

Sound Waves



“In any moment, no matter how lost we feel,
we can take refuge in presence and love.”
– Tara Brach

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Refugee

– Rex Allen, manager, grief support services



Refugee: Someone who has been forced to leave a particular place

Throughout history, individuals have been uprooted for a variety of reasons from the place they call home. More often than not, displacement has come at the hands of others through acts of war, or through natural disasters that are a result of the many violent manifestations of nature. Whatever the reason, one thing is clear: When displacement comes, the certainty and comforts of home are lost. In their place is a new world turned upside down where familiar landmarks have disappeared and meaning is questioned. It is the world of the refugee.

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Using cairns as guides on the grief journey

– Ross Robinson, grief services counselor

Cairn **noun** \ˈkern\
**A mound of stones erected
as a marker or memorial.**



Composed of a stack of rocks, cairns are an ancient symbol found in many cultures around the world. They can memorialize a loved one or help point the way in a confusing landscape. Thus their construction provides a useful tool for those who are grieving.

They are inexpensive to build and apply to a broad age range. Our counselors often offer this activity for the children and teens they visit, both individually and in group settings, as a way to express memories of their loved ones or some of the difficulties present in their grief process. We invite them to create a cairn representing what grounds them in the midst of uncertain times, such as people, activities or memories. Silently, towers of meaning can be created, held together by glue so that they can more easily be moved throughout the

house and yard.

The intentional process of building these cairns is what gives unique meaning to each individual. No matter how confused you may feel, a cairn is a universal sign that you are not lost or alone; others before you have traveled this way, and just as they have, you will find your next step on this journey.

Here's what you need to build your own cairn:

- A drop cloth or newspaper to protect the work surface
- A collection of rocks and found objects such as beach glass, shells and marbles that fit easily in the palm of your hand. A variety of sizes is helpful, and smaller objects are better. Use the larger ones on the bottom of the structure.

- Permanent markers for writing words on rocks
- A hot glue gun or white glue. A hot glue gun works best and fastest. Children may need supervision with a glue gun.
- A non-porous base such as a board, shingle or plate. You can seal a porous base using Mod Podge or watered-down glue. The base should be prepared in advance.

Hint for building a cairn:

- If a cairn tumbles, don't give up – just use smaller objects and more glue!



A Spiritual Journey

And the world cannot be discovered by a journey of miles,
no matter how long,
but only by a spiritual journey,
a journey of one inch,
very arduous and humbling and joyful,
by which we arrive at the ground at our feet,
and learn to be at home.

– Wendell Berry

SoundCare Kids

Grief support for children, teens and the adults who care for them.

Group nights begin with pizza and play. The kids, teens and caregivers then meet in small groups for discussion and activities designed to explore different aspects of grief. Each week builds on the concepts, discussions and activities of the previous week, so attending all six weeks is recommended.

Our regular session topics include:

- Week 1:** Learning about grief and getting to know each other
- Week 2:** Exploring feelings and learning how to cope with them
- Week 3:** Sharing our stories
- Week 4:** Dealing with regret, guilt and unfinished business
- Week 5:** Identifying and adjusting to changes
- Week 6:** Keeping memories and staying connected

SoundCareKids is provided at no cost to families in Thurston, Lewis and Mason counties through funding from Providence St. Peter Foundation.

For more information about counseling or to reserve your place in an upcoming session, call Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice at 360-493-5928. Pre-registration is required.

2015 Fall Grief Support Group Schedule

This group will meet
Oct. 29 - Dec. 10
(no meeting on Nov. 26
due to Thanksgiving).



<http://on.fb.me/ikYfdd>

In a recent National Public Radio report, I listened with interest as the commentator interviewed a Swedish government official who described at length his government's response to the basic needs of current war refugees in his country. From special credit cards and stores to housing and education, these refugees are embraced and securely held as they tentatively begin to move through their new world. The Swedish official summarized his country's approach as one that respected the inherent dignity of an individual, helped them realize possibilities and provided a sense of normalcy.

As I listened, I was reminded of the lessons that grieving individuals have taught me over the years. High on that list of lessons is the observation that to experience grief is to become a refugee of sorts. When the unthinkable happens and grief enters a life, the person is forever evicted from the world they have known and are left to wander a landscape that may seem as foreign as the moon.

As I thought about the Swedish response to their refugees of war, I wondered if each of us who grieves might not benefit from the caring perspective of people who have been uprooted from what they have known and loved.

Each day, in this new landscape of grief, you might promise yourself these three things:

- First, remind yourself of your inherent dignity. No matter how deep your experience of grief might be, you are worthy of honor and respect.
- Next look for the possibilities, the opportunities that are before you and what they might have to teach you as you struggle to find your footing and move one small step at a time. The possibilities may not be obvious at first. Your vision may be clouded, and possibilities may be hard to discern. However, just as fog will slowly dissipate as it is warmed by the sun of a new day, so, too, will the fog of grief begin to clear in ways that allow you to see your opportunities more clearly.
- Finally, begin to create a new normal for yourself within the possibilities that have arisen. Normalcy may seem impossible to achieve at first. The desire to strongly cling to what has been can be immense. And yet, viewed from a place of dignity, the warmth of new possibilities will eventually lead you to a new normal – a full life that is different, but no less meaningful.

Always remember that at Providence, we're here to walk with you through the coming days. Never hesitate to let us know how we can be of service to you.



Adult support groups

Everyone has the capacity to heal and grow after the life-altering experience of a major loss. Our goal is to help people understand and cope with their grief while offering support and opportunities to learn and grow. We help people identify needs and strengths and work with them to develop a plan to address these. We work with individuals, families and groups in the community.

For information about individual counseling or to make an appointment, call 360-493-4667.



Adult Support Groups (Ongoing)

Daytime groups

- 10-11:30 a.m.
First and third Monday of each month
Lacey Presbyterian Church
3045 Carpenter Road SE, Lacey
Information: 360-493-4667
- 1:30-3 p.m.
First and third Tuesday of each month
Shelton Fire Department building
122 W. Franklin St., Shelton
Information: 360-493-4667

Evening groups

- A Mindful Approach to Grief (six-week series)
This grief support group will meet for six consecutive weeks to explore how the concept of mindfulness can be an important tool in coping with grief.
6-7:30 p.m.
Tuesdays, July 28-Sept. 1
Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice
3432 South Bay Road NE, Olympia
Free. Pre-registration is required.
For more information or to register, call 360-493-4667.
- Loss of Child Support Group (The Compassionate Friends)
7-8:30 p.m.
First Monday of each month
Providence St. Peter Hospital (Executive Meeting Room)
413 Lilly Road NE, Olympia
For more information or to register, call Allen Roth at 360-402-6711.

Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice

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Grief support for all ages

Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice provides a full range of grief support and bereavement services for adults and children. We can help you better understand and cope with your grief, while offering support and opportunities to learn and grow.

See **INSIDE** for more information!

What the Heart Cannot Forget

Everything remembers something. The rock, its fiery bed, cooling and fissuring into cracked pieces, the rub of watery fingers along its edge.

The cloud remembers being elephant, camel, giraffe, remembers being a veil over the face of the sun, gathering itself together for the fall.

The turtle remembers the sea, sliding over and under its belly, remembers legs like wings, escaping down the sand under the beaks of savage birds.

The tree remembers the story of each ring, the years of drought, the floods, the way things came walking slowly towards it long ago.

And the skin remembers its scars, and the bone aches where it was broken. The feet remember the dance, and the arms remember lifting up the child.

The heart remembers everything it loved and gave away, everything it lost and found again, and everyone it loved, the heart cannot forget.

– Joyce Sutphen