

EXPERIENCING GRIEF: COPING WITH LOSS

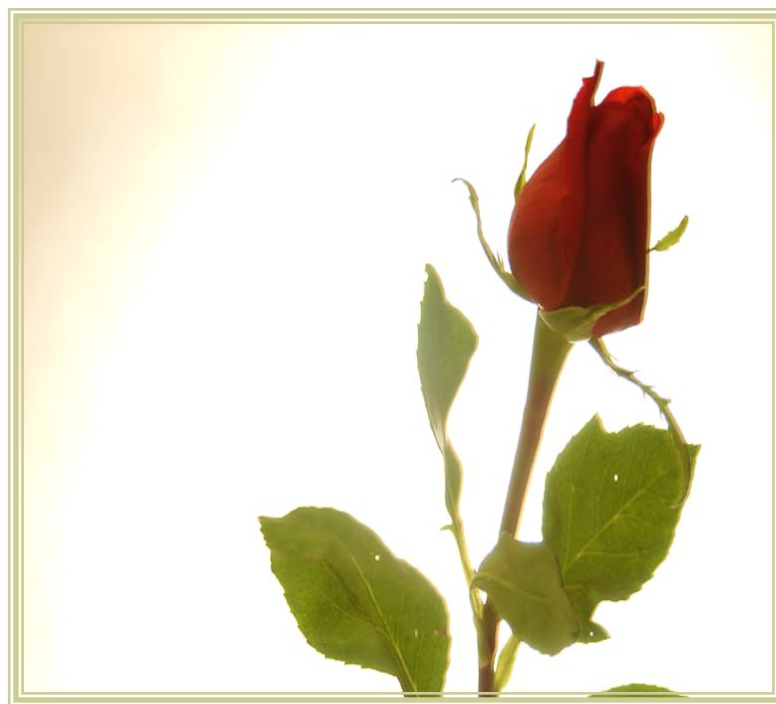
Pima County Attorney's Office



Victim Services Division
32 N Stone Suite 800
Tucson, Az, 85701
520-724-5525

PROHIBITION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

The Pima County Attorney's Office provides victim services regardless of race, color, national origin including persons with limited English proficiency, sex, religion, disability, age, and genetic information. If you believe that the Pima County Attorney's Office has discriminated against you, you can find information about how to file a complaint at: www.pcao.pima.gov/CivilRightsComplaint.aspx.



EXPERIENCING GRIEF: COPING WITH LOSS

There is nothing in life more painful than experiencing the death of a loved one. Initially, those impacted by the death of a loved one may be overcome by disbelief and a sense of emptiness. Then, they begin to consciously realize the impact of the loss by expressing normal feelings of resentment, anger, and depression. All of these feelings are muddled in a state of confusion and despair.

There is no universal law pronouncing how one should or should not react to death. Everyone experiences and expresses the feelings and emotions of grief differently. The manner in which people deal with grief depends on their upbringing, their relationship with the deceased, and their reaction to the cause of death.

Victim Services has prepared this brochure to help the citizens of Pima County understand the dynamics of grief and work through it. The staff has gained a lot of insight about grief by serving thousands in the community who have dealt with the loss of a loved one.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Homicide Survivors **520-207-5012**
Weekdays Mon-Fri 8am-5pm. Advocacy group offers one-to-one peer counseling, telephone contacts, and monthly meetings. May help with funeral expenses for deaths resulting from homicide.

Compassionate Friends **520-721-8042**
Compassionate friends are a self-help group offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents. They provide one-on-one contact, monthly meetings, telephone friends, lending library and a newsletter.

Footprints Support Group **520-873-6590**
A support group for parents who have lost a baby to miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, stillborn or newborn death.

Additional Resources

Mexican Consulate **520-882-5595**
553 S. Stone Ave, Tucson, Arizona, 85701

Pima County Public Fiduciary **520-724-5454**
10 E. Pennington, Tucson, Arizona, 85701

Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner
2825 E. District St, Tucson, Arizona, 85714 **520-724-8600**

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Listed below are several community resources for counseling and support. A brief description of services provided are listed with each resource.

