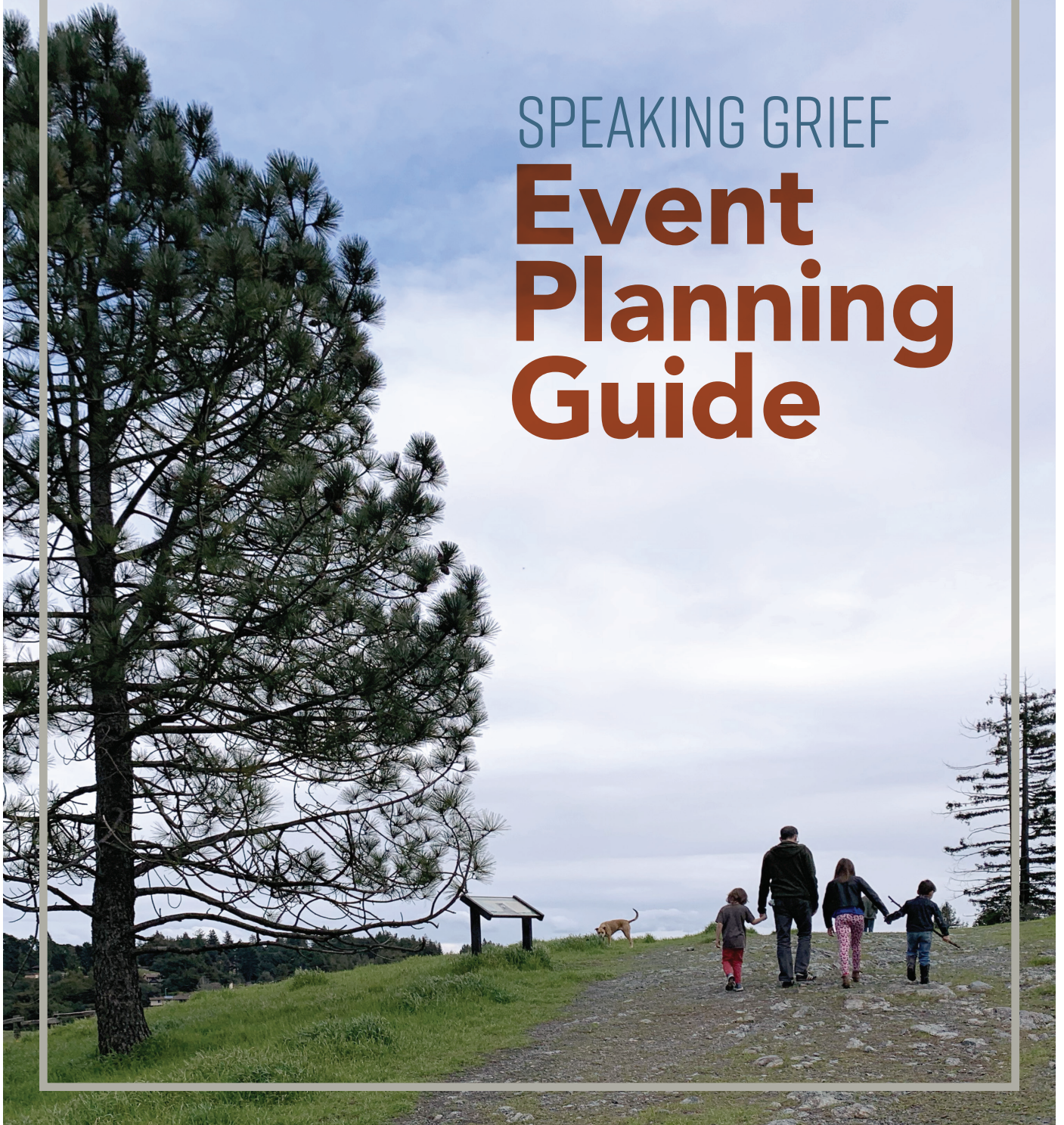


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SPEAKING GRIEF **Event Planning Guide**



Let's get better at grief.

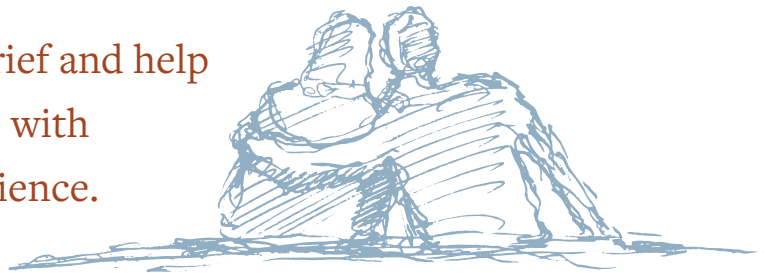
Speaking Grief is a multi-platform, public media initiative that explores how we can create a more grief-aware society by validating the experience of grievers and providing guidance for those who wish to support them.

