

As this first year of grieving comes to a close, you may find yourself reflecting on the past while also looking ahead to the future. As you continue to adjust to the changes in your life, please know that support is available to you and your loved ones through the Bereavement Services at Empath Health.

Through your experiences with illness and grief, you have likely learned some lessons that could make a difference for others. Each day, volunteers play vital roles in supporting our neighbors who are living with serious illness, caregiving and grief. For more information about grief support or volunteering, please call **(727) 467-7423**. We are here for you.

# Grieving: Your Healing Journey

## You have walked through and survived the first year of your loss.

Grief frequently challenges our sense of timing to where the loss may feel like it was long ago, just yesterday or totally accurate to the time. As your healing journey continues, we offer some concluding reminders to support you in the months ahead.

### Remember to:

- Seek a mixture of rest, reflection, exercise, healthy eating, and recreation
- Continue with patience, kindness and compassion with your healing
- Opt for reasonable and realistic expectations of yourself, realizing that you are the expert on yourself and what you can do from moment to moment – no matter what others think
- Connect with your spiritual support (nature, art, music, inspiring readings) or faith community
- Make use of and create personal rituals, especially on specials days (e.g. plant a tree or toast your loved one)
- Become comfortable with solitude. You can cope through activities such as walking, working on a hobby, doing a household project or calling a friend.
- Adopt a perspective of openness... openness to new routines, new people and/or new patterns in your daily life
- Embrace simple joys and pleasures
- Continue with positive, healthy ways to express your emotions (e.g. journaling or sharing your story with a good, caring listener)
- Check out learning opportunities to develop a new skill or gain new knowledge on a subject of your interest
- Embrace humor, play and laughter whenever possible
- Pursue and create a new sense of purpose and meaning through reaching out to others

### Connect with caring:

- Care for your neighbors
- Care for your friends
- Care for some flowers or plants
- Care for a pet
- Care for a child
- Care for your home
- Care for family (related or not)
- Finally... care for YOU