

About the Grief Resource Center

The Grief Resource Center has been created to reach out to those in the community who are grieving and to promote an awareness of the many ways grief can be experienced.

At the Grief Resource Center, service providers can come together and work in partnership to help individuals define their own unique pathways to healing.

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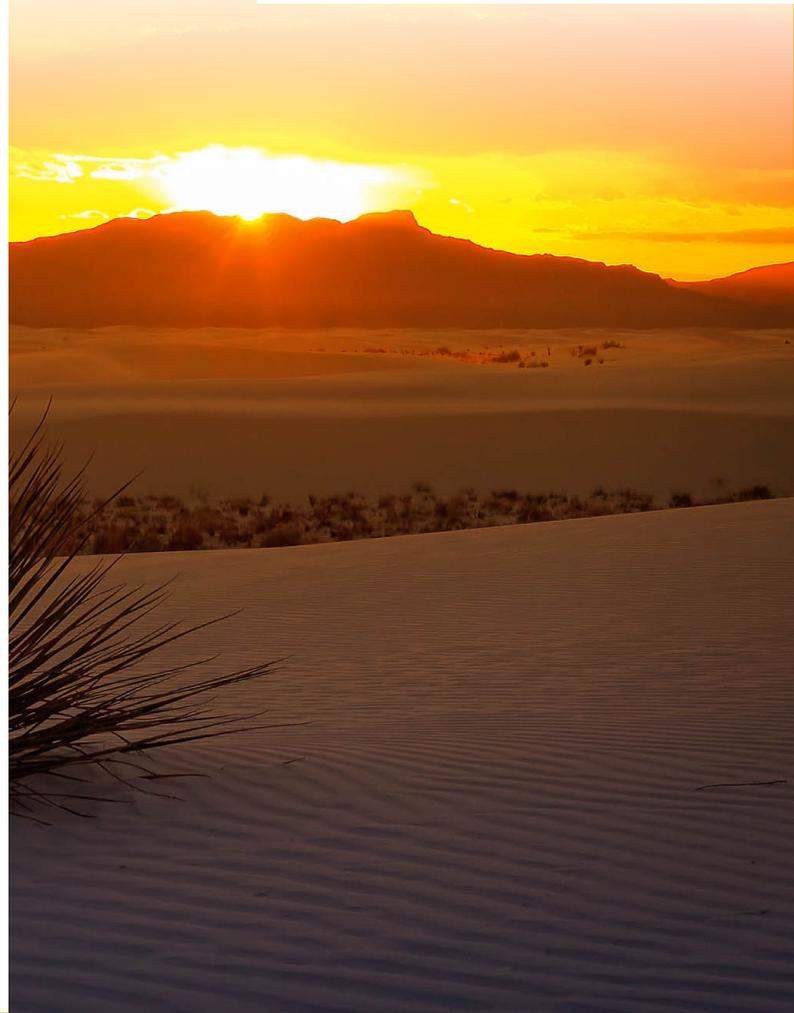
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***The Grief Resource Center is a
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Death as Part of Life

by Linda Phelps, Ph.D.

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R E S O U R C E C E N T E R



Death as Part of Life

Death...is the end of the life cycle. It's natural; it's inevitable. Every cell that makes up the human body eventually ages, wears out and dies. Death is part of life; it's part of life's complexity and wonderment.

Death...is inescapable; it will happen to everyone. Meaning and purpose in life can grow out of our knowledge that life has an end, that there is only a finite amount of time to appreciate, to create, to achieve. Death creates an urgency to love and care more fully about others because life and those whom we hold dear, will come to an end.

Death...often asks the hard question: "Why?" A persistent voice within says, "Why is this happening? Surely there is no reason for this!" As human beings of reason and logic, we tend to think there should be a purpose for everything that occurs. This thought provides us with some defense against our feelings of helplessness and lack of control. One of our most fervent challenges in life is to live fully even when we have so many unanswered questions.

Death...too soon? We often have preconceived notions about how we should consider life as complete. For some, it's harder to accept the deaths of a ten year child or thirty year old adult than it is to accept the death of an eighty year old. Human logic and reason tell us that it's really the eighty year old who had the most complete life because he lived the longest and experienced the most. Yet despite our notions, it's important to realize that every life is complete within its own right. A complete life has only two necessary components: birth and death. Of course we want to fill this time in between with more years, more goals, more accomplishments, but these are human desires. We might feel that death came too soon to our loved one, but we can take comfort knowing that even if that life was brief, it had meaning and purpose, it was complete.