The initiative includes a documentary and website that share diverse representations of grief through candid interviews with grieving individuals and families, whose losses range from stillbirth to suicide, as well as leading grief professionals. It also includes a social media learning campaign (@wpsugrief on Facebook and Instagram) and community events.

Produced by WPSU Penn State with philanthropic support and outreach collaboration from the New York Life Foundation, *Speaking Grief* validates grief as a normal, healthy part of the human experience, addresses the importance of support from friends and family, and offers guidance on how to show up for people in their darkest moments.

Thank you for being part of this important work!

This project seeks to normalize grief and help people become more comfortable with the many forms of the grief experience.



PLANNING GUIDE OVERVIEW

This event planning guide will help you plan community events around grief and supporting grievers. The guide is intended for grief support organizations, community groups, public broadcasting stations, faith organizations, and anyone with an interest in raising public awareness about grief and grief support in communities across the nation.

About the Initiative



WPSU Penn State is a PBS and NPR member station and a service of Penn State Outreach, supporting the community as a trusted source for news, information, and education. As a next-generation media organization, WPSU creates, curates, and distributes content on screens both large and small. As a community partner, we focus on local concerns that can be part of a greater national conversation.

wpsu.org



NEW YORK LIFE
FOUNDATION

Inspired by New York Life's tradition of service and humanity, The New York Life Foundation has, since its founding in 1979, provided nearly \$280 million in charitable contributions to national and local nonprofit organizations. The Foundation supports programs that benefit young people, particularly in the areas of educational enhancement and childhood bereavement. Childhood bereavement is one of society's most pervasive issues: one in fourteen Americans will lose a parent or sibling before age 18 and the vast majority of children experience a significant loss by the time they complete high school. Yet bereaved children remain largely unseen and under-served within their communities and schools, with few outlets to express their grief.

Recognizing the critical need to provide greater support to grieving children and their families, The New York Life Foundation established childhood bereavement as a funding focus area in 2008 and has invested nearly \$50 million to bereavement organizations across the nation. As our commitment to the bereavement "field" has grown, we've been proud to serve not only as a funder but as an active partner to a wide range of nonprofits, helping to raise public awareness about grief's impact as well as build communication and collaboration among grantees. The issue is at the heart of our company's mission and day-to-day business, resulting in robust employee engagement across the country in support of grieving children.

The Foundation also encourages and facilitates the community involvement of employees and agents of New York Life through its Volunteers for Good program and Grief-Sensitive Schools Initiative.

www.newyorklifefoundation.org

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An Important Note Regarding Sensitivity

Events about grief can invite a wide range of emotional, physical, and behavioral responses from participants. We recommend you include two or three licensed therapists, licensed clinical social workers, or skilled grief advocates who are experienced and confident in having difficult conversations with people about grief, death, and dying. At a minimum, have local grief resources available so you can direct participants to appropriate support.

Not sure where to find an experienced partner?

Eluna provides an index of grief organizations and grief camps by state.

<https://elunanetwork.org/national-bereavement-resource-guide/resources/>

Evermore provides an interactive search-by-state directory of grief support centers for families.

<https://www.live-evermore.org/grief-support-directory/>

BEST PRACTICES:

- Invite at least two professionals who are experienced and confident about having difficult conversations with people about grief, death, and dying.
- Create a safe, non-judgmental environment. Ensure comfortable, accessible seating is available. If possible, avoid harsh overhead lighting to promote a more welcoming environment. Have water and tissues available.
- When you speak about death or dying, use simple and straightforward language such as death, die, dying, and grief. Avoid euphemisms that are abstract such as “departed” or “lost.” Note that attendees may not use direct language, and that is ok.
- A variety of feelings are completely normal. Be open to each attendee’s experience – there is no one right way to respond to grief.
- Welcome other’s experiences of grief. Everyone grieves differently. Be mindful not to impose your own beliefs.
- Cultural, familial, political, and spiritual differences are common. Be sensitive to the different ways attendees may express grief or honor the dead.
- Plan to have a quiet, reflective space available in case attendees need to take a break.

Initiative Components

DOCUMENTARY

Speaking Grief explores the transformative experience of losing a family member in a death- and grief-avoidant society. The documentary features diverse representations of grief through candid interviews with seven families from across the country whose losses range from stillbirth to suicide. Moving away from the idea that grief is a problem that needs to be “fixed,” the documentary validates grief as a normal, healthy part of the human experience. *Speaking Grief* also addresses the role support from friends and family plays in a person’s grief experience, introducing ideas for how we can get better at showing up for people in their darkest moments.

