals and families throughout their healing journey. These resources are available at no cost and can be borrowed anytime.

You are not alone - support is here, whenever you're ready.



For more information, please contact us at grief@hospicerenfrew.ca or call **613-433-3993 ext. 2237**.

Visit our Website

Looking For More Resources on Grief?

Because losing someone is hard....
Mygrief.ca and What's your Grief.com are websites that offer information, resources, articles and support a growing community to foster understanding to help us move through the grief journey.



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