

Support from A1

the holidays. “We talk about ways your loved one can be honored around the holidays,” said Bedford. “You can do things like light a special memorial candle or ... when everyone comes together to talk about the loved one, offer a toast in remembrance.”

The session, which will be facilitated by Chaplain Stephen Landale, provides an environment which is part educational and part conversational. Facilitators of the groups teach about grief and the coping mechanisms, opening up the opportunity for people to talk about how grief affects them.

“Some people come in with feelings of guilt or what they wished they had accomplished when their loved one was here,” said Bedford. “What we try to do is ... not fix the way they’re feeling. We don’t want to tell them how they ought to feel. We walk with them through those emotions and not around them.”

Facilitators come with

their own outline of what they want to accomplish, but largely allow the group to decide where to take the conversation. Facilitators may also bring poetry and encourage journaling and artistic expression.

The program promotes a “Mourner’s Bill of Rights,” which includes having “rights” to gain authorship over the various aspects of one’s life including expressing emotion, reminiscing, creating rituals and guilt-free expressions of happiness.

“It’s okay to feel sad. It’s okay to feel good. It’s okay to cry. It’s okay to lower your expectations on yourself,” Bedford explained. “I believe you can never really get over your loss, but find ways to cope with it and deal with it.”

Many can find themselves alone with their thoughts and memories of lost loved ones during the holidays, which may exacerbate a sense of isolation.

“Our culture can be kind of standoffish to grief,” said Bedford, “or people have the mentality of ‘It’s been a month since you lost your loved



From left: Bereavement Coordinator Joshwa Bedford and Chaplain Stephen Landale facilitate grief support groups in the area.

COURTESY PHOTO

one. You can get over it now and move on with life, when that’s not reality. Grief is not a one-size-fits-all process.”

Bedford views the support group as a bold step for some.

“We like to acknowledge that it takes a lot

of courage to come to a support group because ... you have your mind telling you, ‘No, you don’t need this,’ or, ‘What will people think of me?’ or, ‘Am I in this alone?’ he said. “I find people to be very courageous going to these types of support

groups.” As many end up returning to sessions, Bedford said he’s witnessed positive change.

“I’ve seen people develop coping skills — build some kind of resiliency,” he said. “They’ve built relationships within the groups, and I think that’s probably one of the most important things, is finding people you can relate with and building a friendship out of that.”

Bedford encourages people to continue their grieving process beyond the drop-in.

“If they can find other grief support groups in the area, I strongly suggest that,” he said. “If people want to come up from Cottage Grove, they are more than welcome to come.”

More drop-in support groups in Cottage Grove are planned for 2020, though no dates or times have been scheduled yet.

For more information, contact Joshwa Bedford at 541-246-1568 or via email at jbedford@4signature-service.com.

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DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

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OREGON WINTER WEATHER IS STARTING TO SET IN ACROSS OREGON. ARE YOU PREPARED?

Oregon State Police
Oregon winter weather is starting to set in across Oregon. Are you prepared? With the increase chances of snow, freezing rain, and ice on the roadways it is more important than ever to #Knowbeforeyougo.



Checking www.tripcheck.com is the best way to get information on highway closures/construction, minimum chain requirements and road conditions utilizing their traffic cameras.

Those traveling in lower elevations, expect rain and wet roadways. Which means you will need to increase your following distances due to decreased traction on those wet roads.

- OSP is also urges all motorists to plan their travels by:
- Be prepared in the event you become stuck during your travels- Carry water, food, and blankets in the event you are stuck in your vehicle during your trip
 - Put the distractions away. Pull over to use that handheld electronic device, ask as passenger to help or wait to arrive at your destination to use them.
 - Watch your speed; often speeding will not get you to your destination any faster. You will fatigue faster, burn more fuel, and create a more hazardous environment on the highway.
 - Be extra vigilant in highway work zones. Even when workers are not present, all work zone speed limits still apply and fines double. Inactive work zones still have equipment, detours, and incomplete changes in the roadway so drivers need to slow down and be alert.
 - Get rested before you travel. Fatigued drivers are more frequent during holiday weekends because of increased travel and activity. Be patient and allow plenty of time to reach your destination.
 - Wear your safety belt. Ensure your passengers and children are properly restrained too. We see too many crashes were people would have walked away with minor in any injuries.
 - Get a designated driver (plan ahead) if you plan on consuming intoxicating substances.

Our partners at Oregon Department of Transportation recently reminded drivers about the dangers of not checking the roads before you go and only utilizing GPS. When roads are closed and your navigation systems direct you onto a detour route, keep in mind that the device you count on for guidance could instead guide you into trouble.

PUT TOGETHER A PLAN

Make sure all the pieces are in place to render you and your family prepared in the event of a natural disaster.

- Listen to radio or television newscasts for the latest weather information, and follow all evacuation directions and suggestions.
- Keep a stock of non-perishable food items as well as bottled water on hand inside your home.
- Keep a 72 Hour Kit on hand inside your home that is easy to get to in the event of a disaster.

For more information and tips on disaster response and preparedness, contact your local emergency services center.
South Lane Fire & Rescue • 233 Harrison Ave, Cottage Grove 541-942-4493 • 55 South 1st Street, Creswell 541-895-2506



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