WEBSITE

SpeakingGrief.org is a hub for learning resources on grieving, understanding grief, and supporting grief. It provides practical, actionable guidance for navigating the grief experience. The website also houses more than 350 unique video clips, including insight from some of the leading experts in the field, more commentary from the families featured in the documentary, and additional video profiles of grieving people.

PRESS KIT

Project logos, marketing materials, templates, and more can be found at <http://tiny.cc/SpeakingGriefPress>

“If you are grieving the death of someone close to you, I can really recommend the [Speaking Grief] Facebook page. Each status covers a different aspect of the thoughts and feelings you may be experiencing—that are all normal in grief.”

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a critical component of the *Speaking Grief* Initiative’s public awareness campaign and educational strategy to normalize grief. Facebook and Instagram are valuable distribution tools where we can consistently inject grief-related topics into public discourse. These platforms allow us to reach people outside the “grief community” and break complex ideas into small, digestible pieces that are easily shared and/or saved for future reference. By adapting the content created for the website, we will continue to create and share “micro-lessons” and sustain awareness.

Social media platforms are also a great way to spread the word about your event! Add the following hashtags to your Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter posts: #speakinggrief #nylffoundation. This will also allow us to track the reach of this project. To increase the reach of your Instagram and Twitter posts, include additional hashtags to allow more people to find your content.

We suggest: #grief #griefsupport #griefandloss #grieving #griefawareness #realityofgrief

Community Engagement

WHY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS

Speaking Grief brings to light the difficult and emotional topics of death and grief. Honest, open discussions can serve as a catalyst to bring people together to learn more about grief, and how we can better support one another. Candid discussions can help to validate grief as a normal, healthy part of the human experience.

POTENTIAL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

This initiative seeks to increase awareness and access to grief services in communities across the nation. As such, it is helpful to partner and collaborate with other groups in your community. *Collaboration is at the heart of this initiative.*

Examples of potential community partners:

- Public radio or television stations
- Healthcare organizations/hospitals
- Health and wellness organizations
- Hospices & grief organizations
- Mental health organizations
- Palliative care organizations
- Faith organizations
- Community and university libraries
- Civic organizations
- Universities and colleges
- School districts
- Workforce development
- New York Life offices

An index of grief organizations by state:

<https://elunanetwork.org/national-bereavement-resource-guide/resources/>



A NOTE ABOUT FACILITATORS

Remember: It is important to have people help facilitate your event who are confident and experienced in having difficult conversations with people about grief, death, and dying. The facilitators may also need to support each other, for example, in extricating each other from conversations. Facilitators may also need breaks during your event, so a minimum of two or three experienced facilitators is recommended.

Event Goals & Desired Outcomes

DEFINE EVENT GOALS

As you plan your event with community partners, discuss potential audiences and which type of event will best resonate with them. You may want to focus on raising awareness and establishing a common understanding about grief and supporting griever, or you may choose to focus on helping the audience become more aware of grief support organizations in your community. Community partners help you determine shared goals and decide which audiences to invite to the event.

MEASURING IMPACT

Measuring the impact and quality of events can be challenging. Having clear goals in the planning stages can help you define what success looks like for your event.

Some ways to collect impact data include:

- Track the number of attendees
- Ask attendees to complete feedback cards
- Send out a post-event survey in a follow-up email
- Hold post-event discussions
- Collect comments made by participants during the event using a Story Wall
- Review media mentions
- Collect social media statistics.



A template for feedback cards and information about Story Walls are included in the Appendix.

Event Format Ideas

PUBLIC SCREENING

Host a public screening event. You could invite special guests from the community to engage the audience in a panel or group discussion after the viewing.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Host a public screening event followed by a panel discussion. At the end of the screening, representatives from local grief support organizations could discuss key themes from the documentary and address questions from community members.



Tips for convening a panel discussion are included in the Appendix.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Small groups are great venues for sharing and discussing *Speaking Grief*. We can discuss how we feel about what we've just seen and how we can help change our conversations and actions about grief moving forward.



A group discussion guide is included in the Appendix.

LOCAL PRODUCTIONS

Local public television or radio stations could produce their own local interest stories. Stories could feature community grief support organizations and the families they serve or focus on the grief experience of a particular person or family. These could be done as individual stories or as part of a larger community storytelling project.

EXHIBITION

An exhibition-style event could combine several activities. This could be designed as a series of interactive stations that attendees can visit at their own pace. (Similar to a museum or a gallery.)

Activity Ideas

REMEMBERING LOVED ONES - MEMORIAL IDEAS

Wall of Names

Provide an opportunity for attendees to write or say the name or names of their loved ones. It can be as simple as a large easel pad or whiteboard, or as ornate as you can imagine. This could also be an opportunity for creative expression if you provide basic art supplies.

