



## Member Communication

Beside you through grief's journey

### WELCOME TO ADULT GRIEF AND LOSS ZOOM SUPPORT GROUP!

When people work together in groups to support each other and help themselves, a few guidelines have often been found to be very useful. As we begin The Caring Hearts Grief and Loss Group Zoom format online, we would like to provide guidelines to ensure a smooth flow for everyone.

#### 1. **Language and Logistical Guidelines:**

**Let one person talk at a time:** Multiple conversations and side remarks distract from the group's flow and focus. Allowing one person to have the floor lets everyone hear what is being said. It is important to allow the facilitator of the group to take the lead, so be mindful of giving the space for the facilitator to run the group.

**Speak for yourself:** It is important to recognize that while people affected by Grief and Loss have many similarities, there are also differences. Making "I statements", rather than saying "you", "we", or "people" when you actually mean "I", is a clearer way of expressing your own experience. Do not give advice unless it is asked for.

**Keep on focus:** Using the group for the purpose for which it is designed makes good use of everyone's time, especially your own. Giving the 120 minutes focused attention includes:

- Silence your phone and please do not check emails or read texts during group (unless it's an emergency)
- No eating during group time or drinking alcoholic beverages
- Minimize outside distractions (animals, favorite background music, etc.)

When sharing personal information with group members it can feel painful to see someone else distracted by their phone.

Social visiting can be productive before or after group rather than during group.

**Be honest:** Group is a place where you can be frank and straight forward with your thoughts and feelings; there is no need to hide your personal experience from others or from yourself - most of the people in the group share similar feelings, and your facilitator is accustomed to facilitating such expressions.

#### 2. **Respect Confidentiality:**

Please respect the privacy of every member at the Caring Hearts Adult Grief and Loss Group Zoom Program and please ensure to find a quiet and private space in your home for our program time. If you have other individuals you are living with, headphones should be utilized to maintain a sense of privacy and confidentiality. Things discussed within the time and space of group programs should be kept private and should not be discussed with individuals not present in the group. The vast majority of members are aware of the importance of confidentiality. As a practical matter, however, The Caring Hearts cannot enforce confidentiality among members.

#### 3. **Attendance:**

Make a commitment to attend your weekly Adult Grief and Loss Group zoom program as you have registered. If you are unable to attend for some reason please let The Caring Hearts know via email (Facilitators email: [smbatha2002@yahoo.com](mailto:smbatha2002@yahoo.com))

Regular attendance improves the overall experience for individual members of the group and

the group as a whole. Group members who get to know and become interested in the lives of other group members tend to feel more satisfied with the group experience. This unique friendship is built on shared experiences and can serve as an antidote to unwanted aloneness.

4. **Facilitators:**

The role of the professional facilitator in programs is to bring the group together, ensure everyone has the ability to actively participate, and to provide additional resources. Group facilitators are experienced in understanding how groups work effectively as well as the aims and goals of The Caring Hearts Grief and Loss Group Support Program. Facilitators are professionally obligated to maintain confidentiality, except where required or allowed by law.

## **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR VIRTUAL PROGRAMS**

- 📌 **Meetings will start on time** – Please make every attempt to join the ‘waiting room’ of virtual program so you are ready to begin at the set time of the program. If you join late, please don’t interrupt the conversation. Wait until there is a natural opening or the facilitator addresses you.
- 📌 **Be mindful of your surroundings** – Spend a couple minutes before the meeting starts and find a comfortable spot in a quiet location where you won’t need to move or be disrupted/distracted.
- 📌 **If using a phone or computer with a camera** - try to position your camera to be at eye level for more direct engagement with other meeting participants.
- 📌 **Find a spot with good lighting** - If possible, find a spot with natural lighting. If you have lights on, make sure they are not behind you and backlighting your face (putting it in shadow).
- 📌 **Confidentiality & privacy** - Help ensure a sense of group safety by making sure you are in a non-public place and behind closed doors where others cannot see or hear the group conversation. Participants should use headphones to ensure privacy and confidentiality when other’s may in the vicinity when programs are taking place. *Please do not audio or video record any part of the group discussion.*
- 📌 **Normal group expectations still apply:**
  - Please be intentional about the discussion
  - Be present for each other and not distracted by technology
  - One person should talk at a time, but please do engage in meaningful dialogue
  - Be respectful of the person speaking
  - Be mindful of time and ensure all attendees get a chance to be heard
  - Please be dressed appropriately

### **Technical Issues:**

- 📌 If your link requires you to register, please do so in advance. Then you won’t feel anxious trying to get it set up when it is time for your meeting.
- 📌 Add the meeting to your calendar with the link, for quick and easy access.
- 📌 If you cannot see or hear the other attendees on ZOOM, please check the lower left-hand corner for the mute and video buttons to make sure they aren’t on. You may also want to check your computer’s microphone/volume settings if you cannot hear others or they cannot hear you.
- 📌 Your video should be on when you join the group
- 📌 Please try to minimize or turn off background noise (i.e. music, voices in the background, water running, etc.).
- 📌 Avoid excessive movement of your screen by keeping your phone or computer on a stable surface. This will make it less distracting for other members.