

# Grief Notes

December 2025

## Grief in the New Year by Timothy Soucy, Bereavement Coordinator

You may be reading this Grief Notes, titled “Grief in the New Year,” in the middle of December while navigating your first holiday season without your loved one being physically present. If the title of this Grief Notes created visceral thoughts and feelings, I would encourage you to stop reading and take a moment to ask yourself whether you want to continue reading these thoughts about grief in the New Year,

“By pausing to reflect, you are creating space to listen to yourself.”

or if it would be best for you to put this aside and read at the beginning of the New Year. By pausing to reflect, you are creating space to

listen to yourself, acknowledge your thoughts and feelings, and practice self-care. This may not be the right time for you to continue to read this article, but that time will come.

Many years ago, I had an unexpected event on New Year’s Eve. As the clock got closer to midnight, I experienced a wave of memories and emotions of a deceased family member. This family member and I were very close. I would not be the person I am today without their encouragement, support, and love. This family member died eleven months earlier, but it wasn’t until that moment that the profound realization came that this would be the first time in my life that this person would not be entering the New Year with me. The tears came, and it was a tough time. Looking back, my grieving of their death has dramatically softened; I have a greater awareness of the gratitude that they were a significant part of my life, and they continue to be deeply missed.

Many of us will wonder whether our grief will change in the New Year. Will it be different? Will grief’s intensity change? Is there hope? The simple yet brutal reality is that our grief and life events do not change because we enter a new year. We do not get a clean slate; we do not get to start over. How do

we move forward in the new year? I suggest we start by asking ourselves questions. What am I feeling? What would I like to feel? How can I begin to care for my grief in healthy ways in the coming year? Are there steps I need to take to start the desired change? Am I ready to change, or do I need more time where I am presently? If you need guidance navigating these questions concerning your grief, please remember that your bereavement coordinator is here to support you.

The suggestions below are not exhaustive, nor is there a one-size-fits-all approach to our grief in the New Year. In the past, making New Year’s resolutions may have been part of how you welcomed in the New Year, while for others, it has been shunned. **But I want to propose the following resolutions for us to consider:**

1. Placing no time limits on my grief.
2. Being kind to myself when I’m not being as productive as I would desire.
3. Making no apologies for my tears, whether physically shed or tears of the heart.
4. Placing realistic expectations on myself and others.
5. Discovering ways to honor the memory of my loved one.

Please remember that we grieve because we loved the person who has died. While our loved ones are not physically with us, they remain part of us. They stay in our thoughts and continue to shape our lives in many ways. Recognize that looking ahead to the New Year is not a betrayal of our loved ones. Remember that January 1, 2026, is just another day, with no meaning other than the one we choose to give it. If you continue to be unsure about what to do or how to move forward, have questions and/or concerns, consider contacting one of Northern Light’s bereavement coordinators. Your local bereavement coordinator’s name and contact information are on the other side of this Grief Notes.



# Calendar

## Bangor Area Grief Support

Grief can feel isolating and lonely, and griever are sometimes surprised by the intensity and duration of their grief. Here at Northern Light, we believe that no one should grieve alone. Our bereavement coordinators are available for questions and grief support. Please feel welcome to contact your bereavement coordinator, Jane Cornman, to learn more about how we can help, or to sign up for a support group: 207-944-5534 / jcornman@northernlight.org.

### Monthly Drop-In Grief Support Group (in-person)

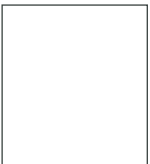
Tuesday Drop-In Grief Support Groups continue on the fourth Tuesday of the month, 2-3:30 pm, at a local church in Bangor. The next two meetings will be on December 23 and January 27.

### Online Grief Support Being Organized

We are organizing a 6-week online grief support group. Once a minimum of five participants signs up, we will find the best mutual time for all participants and schedule the meetings. The group is free of charge and open to anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one. For more information or to register, please contact Jane Cornman at 207-944-5534 or jcornman@northernlight.org.