Wall of Photos

Encourage attendees to bring a photo of their loved one to the event. (Let them know if they should not expect their photo returned to them.) Dedicate an area and have supplies available for attendees to post the pictures as a visual memorial. (Removable mounting putty works well for this.)

Releasing Wishes

If you have access to an outdoor space, releasing wishes into the sky is a beautiful tribute. Flying wish paper is an eco-friendly alternative to releasing balloons or paper lanterns. Attendees write on this special paper, then roll it into a tube and light it on fire. The wish paper then gracefully floats up into the sky.

Purchase an assortment of flying wish paper from a local party store or online. Attendees can write the name of their loved one or a message to

them on each wish paper. Provide a safe area to light the wish papers and watch them float away.

Take pictures of your wish release and share them on social media with the hashtags #wpsugrief and #NYLFoundation.

Luminaries

Luminaries made from paper bags and battery-operated tea candles create a memorial that adds a beautiful ambiance to an event. Attendees could decorate the bags with the name(s) of their loved ones or a special message. The luminaries can be lined up in your event venue for all to see.

Take pictures of the finished luminaries and share them on social media with the hashtags #speakinggrief #nylffoundation.

Memory Stones

Have a collection of permanent markers and smooth river stones available. Attendees can write the name or a memory of their loved one on a stone. You can have a clear glass vase for attendees to put them in as a "Memory Jar" or use them to create a Memory Garden as part of your event. Invite attendees to take them home with them as a memento at the event conclusion.

Take pictures and share them on social media with the hashtags #speakinggrief #nylffoundation.



NOTE

These ideas are provided to get you thinking about ways to engage attendees if appropriate for your event type. Choose only a few, and be aware that it can be overwhelming for grieverers to participate in these activities in a public setting.

SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Who is in your circles?

Susan Silk and Barry Goldman developed a simple exercise to help us know what to say and to whom to say it when we seek to support someone in crisis.



A worksheet attendees can take home with them is included in the Appendix.

Send Some Love – Empathy Cards/Postcards

Even when we're not sure what to say, it is always better to say something rather than nothing. Consider having an area where attendees can take a moment to write out a card for someone who needs a kind word.



A sign with suggestions for how to write an empathy card is available in the Appendix.

You can purchase empathy cards or postcards online, design your own, have blank cards available for attendees to design or include a mixture of all three.

What to Do

"Let me know if you need anything" is how we often attempt to offer support. A grieving person may not have much capacity to consider what they may need. Asking for help puts them in a vulnerable position when they are already feeling vulnerable in their grief.



Need some ideas?
A starter list of ideas for offering support is available in the Appendix.

Instead of putting the responsibility on the grieving person, think about what you can provide that you will be able to follow through on. Think about what might help you if you were in this situation and ask if it would be ok for you to do it for them.

What You Can Do + When You Can Do It + Is That OK? = How to Offer Concrete Support

Write a few ideas on notecards and place them on a table or pin them to a bulletin board. Have blank notecards available for attendees to contribute their own ideas of how to offer support. Consider encouraging attendees to take a few along with them after the event. This way, they will leave with a few concrete ideas for how they can offer support to someone in need.

Share pictures of ideas contributed during your event on social media using hashtags #speakinggrief and #nylffoundation

OTHER IDEAS

- Artwork display
- Quiet reflection space
- Music listening and/or performance space
- Talk with your local public radio station about recording stories at your event

Event Planning Checklist

Preview Resources

- ☐ Review initiative website at speakinggrief.org
- ☐ Request a screener link to preview the documentary
- ☐ Review acknowledgment requirements (for print materials and advertisements)

Design Event

- ☐ Name of event
- ☐ Type of event (Documentary screening, panel discussion, workshop, etc.)
- ☐ What is the goal of this event? (e.g., raise awareness, convene community resources, encourage conversation, etc.)
- ☐ Will there be a host?
- ☐ Can you reach out to volunteers?

Determine Budget

- ☐ Decide on the budget and anticipated expenses
- ☐ Can you secure sponsors to help offset costs?

Select Location

- ☐ Select a venue
- ☐ Is the location accessible to the public?
- ☐ What is the venue capacity? What is your target goal for attendance?
- ☐ Is there ample parking?
- ☐ Consider restroom availability/accessibility
- ☐ Is the room handicapped accessible?
- ☐ Is the room style aligned with the event type you wish to hold? (tables, chairs, flow, A/V, etc.)
- ☐ Obtain permits and legal paperwork if necessary

Determine Date

- ☐ When will the event be held?
- ☐ Has the date/location been approved by all the necessary parties?
- ☐ Does the date conflict with any holidays, school breaks, or other community events?

Select Community Partners

- ☐ In what capacity are partners engaging in this event?
- ☐ Who needs to be acknowledged in remarks and print materials? (Include The New York Life Foundation)
- ☐ Will partners have a role in approving the event plan/schedule?

