



Carrying On

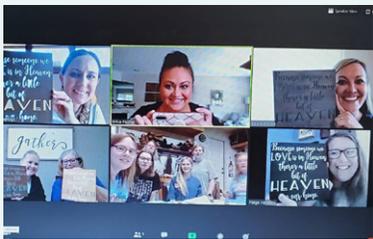
FALL 2020 ★ COPING THROUGH COVID

Inside this issue:

- Fall Memorial Tradition Continues
- Sunshine Bags
- Grief and Covid

Mothers of Angels show off their pallet art!

One Bright Star had to get creative with their annual Mothers of Angels event this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was held on June 13th, 2020 via Zoom with Design and Wine's owner Laura Doyen. We were all able to bring out our artistic side with pallet art and lots of laughs! Although we couldn't be together in one space, it was still a great time and an amazing way to remember our angels.



About One Bright Star:

One Bright Star's mission is to be a resource for grieving families who have lost a child to death. One Bright Star has created a unique star symbol to recognize and support them.

Contact Us:

Phone: (507) 345-1920
 P.O. Box 1084
 Mankato, MN 56002
 onebrightstar.org



Fall Memorial Tradition to Continue, the Covid Way

During this time, One Bright Star and the amazing board members are usually in the thick of planning and prepping for the annual Fall Memorial held at the OBS memorial site located at Erlandson Park. However, due to the current COVID-19 Pandemic, we have had to make the difficult decision to cancel this year's memorial to ensure everyone is staying healthy and safe. New plaque and pavers will still be placed and the memorial site is still open for visiting to honor and remember your angel. Please keep an eye out for a packet in the mail that will contain a few of the Fall Memorial traditions that you can still do on your own time. Please reach out to our Executive Director at director@onebrightstar.org if you wish to receive a memorial packet.



Sunshine Bags

There is no better feeling than putting a smile on someone's face. One Bright Star created Bags of Sunshine to do just that during the difficult times our community is going through. Each Bag of Sunshine contained a small terracotta pot, soil, a positive plant pick, seeds hand selected by Hilltop Florists. The bags were distributed throughout the community.



One Bright Star's Executive Director, Erica Fischer and her daughters. Kassidy and Kaydra prepare Sunshine Bags.



Future One Bright Star volunteer, Noah enjoys planting the seeds and writing a special message on his plant pick.

Well, it has been quite a crazy summer to say the least. On top what is happening in the world, us bereaved are still dealing with our grief on top of many changes we have been faced with during the Covid outbreak. I know that I have picked up some great coping tools during my grief journey, but I really loved the points and suggestions that were made in this article. These are trying times, but we now know we are able to survive anything. I hope this article reminds you of how resilient and courageous you are. -Tracy

How to Cope with Bereavement During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Jason Spendelow Ph.D. Bravery in Bereavement - [psychologytoday.com](https://www.psychologytoday.com)

Grieving the loss of a loved one may be especially challenging right now.

Bereavement is a painful, stressful, and difficult journey at the best of times. But grieving the loss of a loved one may be especially challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Why Does the Pandemic Create Additional Strain for the Bereaved?

We live in highly uncertain times, and we are surrounded by fear, anxiety, and illness. But this pandemic will be especially stressful if already grieving the loss of a loved one. Some of the reasons for increased stress may include:

Being less able to receive in-person support from friends and family, potentially leading to a greater sense of isolation and loneliness.

A decrease in activity levels which may lead to more "thinking" time and a reduced ability to use hobbies and interests as helpful distractions.

High levels of social, health, and occupational uncertainty, reducing stability in life as you grieve, which can create difficulty planning for the future.

More frequent reminders about illness and death, including the fear that you will experience further loss.

There will be other stressful factors but, as we can see, the coping resources of a bereaved person are under severe strain in the context of the pandemic. You must have a clear game plan to help manage the additional challenges caused by COVID-19.

Coping Strategies

Here are some suggestions to help support your well-being while grieving during the pandemic:

- Acknowledge that grieving at this time is more challenging than coping with loss outside a health crisis. You have additional sources of stress to contend with, so you must practice self-compassion. Signs of self-criticism might come in the form of beliefs like "I should be doing better than this" or "I am failing to keep it together." Failing to acknowledge the additional stress associated with the pandemic runs the risk of blaming yourself for something that is out of your control.



- Staying connected to others is very important if you are grieving AND socially isolated. Often we don't feel like talking to others after losing a loved one. If you lack this motivation, try to book times for phone calls and video chats. Arrange these conversations as appointments you must keep. Agree on times with people in advance so you are more likely to follow through.
- Alternate between "loss" and "restorative" activities. This idea comes from the dual-process approach to grief which says that people move between loss-related activities (e.g., looking at photos

of the deceased, crying, talking about the person) and restorative exercises (e.g., making plans for the future, spending time on hobbies).

- Consider minimizing the time you spend watching the news. It is sensible to be aware of major announcements by government and health officials. Outside of that, don't watch the news if it increases your stress levels.

You might find it useful to think about how your lost loved one would like you to respond in these circumstances. You can use this exercise to help generate coping strategies.

Alternatively, if you could talk to this person in 10 years, what would you like to say about how you coped during the pandemic? These final two strategies may not suit everyone, so only use them if they are right for you.

Summing up

Everyone is living under difficult and stressful circumstances. The pandemic will be especially challenging for the bereaved. Having a clear coping plan is essential, and some of the strategies suggested above may form a part of that plan.

