

Nova Scotia Health

Northern Zone Grief Newsletter

A Message from your Northern Zone Grief Coordinator

Fall 2025



Jude Lightfoot

People sometimes ask me why I decided to become a Grief Coordinator. My answer could be lengthy, but the short version is that somewhere along the line my professional background collided with my personal life and lived experiences, and I was propelled to where I am now.

Along with years of working in healthcare, I was simultaneously living a life that at times brought me some of my most important learning and growth opportunities, whether I wanted them or not.

Those experiences, though often difficult to navigate, helped me become a better and stronger human and service provider, and I view sharing that wisdom as an important component of my work today. But what does it mean to be 'stronger' anyway, and why do we care to be?

My dad died suddenly 21 years ago. He was the rock of our family. His death was devastating, and the ripple effects of his absence are something that have since persevered.

As the "strong" member of my family, I found myself speaking at dad's funeral. I wrote a speech and intended to do a stand-up job of representing my family, but when I found myself standing in front of the crowd assembled that day, I 'broke down'. I cried. Hard. I remember thinking, 'this wasn't the plan, and I want to run' but I stood there anyway, I let the tears happen despite the many witnesses, and when I was ready, I did what I was there to do.

Afterwards, I reflected on that moment and realized several things: I had not 'broken down', I had broken open and I would not change a thing. My tears had more accurately conveyed the depth of my grief than my words ever could. I had still gotten the job done. I had done a greater honor to my father by being genuine and I learned the stark difference between what I thought was the strength I wanted versus the resilience I needed. That resilience was the very thing that was going to get me through. I was stronger by accident because I had made space for vulnerability and genuine, valid, and healthy emotion.

Today, I teach people about the difference between what society tends to view as strength, and what strength really is. I hope you'll think about my story and try to make more space for true strength in your lives as well. I believe in you.

*If you are seeking more information on grief, have suggestions, or
would like to connect with us:
NZGrief@nshealth.ca or 902-893-0720*



Upcoming Events

Pictou County Hospice



A monthly grief support group for anyone who has lost a loved one and are struggling.

The group is facilitated by Dawn Peters, MSW RSW.

Courageous Souls Grief Support Session

Saturday, August 30 at 10:00 am
Drop In - 2042 Queen St #3, Westville

**For more information,
please contact the
Westville Library at
(902) 396-5022 or email:
westville@parl.ns.ca**

Cumberland County Hospice Palliative Care

Cumberland County Hospice and Palliative Care Society Presents

End-of-Life Information Session

Connect and learn about end of life programs and services in our community

Join us for an afternoon of connection, learning, and support. This free community event brings together local organizations and resources focused on end-of-life planning, caregiving, and grief.

Free Admission

Event Details:
Thursday, October 16, 2025
100 PM - 400 PM
CCUBIC, 5 Ratchford St, Amherst

Info Booths & Presentations

For more information and the complete program, visit www.cumberlandhospice.ca or contact: cchpcs@gmail.com

The logo for Holding Hearts, featuring a stylized sun with rays above a hand holding a heart.

Holding hearts

DROP-IN GRIEF & BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

Holding Hearts provides a supportive and confidential space for adults (18+) grieving a death to share their thoughts, experiences, and concerns. The group is guided by trained facilitators.

Every week in different areas: Amherst, Pugwash, Parrsboro, and more!

**Please contact Hospice by calling 902-669-0261
for more information and registrations.**



Upcoming Events

Colchester East Hants Hospice Society

Social Drop-ins @ 89 Queen Street, Truro NS

September 17, 2025

October 15, 2025

November 19, 2025

December 17, 2025

1:00-3:00 pm

No registration required - all are welcome!



Hope & Understanding for the Grieving

Body & Soul: Self-care in Grief

Every Friday, Sept. 19 - Nov. 7, 2025

6:30 - 8:30 pm

Please register by contacting the
Central North River Community Centre, corner of
the 311 and Hiram Lynds Road.

**Please call (902) 893-3265 or visit www.cehhospice.org
for more information.**

Do you have an event or information you would like us to share?

Let us know: NZGrief@nshealth.ca or 902-893-0720