Widowed to Widowed **520-884-4570**

Widowed to Widowed is a group consisting of people who have lost a spouse. They provide outreach on a one-to-one basis, either in person or by telephone, and also provide group support meetings, social groups and newsletters.

Survivors of Suicide **520-323-8660**

This is a message line only, calls will be returned within 24hrs. Survivors of Suicide is a support group for friends and families grieving a loss as a result of suicide. The support group meets weekly.

Tu Nidito Children and Family Services **520-322-9155**

Children to Children offers group counseling, primarily for children ages 3-18 who have experienced a death loss. Support also is available for child's family, care givers and schools.

MISS Foundation **520-404-1004**

MISS Foundation is a support group for families who have lost a child of any age due to unfortunate circumstances. They offer bi-weekly meetings and other support services.

M.A.D.D. **1-877-MADD-HELP**

Mothers Against Drunk Driving provides support groups and assistance to individuals who have been victimized by a drunk driver. The national help line is **1-877-255-6233**.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>The Acute Phase</u>	4
<u>The Transition Phase</u>	6
<u>The Recovery Phase</u>	7
<u>Helping Children</u>	8
<u>Making Arrangements</u>	10
<u>Documentation</u>	13
<u>Mortuary Services</u>	15
<u>Crime Scene/ Disaster Cleaning</u>	17
<u>Community Resources</u>	18

THE ACUTE PHASE

Shock and Disbelief

Many reactions are common to people who have just received the tragic news of the death of a loved one. The first reaction is usually a dazed sense of disbelief, or shock. It is often hard to believe that the person who died is really gone. It is not unusual for some people to refuse to believe that their loved one is dead, and it may take some time for them to accept that fact.

Some people react with an outpouring of emotion, expressing the pain and emptiness inside through screaming or crying. In contrast, some people completely withdraw, and internalize all their feelings. These reactions are healthy, and should be allowed to occur. The important point to remember is that everyone handles grief and loss differently; in the way that is most comfortable for them.

Anger and Guilt

Another common initial response is anger. Some get angry with the circumstances within which their loved one died. Some get angry at other friends or family members, or even the person who died. Some get angry at themselves. It is common to feel a sense of guilt, or to feel a need to place blame for the loss of a loved one. It is important to keep in mind that everyone attached to the person who died is operating within a state of shock, making it difficult to process through information logically. In an effort to make sense of the tragedy, people need to explore all of the possibilities in their mind. In time, many come to the realization that they had no control over the circumstances that led to the death of their loved one. Often the "why" of the person's death must be put to rest without an answer before progressing through the grieving process.

CRIME SCENE/ DISASTER CLEANING SERVICES

This list is intended to be helpful to those in need of this service, but by no means is an endorsement by the Pima County Attorney's Office. It is recommended that an estimate is obtained before services are rendered. For homicides that occurred at a residence, the Crime Victims Compensation Program may be able to assist with the cost of the crime scene clean-up. Please call 724-5525 to speak with someone in Victim Compensation. Additionally, crime scene clean-up services may be covered by your homeowner's/renter's insurance policy. It may be helpful to check with the appropriate insurance agent prior to having services rendered.

Abacadabra	520-323-3261
Action Bio-Care, Inc.	1-800-922-4214
Aftermath	1-800-366-9923
Arizona Bio	520-882-4350
Bio One	520-771-5960
Griffin's Trauma Scene Clean Up	520-444-4999
Quality Restoration	520-322-5326
SUDS	520-326-6871

MORTUARY SERVICES

Mortuary Services Outside of Tucson

Desert Sunset Funeral Home

15920 N. Oracle RD. #100 Catalina, AZ
Phone: **520-818-0038** Fax: 520-818-0148

Green Valley Mortuary & Cemetery

18751 S. La Canada Dr., Sahuarita, AZ 85629
Phone: **520-625-7400** Fax: 520-625-0952

Marana Mortuary & Cemetery

12146 W Barnett RD. Marana, AZ
Phone: **520-682-9900** Fax: 520-682-9007

Vistoso Memorial Chapel

2285 E. Rancho Vistoso Blvd. Oro Valley, AZ. 85755
Phone: **520-544-2285** Fax: 520-825-6578

THE ACUTE PHASE

Sadness and Depression

An overwhelming sense of sadness or depression is frequently experienced by those grieving. It is hard to imagine how life will ever go on, or get back to normal. Many people feel completely lost. In this time of grief, some people express they do not want to face the daunting task of redefining their entire existence without the companionship of the person who died. It may seem easier to give up on living altogether. Some also say they wish they could trade places with the person who died. It is okay to understand that life will never really be the same again. In time though, a new sense of normal can be achieved.