Create Event Schedule

- ☐ Include setup and breakdown times with your venue
- ☐ Will there be any pre- or post-event activities? (Such as refreshments or reflection discussion time.)
- ☐ Determine the event start and end times

Create invitations

- ☐ Create the guest list
- ☐ Determine how invitations will be distributed (e.g., mail, email, newsletter, newspaper ad, etc.)
- ☐ Who needs to approve the invitation design and guest list?
- ☐ Are RSVPs necessary? If so, who will be coordinating them? What is the RSVP deadline?

Develop Marketing Plan

- ☐ Decide on event promotions
- ☐ Download logos, templates, etc. from press kit <http://tiny.cc/SpeakingGriefPress>
- ☐ Will the event require a press release to be sent to the media?
- ☐ Should the press be invited?
- ☐ How can social media be leveraged to spread the word?

Measure Impact

- ☐ How do you plan to measure the impact of the event? (survey attendees, comment cards, etc.)

Event Logistics Checklist

Audio/Visual

- ☐ What are your requirements? (TV/projector, screens, speakers, etc.)
- ☐ Microphones

Check-in Station

- ☐ Nametags
- ☐ Assign greeters
- ☐ Coat rack

Parking

- ☐ Location
- ☐ Capacity
- ☐ Charge

Signage

- ☐ Parking
- ☐ Restroom locations
- ☐ Event
- ☐ Recognize New York Life Foundation

Rentals/Deliveries

- ☐ Vendors
- ☐ Delivery times

Supplies

- ☐ Tissues
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Activity materials

Seating

- ☐ Arrangement
- ☐ Accommodation for wheelchairs and other assistive devices

Catering

- ☐ Contact information
- ☐ Arrival time
- ☐ Services provided (flatware, linens, paper products, ice, setup/teardown)

Referral Materials

- ☐ From local grief support organizations

Emergency Contact Numbers

- ☐ Local fire, hospital, and emergency contacts

Post-event Checklist

Thank You's

- ☐ Thank everyone who contributed to the event (speakers, funders, partner organizations, sponsors, volunteers, etc.) with a personal thank you note, email, or phone call
- ☐ Thank attendees for coming by sending an email the day after the event

Conduct Post-event Survey

- ☐ Send a survey to attendees
- ☐ Send a survey to sponsors and partner organizations

Rentals/Deliveries

- ☐ Ensure anything rented is returned

Press

- ☐ Follow-up with any press inquiries related to the event

Social Media

- ☐ Post pictures from the event
- ☐ Include #speakinggrief and #nylffoundation
- ☐ Recap the event in your newsletter or blog

Appendix

Feedback

FEEDBACK CARDS

The benefit of feedback cards is that participants can fill them out before leaving, giving you data right away. You can also offer a prize or free item for filling out the card if your budget allows. Alternatively, you can collect e-mail addresses and send out a survey. (Just beware you might not collect as many responses this way.)

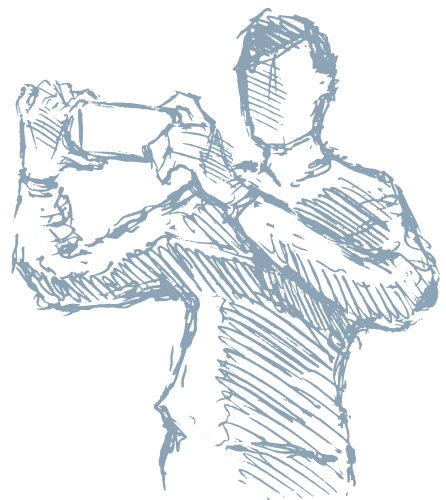
We have provided a sample feedback card on the next page. Feel free to modify the questions and use only the ones pertinent to you and your event.

STORY WALL

Instead of feedback cards, you can collect anecdotes and impact by collecting comments on a Story Wall. Use a whiteboard or hang a large sheet of paper on the wall near the event exit. Supply writing utensils and encourage attendees to write their responses during or on their way out of the event.

Sample questions include:

- What is one thing you learned that you will take with you from this event?
- What will you do differently after experiencing today's event?
- Would you recommend *Speaking Grief* to others? Why or why not?
- How could we improve this event?



Feedback Card

Thank you for your time! Your feedback is appreciated!

1. What is one thing you learned from this event?

2. What will you do differently after experiencing today's event?

3. Would you recommend *Speaking Grief* to others? Why or why not?

4. How we could improve this event?

Gender/Gender Identity:

Age:

☐ 18-25

☐ 25-35

☐ 35-45

☐ 45-55

☐ 55+

Ethnicity:

Occupation:

Zip Code:

Feedback Card

Thank you for your time! Your feedback is appreciated!

