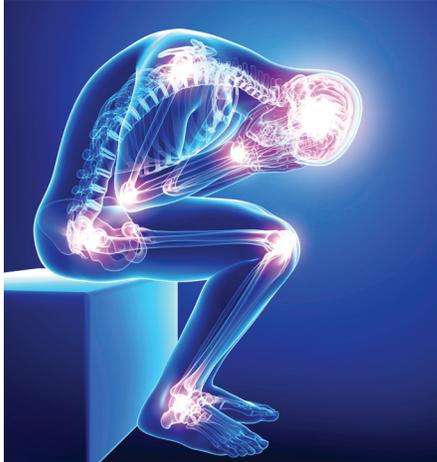


# TRANSITIONS

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## the **physical** symptoms of grief



by Andrea Ruggieri

We often discuss how grief affects our psyche as we travel the emotional journey after a losing a loved one. Sadness, grief, anger, feeling lost, are the emotions we may feel. Amidst the pain of loss it's not uncommon for fatigue, a heaviness in the chest, heart palpitations, digestive unrest, sickness and other physical ailments to add to your discomfort.

Because grief is the price we pay for loving someone, we naturally and profoundly feel that loss. In certain losses, like losing a life partner you also are faced with identity and lifestyle changes; who are you now without this person in your life? These realizations are frightening and can be very stressful. Your body intensely feels these emotional shifts.

By nature, the body responds to grief and can present in any number of ways, physically and chemically. The human body is a mystical and complex miracle but it may be tricked into responding in unhelpful ways. It feels the depth of your stress and reacts as if there is a risk. In attempting to protect you, it releases hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. In small doses this helps the body. A surge of these hormones, in excess, may affect your ability to sleep, as they are designed to keep you attentive during a traumatic time.

Your immune system can be compromised when you grieve, making you more susceptible to illness. You may experience cognitive deficiencies, finding it hard to think, remember things and make decisions. The nervous system activates to a higher level, and your "fight or flight" response, which is controlled by the sympathetic nervous system is on high alert. Your body responds by tensing up, having increased digestive issues or elevating your heart rate. Grief can overwhelm the body.

Physical symptoms of grief and stress have been known to be present days or weeks following the shock waves of loss. So what do we do when the physical effects of grieving become unmanageable? How do we know if physical signs are grief-related or something more serious? When things don't get better, even worsen over several months it's important to consult with your physician, being very open about your recent loss, so that they can properly diagnose and get you help.

### **How to help yourself before you become overwhelmed:**

- **Hydrating** - It's a must. Lack of hydration will exacerbate headaches, brain fog, and make you feel more tired.
- **Eat Well** - Your body needs proper fuel to run properly. Try small bites throughout the day for gentler digestion.
- **Keep Moving** - Moderate movement is all that is needed: walk the dog, do some stretching, bake a cake...
- **Get Rest** - Change your surroundings and current habits to improve the likelihood of getting more rest.
- **Express Yourself** - Journal- Garden - Create Art - Organize - Fix things! Whatever calms your psyche, you may find it helps you work through your grief.

Be mindful. Be consistent. But most of all, be kind to yourself; don't let things spin out of control. Get help if it is needed. For extra help, visit: [bartolomeo.com/wp-content/uploads/BP\\_Grief-Resources.pdf](http://bartolomeo.com/wp-content/uploads/BP_Grief-Resources.pdf)

Source: Reviewed By: Cathy Sanchez Babao "The Physical Side of Grief: Why Your Body Hurts When Your Heart Does." Parting Stone Blog, [blog.partingstone.com/the-physical-side-of-grief-why-your-body-hurts-when-your-heart-does/](http://blog.partingstone.com/the-physical-side-of-grief-why-your-body-hurts-when-your-heart-does/)



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**Check it off your list!** It will be nice to know your personal wishes will be honored and it gives you great peace of mind. Done! Enjoy life.

