

# The ALS South Texas Chapter Bereavement Support Group



The ALS Bereavement Support Group is support group for those whose loved one or friend has died due to ALS. By sharing experiences, we help loved ones and friends find comfort and healing. The ALS Group provides a safe place for bereaved loved ones and friends to find their own answers to some of the questions that may consume them following their loss.

## **What is happening to me?**

Bereaved ALS family and friends often experience a variety of responses to their loss – emotional, behavioral, mental, social, and spiritual. Shock, disbelief, anger, guilt, forgetfulness, difficulty concentrating, etc. are normal reactions after a death of a loved one as loved ones rebuild their world and learn to live without their loved one. During the ALS support group, everyone shares what is happening to them with others who can lend support. While each person comes to the group with individual circumstances, all participants have in common the loss of hopes and dreams for their future.

## **How long will I feel like this?**

This experience will forever be a significant event in your life, often times one that shapes the disappointing and heartbreaking chapters in your life story. However, you will eventually reach a point where it does not consume your every thought. The ALS Bereavement Group can help you find your way toward acceptance, and eventually, peace.

## **Who attends the group?**

While the roads that lead families to the group are varied, the end result is similar. The group is for all loved ones and friends regardless of sex, ethnicity, religion, or socioeconomic status.

### **What happens in the meeting?**

The group is facilitated by an experienced, specially trained volunteer. Worth Kilcrease, LPC, FT, an expert in end-of-life and bereavement counseling, oversees all groups. Participants informally discuss their own experiences as they feel comfortable and frequently learn from and provide support to each other. Occasionally, others experts in the community may speak to the group.

### **When and where does the ALS Group meet?**

All of my groups are “closed” groups, meaning the same individuals attend all meetings. This allows the members to become secure with one another and to delve more deeply into those issues troubling them most. The groups are limited in size from at least 6 to no more than 12 individuals. We meet at the same time, usually from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., on the same night of the week for six continuous weeks. Members can repeat the group if they feel they would like to. The groups are held multiple times during the year. In Austin, the meetings take place in an easily accessible, centrally located meeting room, while in San Antonio they are held at the offices of the ALS Association - South Texas Chapter. The Association sponsors the groups so they are free of charge.

### **How can I learn more about the ALS Group?**

Melina Monson, Steve Morse or Worth Kilcrease can give you more information or help you decide if the ALS group is right for you. Also, with your permission, Melina, Steve, or Worth may check in on you following your loss to see how you are doing.

### **Contact Information:**

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