

Grief Support Groups

When a loved one dies, you may experience a wide range of emotions, from confusion to anger to sadness. All these feelings are normal. You may also feel isolated or alone – even if you have family members or loved ones who are grieving right alongside you.

Grief support groups can connect you with people who have had similar experiences. The groups can help you navigate your own grief and feel less alone.

At VNS Health, we understand how much these connections can help support you at this challenging time. That's why our goal is to make joining a support group easy for all of our patients' loved ones. We offer grief support groups throughout Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten Island. We also offer a wide range of support groups, such as ones for certain relationships (like parent and sibling relationships) and ones in other languages (such as Chinese and Spanish).

How Can Grief Support Groups Help?

VNS Health grief support groups are gatherings of people who have lost someone they love. Because of this shared experience, participants can offer support, comfort, and encouragement – and receive the same benefits in return.

Grief support groups can also provide you with helpful advice, such as coping strategies and ways to practice self-care. When others share their experiences, you can gain insight into what might help you on your own journey.

Finally, grief support groups help you feel less alone. Hearing from and connecting with others who have faced similar

experiences can remind you that healing is possible. You will also realize that your grief is unique and that, with support, you will get through this process in your own way.

I have heard from many support group participants how VNS Health groups have validated their grief experience and provided social connection during the long and difficult period of isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Willis Partington, VNS Health Lead Bereavement Counselor

Because VNS Health offers grief support for 13 months, our groups can help you get through the milestones and anniversaries of the first year without your loved one – including the first anniversary of your loved one’s death. Being part of a support group means you won’t have to experience those firsts alone.

What Happens at Grief Support Groups?

When you join a grief support group, you’ll be with others who are also going through their own grieving process. A skilled bereavement counselor (an expert who is trained in providing support during the grieving process) will lead the group, but the voices of other participants are a key part of support groups.

During support group meetings, you may want to talk about your loved one or how their loss is affecting you. You may also prefer to simply listen to others as they share their thoughts and feelings. There is no right or wrong way to attend a grief support group, and you can participate in whatever way feels the most comfortable to you.

Four Ways to Get the Most Out of Grief Support Groups

1. *Attend your support group as regularly as possible.* This will help you get to know other members and make you feel more comfortable.
2. *Use other members as a resource.* Listen to others as they share their journeys, and take what you need to support your own grieving.
3. *Participate in discussions when you feel ready.* By sharing your thoughts and experiences, you can help others and gain insight into your own emotions.
4. *Remember why you joined a grief support group.* When you're feeling particularly down, remind yourself how your support group has helped you maintain a sense of hope.

Because safety is our priority, support groups and other offerings from our bereavement teams are taking place via Zoom during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grief Support Groups FAQs

Here are a few frequently asked questions to help you decide if and when a VNS Health grief support group can help you during your grieving process.

Who can attend VNS Health grief support groups?



If your loved one received care from VNS Health, you can take advantage of our grief support groups.

We want to provide grief support to as many people as possible. If your loved one did not receive care from VNS Health, but

you're interested in one of our support groups, please email us to confirm that space is available.

How much do VNS Health grief support groups cost?



VNS Health grief support groups are free of charge to anyone who is interested. Because groups can fill up quickly, please email us to reserve a spot.

What kinds of grief support groups does VNS Health offer?



We offer a wide range of grief support groups to meet your needs. For instance, we offer support groups specific to certain relationships, such as groups for people who have lost a:

- Parent
- Spouse or partner
- Sibling
- Adult child

We offer support groups in different languages, including Spanish and Chinese, and a men's support group. In addition, we offer workshops on topics such as stress management, coping with grief, and the holidays, as well as workshops incorporating topics such as mindfulness and reiki.

Learn more about VNS Health support groups in our quarterly [bereavement newsletter](#) and our [calendar of groups and workshops](#).

How have VNS Health grief support groups implemented safety protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic?



The COVID-19 pandemic has changed so much, including how we can safely conduct grief support groups. During the pandemic, support groups and other offerings are taking place via Zoom.