1. What is one thing you learned from this event?

2. What will you do differently after experiencing today's event?

3. Would you recommend *Speaking Grief* to others? Why or why not?

4. How we could improve this event?

Gender/Gender Identity:

Age:

☐ 18-25

☐ 25-35

☐ 35-45

☐ 45-55

☐ 55+

Ethnicity:

Occupation:

Zip Code:

Tips for Convening a Panel Discussion

Use a panel discussion when you have a large audience and a group discussion would be impractical, or when the group of panelists have diverse viewpoints and will generate a more engaging conversation than any one individual panel member could on his/her own.

- Research and carefully select a small group of panelists. Discussions on grief can invite a wide range of emotional, physical, and behavioral responses from participants and audience members. Have licensed therapists or skilled grief advocates participate in your event.
- Plan your questions ahead of time. Share the structure with your panelists prior to the event, but not all of the questions. It's best if the conversation is fresh for the audience.
- Determine a response plan for handling long, personal stories/questions/comments that might detract from the broader discussion. Consider having someone available for continued conversation once the panel discussion has ended.
- Decide if you will field questions from the audience. These can be taken directly from audience members or submitted to the moderator in writing in advance.

With more diverse viewpoints, a group of panelists can generate a more engaging conversation than any one individual panel member could on his/her own.

POSSIBLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Why is it important that we talk about grief?
- What are some current losses in our community?
How are people grieving?
- How does your experience as a grief advocate inform your actions to support grievers?
- What grief support resources are available in our local community? Where can we improve?

Group Discussion Guide

Post-screening group discussions are great venues for sharing *Speaking Grief*. We can discuss how we feel about what we've just seen and how we can change our conversations and actions about grief moving forward.

NOTE TO FACILITATORS:

Discussions on grief can invite a wide range of emotional responses from participants. Consider having a licensed therapist or skilled grief advocate participate in your event. At a minimum, have local grief resources available for participants so you can direct them to appropriate support.

Not sure where to find an experienced partner?

Eluna provides an index of grief organizations and grief camps by state.

<https://elunanetwork.org/national-bereavement-resource-guide/resources/>

Evermore provides an interactive search by state directory of grief support centers for families.

<https://www.live-evermore.org/grief-support-directory/>

GROUP FACILITATION BASICS:

- Know the material. Watch the documentary on your own before your group discussion. Reflect on *your* grief and be mindful that what you take from the film may be different from others in the group. Take care of *your* wellness and grief as you prepare to support others.
- Know your audience. Tailor the questions in this guide to what makes sense for your group.
- In setting up your discussion space, ensure comfortable, accessible seating is available. If possible, avoid harsh overhead lighting to promote a more welcoming environment. Plan to have a quiet, reflective space available in case attendees need to take a break. Providing tissues, water, and snacks is a great idea!

- In any group, there's a risk of any one individual's story to take over the rest of the space. Come up with some phrases you might use to redirect the conversation, so everyone has a chance to speak.
- You may have expectations for what your event will look like and feel like. Note that all discussion groups take on a life of their own. Be willing to follow the discussion that unfolds, rather than rigidly adhere to your plans.

BEST PRACTICES FOR CONVERSATIONS ABOUT GRIEF:

- Create a welcoming, non-judgmental environment so all may share their stories and reflections. Welcome other's experiences of grief. Everyone grieves differently. Be mindful not to impose *your* beliefs.
- When you speak about death or dying, use simple and straightforward language such as death, die, dying, and grief. Avoid euphemisms that are abstract such as "departed" or "lost." Note that others in your group may not use direct language, and that is ok.
- You will likely disagree with someone's reflections at least once. Grief is individual. A variety of feelings are completely normal. Be sensitive to each attendee's experience—there is no one right way to respond to death and grief. Cultural, familial, political, and spiritual differences are common.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Which parts of the film were the most powerful for you?
- What surprised you, either in the film itself or in your reaction to it?
- How did it feel seeing such authentic portrayals of grief?
- The opening sequence shows how we often avoid talking about grief. Grief is something we all experience, so why do we avoid talking about it?
- Most people have good intentions in offering support. If you've tried to support a grieving person, what did you find to be most challenging? If you've been the grieving person, what were your favorite ways of being supported?
- What will you do differently as a result of watching this film?

Who is in your circles?

When offering support, it can be helpful to evaluate your relationship with the grieving person. [Susan Silk and Barry Goldman](#) developed a simple exercise to help us know what to say and to whom to say it when we seek to support someone in crisis. It's called *Ring Theory*, and it's very simple.

