

You may find the following questions helpful for reflection on some of your experiences with spirituality, dying, death, and grieving.

- What are some of the religious and spiritual teachings about life, dying, death, grieving and life after death that you grew up with?
- How do you think your own religion and/or spirituality will help and/or hinder your feelings, thinking, attitudes, intentions, and actions in your relationships with people who are dying and/or grieving?
- How sensitive are your beliefs, feelings, and attitudes to others who may feel, think, and believe very differently than yourself about life, dying, death, grieving and life after death?

RIGHTS of the Bereaved

- To expect adequate and professional care, both physical and emotional, for themselves at the time of their loved one's death;
- To observe religious and social mourning rituals according to their wishes and customs;
- To openly express their grief regardless of the cause of the loved one's death;
- To expect health professionals to understand the process and characteristics of grief;
- To receive education regarding coping with the process of grief;
- To receive professional and lay bereavement support.

Clark, Elisabeth J. (1983). Bereaved persons have rights that should be respected. *Principles of Thanatology*. Columbia University Press.

WE Believe...

- That there is a natural death and grief process but that each individual or family will experience it differently;
- That caregivers and families must receive care and support during bereavement.

Our Mission Statement

Warmhearts, Palliative Caregivers Sudbury/Manitoulin is a volunteer based, non-profit organization of dedicated volunteers and staff whose mission is to provide end of life care support to clients and their families. Our mission is achieved through hospice volunteer visiting, advocacy, education, and bereavement support to clients and families within the Sudbury Manitoulin District.



Palliative Caregivers
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Warmhearts

Offering compassionate follow-up support to caregivers and family members who are experiencing grief.



**Warmhearts
De tout cœur**

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The Bereavement Follow-up Program is comprised of two distinct volunteer roles:

Depending on the comfort level and needs of volunteers and caregivers, volunteers are encouraged to attend the Memorial Gathering independently and/or with the caregiver(s) as a source of support.

WHAT is the Hospice Bereavement Program?

The Bereavement Follow-up Program emphasizes a healthy grieving process and is aimed at providing follow-up support to caregivers and family members after the death of a Palliative client. It is focused on helping caregivers and family members understand the grieving process and their own needs in coping with their loss.

WHO are the caregivers?

After the death of a palliative client, our focus is on providing support to the primary caregiver. Primary caregivers can include a spouse, adult children, extended family members, friends, and neighbours.

HOW do we offer bereavement support?

- Follow-up support is provided for one year following the death of a palliative client.
- We send “Thinking of You” and “Sympathy” cards to caregiver(s).
- Upon consent, the **Warmhearts Volunteers** provide follow-up support to the caregiver(s) during their time of grief.
- We invite caregivers to participate in a non-denominational “Memorial Gathering.”

WHAT is the role of the Hospice Volunteer Visitor?

The Hospice Volunteer Visitor contacts the caregiver within **two to three weeks** and within **three months** after the client’s funeral. Caregiver(s) are invited to attend our “Memorial Gathering”.

WHAT is the role of the Hospice Bereavement Coordinator?

After the client’s funeral, the Hospice Bereavement Coordinator sends cards to the primary caregiver three times inviting them to contact the office if they need to speak to someone. These cards are sent:

- **Within six months**
- **Within nine months**
- **Within twelve months**

Calls received are directed to the Bereavement Coordinator and the following occurs:

- The Coordinator maintains a caregiver focus and inquires about the well-being of the caregiver(s).
- Inform the caregiver(s) of our “Memorial Gatherings” and invite them to attend.
- Provide the caregiver(s) with the date, time, place, and purpose of the Memorial Gathering.
- Provide the caregiver(s), when appropriate, with any relevant resources that are available to them.
- Report any concerns regarding the physical, psychological, emotional, and social well-being of the caregiver(s) to the Palliative Caregivers Sudbury/Manitoulin Office.

WHAT is a Memorial Gathering?

- A comforting environment in which caregivers and family members can remember and commemorate their loved ones through music and symbolism.
- A supportive environment in which to express one’s feelings.
- A non-denominational ceremony which focuses on the life, rather than the death of a deceased loved one.
- An opportunity for caregivers to connect with Palliative Caregivers Sudbury/Manitoulin, and with other individuals who have experienced the loss of a loved one.
- An experience that can provide volunteers with an opportunity for self-reflection.

WHEN and WHERE are Memorial Gatherings held?

- Memorial Gatherings are held every three months at the Church of the Ascension, Sparks Street, New Sudbury.
- Memorial Gatherings begin at 2 pm, and end at approximately 4 pm. Light refreshments are provided.

The next Memorial Gatherings will be held on:

September 16th & November 25th, 2007