



Rest. Breathe. Remember.

Thank you for the privilege of allowing our St. Luke's Hospice Team to be involved in the care of your loved one. Now, as you navigate through your loss, please know that our thoughts continue to be with you. In addition, we would be honored to support you as you continue to move through this journey of loss and grief.

This is not easy

Grief is a very normal human emotion, but it can be exhausting. It takes energy and makes demands. However, know that you will not remain lost in your grief. *You will find your way. It will take time. Grieving cannot be hurried.*

As days become weeks following the loss of a loved one, people often feel overwhelmed by their grief. Tasks that need to be done related to the death can feel overwhelming as well. While each person's journey is unique, there are some experiences shared by many who grieve.

So many feelings

Feelings of shock, fear, panic, anger, relief or confusion may be experienced. After the death of his wife, author C.S. Lewis said, "No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear." At times, you may feel numb, empty or hollow. There may be moments when the loss doesn't seem real, and you don't believe the person actually died. You may feel restless. Concentrating or sleeping may be difficult. Some feel moody, preoccupied or forgetful. If the dying process was long or difficult, there may be some relief in addition to the sadness. If you were their caregiver, you may now feel a loss of purpose. If your relationship was distant or difficult, this can bring its own set of challenges in grieving.

All of these feelings are normal. Allow yourself to feel them. Try to be patient with yourself and others on this roller coaster called grief. Hang on and keep going one day at a time.

Rest. Breathe. Remember.

Allow these three words to wash over you in the days, weeks and months ahead. They may help you slow down and heal.

REST and sleep are an important part of the healing process. You will benefit from allowing extra rest during this time of grief.

BREATHE with slow, deep breaths. Deep breathing can reduce stress levels and break anxiety cycles. Developing a practice of intentional breathing can also help prepare your mind and body for rest.

REMEMBER your loved one by allowing memories to come to the surface of your heart, mind and conversation. Talk and cry with people you trust as often as you need. Some find that being around others is most comforting. Others find that spending time alone is more necessary and healing.

Tasks of closure

There are often a number of closure tasks to be taken care of when someone dies. This process can feel overwhelming. We hope the enclosed list of resources will be helpful to you. As some find comfort in talking with others who are also on this journey of grieving, we have enclosed a brochure for St. Luke's Grief Support Group, as well.

Allow us to help

We recognize the intensely private nature of grief. It is important to work through a loss in your own way and time. We are committed to assisting you as best we can. St. Luke's Hospice seeks to support loved ones for 13 months after a loss. We are ready to help in the following ways, if you wish:

- We will provide periodic mailings with information that we hope you find helpful.
- Our Bereavement Coordinator or a Bereavement Volunteer will contact you by phone on occasion to touch base and offer support or connection with resources. Typically, one family member is designated to receive our calls and mailings. We encourage you to share this information. If you feel others would benefit from our mailings and calls directly, please let us know.
- Grief counseling by our Bereavement Coordinator is available to you and your family, either by phone or in person, anytime in this coming year. If you or other family members live outside the Twin Ports, we may be able to connect you with grief support resources in your area.
- We can help you find plenty of written information on grief and loss. This includes information on assisting children during this time and gender differences in grieving.
- You will be invited to one of our Hospice Memorial Services to remember and honor our hospice patients. These are held in April and October.
- All of our grief support services are offered as part of St. Luke's Hospice program. There is no charge to you.

Again, thank you for allowing us the privilege of caring for you and your loved ones.

"There is no way around the pain that you naturally feel when someone you love dies. You can't go over it, under it, or around it... Going through it is what will help you heal."

— Therese Rando



If you or a loved one would like additional information or support, or want to decline future mailings or phone calls, contact St. Luke's Hospice Duluth at **218.249.6100**.

St. Luke's Hillside Clinic
220 North 6th Avenue East, Duluth
218.249.6100

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