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# why residential comfort care homes depend on donations to survive

Resource: ChatGPT

Small hospice homes across New York State provide deeply personal, compassionate care for individuals at the end of life—but behind that care is a fragile financial reality. Unlike large hospital systems, many of these homes operate as nonprofit organizations, relying on community support to sustain their mission.

Residential comfort care homes (RCCH) in New York State generally do not receive direct state funding or reimbursement from Medicare/Medicaid, making them reliant instead on private philanthropy and community fundraising to operate. These nonprofit homes provide end-of-life care at no cost to residents and often utilize volunteers, functioning independently of traditional insurance-funded models.

The bottom line is these homes would not be around without community support. In fact, many essential services that families value most are not covered by insurance. These include grief counseling, caregiver support, complementary therapies, and specialized programs for children and families. Without philanthropic support, these meaningful services would simply not exist.

Small hospice homes also serve patients regardless of their ability to pay. This commitment to “no one turned away” is central to hospice philosophy, but it comes at a cost. Donations help cover care for individuals, ensuring that dignity at the end of life is not dependent on financial means.

In New York, the need is even greater. The state has one of the lowest hospice utilization rates in the country, meaning many individuals are not accessing care early enough—or at all. Small hospice homes often invest in outreach and education to change this, but those efforts require funding beyond what insurance provides.

Workforce challenges add another layer of urgency. Hospice providers across New York face staffing shortages and limited funding for training and recruitment. Donations can support staff development, helping ensure patients receive the skilled, compassionate care they deserve.

Finally, hospice homes are about more than medical

care—they are about comfort, environment, and humanity. Donations help create peaceful spaces, fulfill final wishes, and provide small but powerful moments of joy and connection for patients and families.

In the end, small hospice homes survive not just on funding, but on community. Every donation—no matter the size—helps ensure that compassionate end-of-life care remains available to all, preserving dignity, comfort, and support during life’s most profound transition.

*\*here’s an opportunity to help!*



a \$20 donation is easy to give, and such a **FEEL GOOD DONATION** for hospice care. And... you might just win a 7-day **CARIBBEAN CRUISE & ROUNDTRIP AIRFARE for 2** (or equivalent vacation of your choice)

100% of the PROCEEDS for CRUISE for HOSPICE will be divided among the following area hospice homes:

**JOURNEY HOME  
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**Drawing on MAY 19**  
Winner will be contacted for redemption details (need not be present to win).

**How to Purchase Tickets & Register for Drawing**

- Use QR code link
- Stop in @ 1411 Vintage Lane, Greece



EMAIL: [andrea@bartolomeo.com](mailto:andrea@bartolomeo.com) or CALL 585-720-6000 with questions.

making their  
life celebration  
as special  
as they are

by Andrea Ruggieri

Living a full life is an incredible feat! Celebrate! Each individual, like a snowflake, has it's own unique patterns and facets that make them, *them*. It's pretty incredible, even identical twins have their own spirit and special traits.

When celebrating a special and unique life, don't you think it should reflect their individuality and tell their story?

*Aunt Rita collected sea glass... from every shore, on every body of water she visited in the United States and beyond. And... she made artwork out of each exceptional piece. She lovingly gave many of her creations away, but many remained. What a tribute to her, to share something that brought her and others joy at her life celebration! What what a beautiful testament to her personal identity.*

Sharing personal items along with photos and videos may bring out emotions to those who knew her best, but it also informs guests who didn't. Personal items help to tell Aunt Rita's story and give a glimmer of her inner spark.



*Let's take it a step further... give pieces of sea glass away to guests in memory of Aunt Rita. In some cases, there may be enough special memorabilia to give away. If not, get a water fountain or a large glass jar and have guests bring sea glass to place inside and say a prayer. This interactive piece may be taken home by family or reside in a place that is special to the decedent.*

The story of "Aunt Rita" is a reminder to get creative! "The sky's the limit," as we like to say at Bartolomeo & Perotto Funeral Home. We take great joy in working with you to let your loved one's light shine through.

Don't let their story  
be forgotten



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