This exercise can be used in a couple of ways:

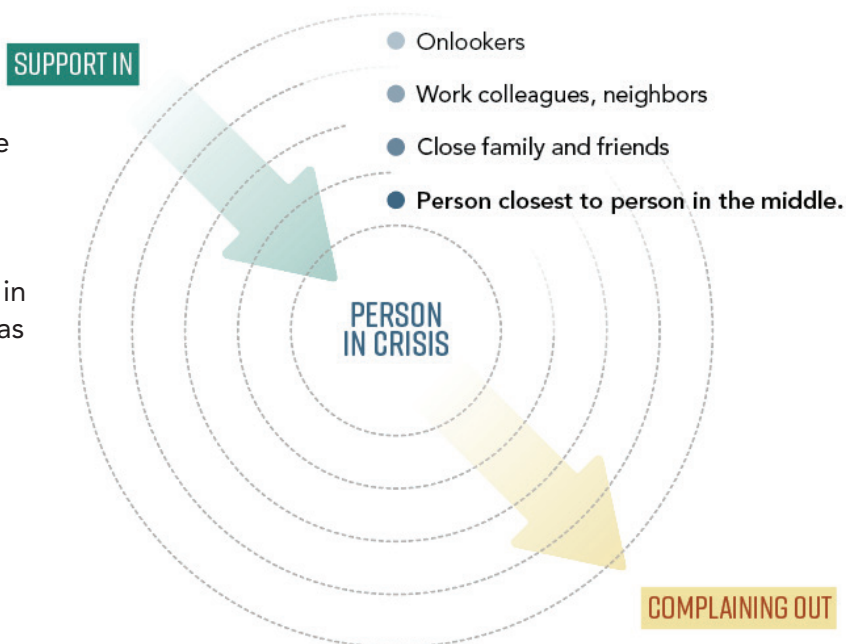
- Grievors can use it to help them identify who their key support people are.
- Supporters can use it to help identify where they fit in the circles around the grieving person.

Haven't had a crisis situation to apply this to? It can still be helpful to use it to:

- Determine who would be in your circles when a crisis affects you.
- Reflect on whose circles you are in and prepare yourself to support others in their times of need.

INSTRUCTIONS

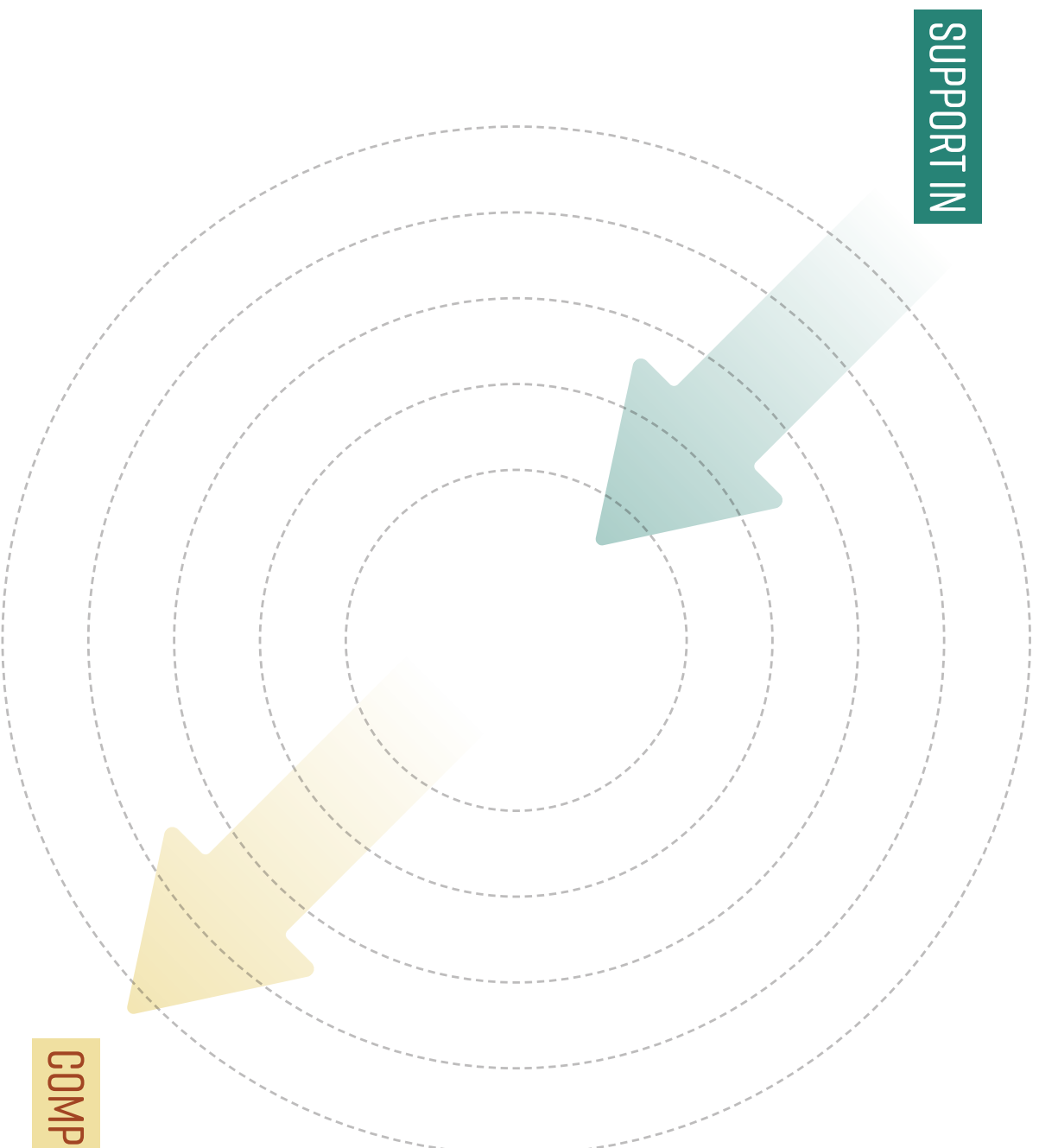
- In the center circle, write the name of the person who is struggling. Moving outward from the center circle, write the name(s) of the people next closest to the person in the center. Repeat as many times as necessary.