Physical Reactions

All of the emotional responses experienced put a physical strain on the body. Some people immediately feel weak or dizzy. Muscles may feel sore and achy. A loss of appetite or a feeling of nausea are also common. It can be helpful to drink as much water as possible, and remember to eat, even if there is no feeling of hunger. Humans need nutrition and water in order to survive. If there are any medical concerns, consult a family doctor or emergency physician.

THE TRANSITION PHASE

Unexpected Changes

It is difficult to cope with all of the changes taking place following the death of a loved one. Many decisions will need to be made by the next of kin. Funeral arrangements will have to be made, personal possessions will have to be distributed. Insurance companies and debtors may need to be notified of the death. Anxiety and fatigue make it difficult to make rational decisions, so a good support system of family and friends can be helpful in dealing with both the emotional and situational changes.

Physical Changes

For a while, memories will preoccupy most of the thought process. Many people believe that they feel, hear, or see the person who died. It is a common experience that some find comforting. Sleeping for any length of time may be difficult due to intense emotions. Additionally, personal stresses may cause some temporary physical problems, such as loss of appetite and headaches. These symptoms are normal. Some people react by withdrawing from outside activities. It can be difficult for relatives, friends, or acquaintances to know how to approach the person experiencing the loss of a loved one. In an effort to be considerate, those people may not initiate contact, or may avoid talking about the death. When ready, those grieving will regain control in their lives and re-engage daily activities.

MORTUARY SERVICES

Carrillo's Tucson Mortuary, Inc.

