



## Grieving Together

All losses we experience result in a period of grief. This grieving process is the way we heal both in body and mind from the trauma. Whether the loss is singular, experienced by an individual or multiple, experienced by many having others support the grieving process provides comfort and helps healing.

This is intensified when the loss and trauma is of a greater scale such as a community event or national disaster. Even when a large scale, horrific trauma does not directly impact us personally the fact that the event occurred at all shakes our sense of security and safety. We feel vulnerable and exposed. Our normal protections are compromised and we are not sure how to protect ourselves and those important to us. It is during these unfathomable events that we need to provide support and comfort as we grieve together as a community.

Grief supporting activities develop in different ways but all acknowledge communal grieving bringing solace and healing to whole communities and nations. These include:

- **Interdenominational community memorial services** provide a spiritual environment in which to share the loss and pain while creating uplifting, comforting experiences.
- **Community expresses** of loss and remembrance on street corners and in front of locations of traumatic events allows persons to share their sadness and empathy with families directly impacted by the trauma.
- **Remembrance gardens**, statues and other permanent memorial locations provide places for ongoing, continued tributes to those lost through traumatic incidents supporting healing.
- **Charitable agencies and annual events** created after the traumatic incidents support the need to implement meaningful purpose and service honoring those impacted by the trauma. This supports the healing process as communities use their talents and resources to counter trauma with effective methods of helping each other.
- **Advocacy actions** to correct situations which can reduce the risk of similar future tragedies

As we all move through the grieving process, after large scale traumatic events, the sharing of our grief with others intensifies our sense of community and eventually strengthens our sense of security and resiliency. We cannot stop all large scale tragedies but we can grieve and heal together.

**Grieving together provides us with a strong sense of belonging and understanding**