“The embracing of grief makes me so aware of the preciousness of life. While I see darkness in my grief, to heal I must seek out light. I will discover that life and living are sacred, beautiful gifts to be treasured each and every moment.”

- Alan Wolfelt,  
Grief Counselor  
and Educator



Jane Cornman, Bereavement Coordinator  
Northern Light Home Care & Hospice  
43 Whiting Hill Road  
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Brewer, ME 04412  
Phone: 1-800-757-3326 or (207) 944-5534  
E-mail: jcornman@northernlight.org



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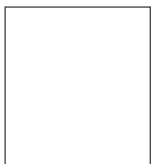
## South Portland Grief Support

**Monthly Zoom Grief Support Meetings:** Next meetings are on December 2 and January 6 from 1 to 2pm. If you are interested in attending, contact Linda Hopkins (207-400-8714 or e-mail [hopkinsl@northernlight.org](mailto:hopkinsl@northernlight.org).) Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month.

Support groups are only one of the supports we offer. If you would like to speak with bereavement coordinator Linda Hopkins or schedule an appointment, please contact her at 207-400-8714 or e-mail [hopkinsl@northernlight.org](mailto:hopkinsl@northernlight.org).

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Linda Hopkins, Bereavement Coordinator  
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South Portland, ME 04106  
Phone: (207) 400-8714 1-800-757-3326  
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# Calendar

## Waterville Grief Support

Grief can feel isolating and lonely, and griever are sometimes surprised by the intensity and duration of their grief. Here at Northern Light, we believe that no one should grieve alone. Our bereavement coordinators are available for questions and grief support. Please feel welcome to contact your bereavement coordinator, Jane Cornman, to learn more about how we can help, or to sign up for a support group: 207-944-5534 / jcornman@northernlight.org.

## Waterville Area Grief Support Groups

### In-Person Grief Support Groups

We are not currently offering in-person meetings in Waterville. If you would prefer an in-person experience, please contact Jane Cornman for assistance with finding a local grief support group.

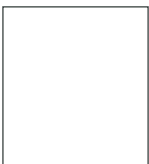
### Online Grief Support Being Organized

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Jane Cornman, Bereavement Coordinator  
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E-mail: jcornman@northernlight.org





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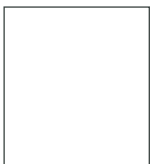
## Ellsworth Area Grief Support

Grief and grieving is different for each of us. If you are struggling with grief, have questions, concerns, or if you would like information about bereavement support groups, please contact Tim Soucy, Bereavement Services Coordinator, at 207-356-1497 or [tesoucy@northernlight.org](mailto:tesoucy@northernlight.org) or our toll-free number at 1-800-757-3326.

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## Presque Isle Area Grief Support

**Six Week Grief Support Groups** – Have you lost a loved one? When someone we love dies it can feel overwhelming. You may feel alone and that no one understands what you are going through. The truth is that many are walking a similar path. Consider coming to a place where you can talk, grieve, and move forward with people who are also grieving.

**There will be two Six Week Grief Support Groups being offered in January:** One group will be held for 6 consecutive Tuesdays, starting January 6th, and concluding on February 10. They will be held at The Connect Center in Van Buren from 6-7:30pm.

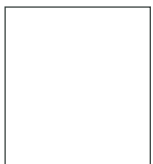
The second group will be starting January 7, for 6 consecutive Wednesdays, concluding on February 11th. They will be held at NL AR Gould Hospital from 6-7:30pm.

These groups are free of charge and open to anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one, but registration is required, and participants are encouraged to attend all group sessions. These groups will be limited to 12 participants, so please be sure to RSVP. For more information and registration, please contact George McLaughlin 207.498.9039 gmclaughlin@northernlight.org

As your Bereavement Coordinator, I am available by phone for grief support. If you would like to arrange a time to talk or meet one on one, you may e-mail your request to George McLaughlin at gmclaughlin@ northernlight.org or call me at 207-498-9039. I will get back to you as soon as I can.

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