204 S. Stone Ave., Tucson, AZ 85701
Phone: **520-622-7429** Fax: 520-622-4047

Desert Sunset Funeral Home

3081 W. Orange Grove Rd., Tucson, AZ 85741
Phone: **520-297-9007** Fax: 520-297-9040

East Lawn Palm's Mortuary & Cemetery

5801 E. Grant Rd., Tucson, AZ 85712
Phone: **520-885-6741** Fax: 520-751-2479

Evergreen Mortuary, Cemetery & Crematory

3015 N. Oracle Rd., Tucson, AZ 85705
Phone: **520-838-9030** Fax: 520-888-7830

(Desert Rose) Heather Mortuary & Chapel

1040 N. Columbus Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85711
Phone: **520-322-6131** Fax: 520-327-2162

Hudgel's Swan Mortuary & Chapel

1335 S. Swan Rd., Tucson, AZ 85711
Phone: **520-747-2525** Fax: 520-748-2660

Martinez Funeral Chapel

2580 S. 6th Ave., Tucson, AZ 85713
Phone: **520-547-3400** Fax: 520-547-3404

Marcus Funeral Services

340 E. Vamori St., Tucson, AZ 85706
Phone: **520-294-4732** Fax: 520-295-8806

Oasis Cremation and Funeral Care

1687 W. Prince Rd. #101, Tucson, AZ 85705
Phone: **520-347-4443**

MORTUARY SERVICES

Abbey Funeral Home

3435 N. 1st Ave., Tucson, AZ 85719

Phone: **520-888-1111** Fax: 520-888-0092

Adair Funeral Home

1050 N. Dodge Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85716

Phone: **520-326-4343** Fax: 520-326-3591

Adair Avalon Funeral Home

8090 N. Northern Avenue, Oro Valley, AZ 85704

Phone: **520-742-7901**

Funeraria Del Angel Mortuary

7 E. University Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85705

Phone: **520-624-8685** Fax: 520-624-9185

Funeraria del Angel South Lawn Mortuary & Cemetery

5401 S. Park Ave., Tucson, AZ 85706

Phone: **520-294-2603** Fax: 520-295-8415

Angel Valley Funeral Home

2545 N. Tucson Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85716

Phone: **520-327-6341** Fax: 520-327-0552

Avenidas Cremation & Burial

1376 W Saint Mary's Rd, Tucson AZ 85745

Phone: **520-305-4740** Fax: 520-373-5948

Funeraria Azahares

1110 E Pennsylvania St. Suite 402

Phone: **520-207-2166** Fax: 520-270-2166

Bring's Broadway Chapel

6910 E. Broadway, Tucson, AZ 85710

Phone: **520-296-7193** Fax: 520-722-6595

THE RECOVERY PHASE

Deciding About Arrangements

Whether or not to attend a funeral or memorial service is a personal choice. Making funeral arrangements or attending the funeral can help some come to terms with the death of a loved one. For others, it is simply too painful or difficult to attend. It can be more harmful than helpful to pressure someone who is ambivalent to attend.

Establishing a New Normal

Mementos of endearment thoughtfully placed throughout the house may help a grieving person face the future. After the funeral service, most people try to decide whether to remove or retain clothing, furniture, and personal objects. Rash decisions to give away or sell everything previously belonging to the deceased often leads to regret later. After some time, many come to feel comfortable with keeping some possessions as a reminder of the good memories shared with their loved one.

Grieving

The process of grief is not a simple one, nor is it one that is simply overcome in time. Special days like birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays will bring remembrance and sadness. However, the depressing periods become shorter and less frequent while the fond memories become clearer and more frequent. Grieving is a process that develops and changes over time. Things may never be the same as they once were, however, the death may bring new meaning to life. Death is a part of life and we can learn from it and be enriched by it.

HELPING CHILDREN

Telling Children

The best approach to take in telling children about death is to be honest and straightforward. Of course, children of different ages understand the concept of death on different levels. For young children, it may be better to explain to the child in simple terms how flowers, animals and people live and die. Older children may already understand the concept of death. Once the concept is introduced, or understood by the child, it is helpful to tell the child there is something sad to say, then inform them what happened in simple, honest terms they can understand.

Providing Support

Once the child works through their initial reactions, it is important to provide positive emotional support. Explain that death is not sleep, and that physical death is final. This may be difficult for the child to understand, and children may worry their remaining loved ones will not wake up. Provide security. Children often worry another special person will also die. The child should know there will always be someone to care for them. Explain that death is not a punishment for anything the deceased did wrong, and assure the child that he or she is not the cause of the death. Listen carefully to whatever expression the child gives, and allow all feelings. Encourage talking, not acting out. Let the child be part of the family's grieving process. Don't try to "protect" the child by hiding facts about physical death.

Answering Questions

Give children factual, truthful information about death. Be honest in answering any questions that may arise. It is important to use concrete terms like "dead" or "death." Misrepresentations confuse children and delay progress in the grieving process for the child.

DOCUMENTATION

The following is a brief list of documents that may need to be collected by next of kin.

Certificates:

Birth Certificate of the deceased

(Contact Pima County Vital Records, 520-724-7932)

Marriage Certificate

(Contact Pima County Superior Court, 520-724-3200)

Baptism/Confirmation

Legal Papers:

Copy of valid Will and Testament

Military Discharge

Social Security Card

Place of Work-location/employee number

Medicare Card

Deeds/Land Titles to all real property

Loan papers/Contracts

Registration/insurance for cars, boats, trailers

Death Certificates (several copies)

Credit Cards

Claims: (check benefits)

Life insurance (work, personal)

Health insurance

Mortgage insurance (pay off benefit)

Car insurance (pay off benefit)

Pension

Company (separation/vacation pay)

Government Burial (Veterans)

Widows and Orphans (Social Security, Veterans)

Disability

MAKING ARRANGEMENTS

Probate Process

The purpose of probate law is to make sure that property owned by the deceased is transferred to people or organizations in accordance with the wishes of the deceased or, in the event there is no will, in accordance with state law. First, a determination must be made as to whether the deceased left a legally effective will. Then, an itemized list of assets should be prepared for the purpose of settling the estate. The main assets that need review are: household property, vehicles, bank and checking accounts, insurance policies, securities, real estate titles, and employer death benefits. If an attorney is not already retained, it may be helpful want to retain one to assist you. An attorney can review the will, if there is one, and the itemized list of assets to find out whether a legal advisor is needed. If family or friends cannot recommend an attorney, the **Lawyer's Referral Service, 520-623-4625**, can set up an appointment with one. Charge for a half-hour conference is \$35.00.

