

SUPPORT GROUPS

Support. This is the primary goal of the group, encouragement that you can survive this tragedy, support that you are doing the best you can at this time; support that is unconditional.

A chance to “vent.” People need a “safe space” in which to tell their story, in all of its intensity; to include details and feelings and concerns that they might not be able to share with friends or family. The group is an atmosphere where feelings can be expressed without fear of judgment.

Honesty. The support group session is a sacred space of truth. After telling the story of a death, we acknowledge that life will never again be the same, and also acknowledge that healing can happen.

Information. This can be books, *CareNotes*, movies, other support groups, presentations and so on, that help people educate themselves about their loss. There is also the sharing of ideas, coping tools, and personal philosophies.

Normalizing. People often feel they are going “crazy” with grief. To be told that what they are experiencing is natural helps them regain some sense of control in their lives.

Camaraderie. It can be comforting to be with others experiencing a similar life crisis. There is an “energy” that develops in a group in every session, an energy that is shared.