RING THEORY GOLDEN RULE: SUPPORT IN, COMPLAINING OUT.

- The person in the middle can say anything they want to anyone in any circle. They can be frustrated, they can have a tantrum, they can question, anything is fair game.
- People in the outer circles can only complain to people who are outside of their ring.
- Only support should move toward the center.

Who is in your circles?



Ring Theory was developed by Susan Silk and Barry Goldman

speakinggrief.org

Send Some Love

It's never too soon or too late to write a note of support.

- 1 Offer your sincere expression of sympathy.
If you don't know what to say, it's ok to admit it.
- 2 Talk about the person who died by name. Share a memory or what you will miss about them. If you didn't know them, you could offer to listen to stories about them when the grieving person is ready.
- 3 Offer tangible support. Think about something that you can offer and will be able to follow through on.
- 4 Close with care.



BETTER TO AVOID

Platitudes such as:

"Everything happens for a reason."

"They're in a better place now."

Anything that starts with:

"At least. . ."

"I know how you feel. . ."

"It could be worse. . ."

"Don't cry. . ."

"They wouldn't want you to be. . ."

"You can always. . ."

"You should. . ."

Pro tip from Megan Devine:

"If you can add 'so don't feel so sad' at the end of what you're thinking of saying, don't say it."

Support Ideas

A starter list of ideas to offer support to someone in need.

1. Show up and listen
2. Bring them a meal (remember breakfast and lunch, too!)
3. Help with lawn care
4. Decorate their front door for the upcoming holiday
5. Answer when they call/text
6. Babysit their kids
7. Help with laundry
8. Drop-off/pick-up their dry cleaning
9. Get coffee together
10. Invite them out for a walk
11. Include them in social events
12. Do their dishes
13. Wash their car
14. Bring groceries
15. Offer to cook together
16. Bring healthy snacks
17. Make them a music playlist
18. Ask if they want to talk, and just listen
19. Ask if others have left dishes you could return
20. Check-in regularly
21. Give a gift certificate for self-care
22. Take out their garbage/recycling
23. Help with transportation
24. Keep asking, even if they've refused help before
25. Replenish pantry staples
26. Buy them stamps and stationery
27. Set up a laundry service
28. Set up a cleaning service
29. Bring paper products – toilet paper, tissues, paper towels, napkins, plates, etc.
30. Give gift cards for retail therapy
31. Give them extra grace – they are hurting
32. Bring mints or gum
33. Help with their pets
34. Add a reminder to your calendar to touch base
35. Plan a fun night for their kids
36. Bring toiletries
37. Offer to vacuum
38. Bring coffee
39. Bring art supplies
40. Bring a journal
41. Give a gift certificate for a writing workshop
42. Give a gift card for a bookstore
43. Invite them out into nature
44. Ask about their loved one by name
45. Set a calendar reminder to reach out around milestones and holidays
46. Bring fresh fruit
47. Offer to organize a memory book or legacy box
48. Watch a funny movie together
49. Invite them to do an exercise class with you
50. Do home repairs
51. Run errands
52. Invite them for the holidays
53. Help organize bills
54. Send a care package
55. Help with pet vet appointments
56. Take them to a farmer's market
57. Go for a bike ride together
58. Go volunteer with them
59. Accompany them to spiritual services
60. Bring fresh vegetables
61. Help sort through or pack up the loved one's belongings
62. Help with taxes
63. Help organize finances
64. Show up if there is an emergency
65. Research resources for them