HELPING CHILDREN

Making Small Decisions

Death is a scary and confusing disruption in any child's life. It can be helpful if the child involved is given some say in what they do or don't do to memorialize the person who has died. Offer choices whenever possible. Children should get to make their own decisions about whether or not to attend the funeral, the viewing, or the grave. Provide opportunities for children to talk, draw, or write about their own memories of the deceased. Children often appreciate being given pictures or other mementos of the deceased person as a way of supporting their grieving process. Allow them to choose the objects they like.

Things That Help

Children express grief in a variety of ways. Some common reactions include stomachaches, sleep or appetite disturbance, and headaches. Children may withdraw, or act out. They may express thoughts of disbelief, finality, or suicide. They may have feelings of shock, sadness, depression, guilt, anger, fear, relief, or peace.

Provide materials and encouragement for expressing feelings through symbolic play. Materials such as clay, crayons, magic markers, doll houses, or other toys may provide a way for the child to express emotions for which they have no words. Don't expect a picture, or "product" that you can immediately recognize.

One of the best gifts you can give your child is to deal with your own grief. As you do, you model for them the acceptance of grieving and having feelings. Help is available for both you and your child. **Tu Nidito** is a local program that specializes in helping people and their children to move through the grieving process. They have several programs tailored to specific needs. Their phone number is: **520-322-9155**.

MAKING ARRANGEMENTS

Federal Benefits

If the deceased meets certain employment criteria, the Social Security Administration provides a modest, one-time payment to help offset funeral costs. Under certain circumstances, Social Security benefits are also offered to the widow and/or children. To determine eligibility for any of these benefits, contact the Social Security Administration at **1-800-772-1213** Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Veterans Benefits

If the deceased was a veteran, burial may be provided at the V.A. National Cemetery. An American flag and grave marker are provided for every veteran by the U.S. Government. In some situations, there are pensions allowed for the widow and/or children. To determine eligibility for any of these benefits, contact the Department of Veterans Affairs, **1-800-827-1000**. **1-800-852-VETS** provides assistance in obtaining benefits, transportation, home visits and advocacy (no fee).

Victim Compensation

If death is caused by a criminal act, Victim Compensation may be available for expenses such as funeral costs, medical, loss of wages and/or counseling. Contact the Arizona Crime Victim Compensation Program through the Pima County Attorney's Office at **520-724-5525** for information and application.

MAKING ARRANGEMENTS

Office of the Medical Examiner

Under Arizona law, The Office of the Medical Examiner may perform an autopsy on persons who die unexpectedly, or without an attending physician. The forensic examination is usually completed within 24-48 hours, however, the results are usually not available for 6-8 weeks. The deceased person's next of kin can begin making arrangements through a mortuary service for a funeral as soon possible. If the person died as a result of a crime, the process can take much longer. The Forensic Science Center does not permit viewings by family or friends. Any questions or concerns can be addressed by phone at **520-724-8600**.

Indigent Interment Program (IIP)

Those without any funds or resources with which to make funeral arrangements can contact **the Indigent Interment Program, 724-8600**. This program is run by the Office of Medical Examiner and is accessible 24 hours a day, everyday, including holidays. This process requires an application and the Next of Kin (NOK) will need to meet the Federal Poverty Standard. Consideration for eligibility for the IIP is based on the NOK's financial status.

Donor Network Of Arizona-(602) 222-2200

Funeral Services

Planning the funeral or cremation can be difficult to cope with. Decisions can be easier if there is a will that includes specific instructions on funeral arrangements. If there is no will, it may be appropriate to consult relatives, clergy, or friends about which funeral home to contact and about what type of funeral or memorial service to request. The funeral director can be very helpful by explaining the different options and services available. In addition, the funeral director can give information about private and public benefits, which may be available. There is a directory of Tucson area mortuary service providers in the back of this pamphlet. Below is a link to pricing for funeral and cremation services.

<http://tucsonfunerals.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/2018-Price-Survey-Southern-AZ-.pdf>