

## About Our Bereavement Counseling Program Informed Consent

### Background and Services.

**We are an international nonprofit that has existed since 1996. We provide bereavement counseling, advocacy, research, education, and support around traumatic grief for tens of thousands of grieving families every year. We help adults and children learn to cope with their painful emotions and trauma in a way that no other nonprofit does. We do not medicalize grief. We recognize grief as a normal reaction to an abnormal tragedy. We help clients find their personal and family strengths and we help them learn to bear the unbearable in a way that promotes open, healthy coping, and integration. We specialize in traumatic grief without diagnosing it as a mental illness.** We are not treatment as usual. We use a community-based, compassionate, and non-medicalized approach demonstrated as effective in research. You may work with a non-licensed but well-trained grief counselor, mentor, or intern; if you feel you need different care, we can make a referral. At times, grieving clients may be better served by another agency or clinician. In this rare instance, we will provide references to another provider in order that you may receive appropriate services.

Fees. Our fees are fixed for grief program weeks. A **3-day grief group program** is \$1200/person. 3-day programs are GROUP retreats, all activities, including counseling will be held in a group setting.

Our fees for the **4-day grief individual program** is \$1600/person. Each registered participant will have their own private counselor during the individual counseling sessions. **Regular grief program weeks are for traumatically bereaved adults only!**

We also offer **private day or overnight visits** for the traumatically bereaved. We require a minimum of 2 scheduled hours. Our minimal hourly rate is \$100/hour/person. Our rates for private visits depend on our visitor's annual household income. Each private visitor will have their personal counselor.

**Family grief programs** are 3-day programs specially organized for families with children above the age of 7. Children will have their own guide/counselor during the individual counseling sessions. **Children need to be accompanied by either their parents/caregivers or the assigned guide/counselor at all times.**

Appointments. Regular attendance at your scheduled appointments, **on time**, is important. Appointments should be canceled a minimum of one full business day (24 hours, Monday through Friday) prior to your appointment.

Appointment availability varies with the client load at the time. High demand appointments, off hours, late afternoons, and Sundays are likely to be sporadic or unavailable.

Privacy, confidentiality, and records. We do not bill insurance companies because we do not issue any form of psychiatric diagnosis of mental illness. Thus, the only records we will keep are your intake forms and brief client notes. We still respect federal guidelines around confidentiality in communications and any written documents. However, there are some exceptions to confidentiality defined in the state and federal statutes. The most common of these exceptions are when there is a real or potential life or death emergency, when the court issues a subpoena, or when child/elder abuse or neglect is involved. We also may participate in a process where selected cases are discussed with other professional colleagues to facilitate continued professional growth and to get you the benefit of a variety of professional experts. Most often counselors here will turn to the carefarm supervisor, Dr. Joanne Cacciatore or clinical director, Dr. Cheryl Pence at [Cheryl.Pence@missfoundation.org](mailto:Cheryl.Pence@missfoundation.org).

Purpose, limitations, and risks of supportive bereavement counseling. Bereavement Counseling, like most endeavors in the helping professions, is not an exact science. While the ultimate purpose of bereavement counseling is to help you learn to cope with the effects of traumatic grief, there are no guarantees that any counseling provided will be useful. Moreover, the process of bereavement counseling usually involves working through painful memories and other issues that can result in some emotional or psychological pain. Bereavement Counseling may result in decisions about changing behaviors, employment, substance use, schooling, housing, relationships, or virtually any other aspect of your life. In the case of marriage and family counseling, interpersonal conflict can increase as we discuss family issues.

Bereavement Counseling process and rights. Your bereavement counseling will begin with one or more sessions devoted to an initial assessment in order to ascertain your unique tragedy and your emotions around it. We also want to get to know your background, your childhood, family system issues, and any other factors that may be relevant. You also have the right to guide all aspects of care, on or off the carefarm, or to withdraw from our program.

Our relationship. The client/counselor relationship is unique in that it is exclusively for the benefit of clients. If there is ever a time when you believe that you have been treated unfairly or disrespectfully, please talk with us about it. You can also contact the carefarm supervisors, Dr. Joanne Cacciatore at [dr\\_joanne@me.com](mailto:dr_joanne@me.com) or clinical director, Dr. Cheryl Pence at [Cheryl.Pence@missfoundation.org](mailto:Cheryl.Pence@missfoundation.org).

It is never our intention for counselors, interns, volunteers, or other clients to hurt others' feelings, but sometimes misunderstandings can inadvertently occur. We want to address any issues that might get in the way of your experience as soon as possible. This includes administrative or financial issues as well.

Consent for bereavement counseling. Consent is hereby given for bereavement counseling on the carefarm. In the case of a minor child, I hereby affirm that I am a custodial parent or legal guardian of the child and that I authorize services for the child under the terms of this agreement.

**We are so deeply sorry you need us. We are so deeply thankful you've found us. We will do all we can to help you remember your beloved in ways that are profound, even if infused with grief.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

In the case of a minor child, please specify the following:

Full name of minor : \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_

For office use only - verification that client has read and understands informed consent document

Authorized Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For them,  
The MISS Foundation Selah Carefarm Team