



Reflection: Preparing
for the Freeze



St. Croix Valley
Grief Coalition



Care Patrol

Still Waters Mediation

Newsletter



Preparing for the Freeze

If you are like me, you are probably thinking about everything that needs to be done to prepare for winter.

There is plenty to do. The garden needs to be put to bed, the patio furniture stored, and winter coats and boots brought out to replace sandals and sunscreen. Maybe you are proactive and already have your snow tires on, or maybe that appointment is still waiting to be made.

Minnesotans are pretty good at preparing. We know winter is coming, so we get ready. We cannot control when the first snow will fall, but we can make sure we are prepared when it does.

Lately, I have been thinking about how differently we approach preparation when it comes to personal conflict.

We often wait until we are already in the middle of it. (cont.)

Upcoming Events

October 6th

**St. Croix Valley Grief Coalition:
Growing Through Loss Series**

6:00 - 8:30 PM

**St. Andrew Lutheran Church
Mahtomedi**

Presentation:

“When Grief Boils Over”

<https://www.scvgriefcoalition.com/>

October 30th

2026 ADR Institute

9:00 AM - 4:45 PM

Minnesota CLE Conference Center

Presentation:

“Substance Use in Family ADR: Balancing
Safety, Accountability and Relationships”

[https://www.minncle.org/seminar/
1063112701](https://www.minncle.org/seminar/1063112701)

November 17th

**Brighter Days Family Grief Center
Eden Prairie**

6:30-8:00pm

Presentation:

“Dealing with Difficult Family Members
in Grief”

A parent has a health crisis. Siblings suddenly need to make decisions about caregiving. Someone's role in the family changes. An estate needs to be divided. And suddenly everyone is expected to navigate difficult conversations while also managing fear, grief, stress and a whole lot of history. What if we prepared for those moments a little differently?

Preparing for Conflict

Priya Parker, whose new book *The Art of Fighting* explores how we can become better at navigating conflict, recently talked about this on *The Daily*. One idea that caught my attention was that low-stakes disagreement can help prepare us for high-stakes conflict. In other words, we can practice. We can practice listening when we disagree. We can stay curious instead of immediately getting defensive. We can notice when our emotions are taking over and learn to slow things down. And we can get more comfortable with a simple truth: disagreement does not have to mean disconnection. That is what conflict preparedness can look like.

Know which conversations need to happen before they become urgent. Talk about caregiving, decision-making, family responsibilities and wishes while there is still time to listen. Expect different priorities. Two people can love the same person deeply and still have very different ideas about what is best. Clarify roles. Unspoken assumptions have a funny way of becoming future conflict. And leave room for the plan to change. Because it will.

Good preparation is not about predicting every possible problem or creating a perfect plan. It is about building enough communication, trust and skill that when circumstances change, you have somewhere to begin.

We do not know exactly what winter will bring. Maybe it will be mild. Maybe we will be buried in snow by Thanksgiving. But we prepare anyway. Perhaps we can do the same with conflict.

Growing Through Loss: The Story of the St. Croix Valley Grief Coalition

In November 2022, Dr. Janice Nadeau hosted a grief support workshop for the local community. The response raised an important question: how could the community expand grief support beyond a single event?

After the workshop, community members came together to explore forming a local grief coalition. As they listened to the needs of individuals and families across the area, it became clear that there was a strong need for more accessible grief support.

That shared vision became the **St. Croix Valley Grief Coalition (SCVGC)**.

The SCVGC brings together organizations and individuals from Minnesota and Wisconsin who believe grief resources should be accessible to everyone. It is a non-faith-based organization and welcomes people of all backgrounds and beliefs.

Although the coalition is not affiliated with any church or faith organization, some programs are held in local churches because these spaces provide room for the six-week series. Using a church facility does not imply affiliation with or endorsement of any faith.

The SCVGC is committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment. They offer a range of support groups, and all are welcome, regardless of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, ancestry, or national origin.

St. Croix Valley Grief Coalition
presents

Growing Through Loss

FALL 2026 - GRIEF SUPPORT SERIES

St. Andrew's Lutheran Church
900 Stillwater Rd, Mahtomedi, MN 55115

Tuesdays, September 22 – October 27, 2026
6:00 to 8:30 p.m.

(Sign in 6:00, Speaker 6:30 to 7:15, Small Groups 7:30 to 8:30)

FREE, AGE 18+, NO PRE-REGISTRATION NEEDED,
ATTEND JUST ONE SESSION OR ALL OF THEM,
RELIGION NEUTRAL, COMMUNITY BASED



www.scvgriefcoalition.com
(651) 413-6698
scvgriefcoalition@gmail.com



For more information, please visit:

<https://www.scvgriefcoalition.com/>

Growing Through Loss

One of the SCVGC's core offerings is **Growing Through Loss**, a free six-week grief support group offered each spring and fall.

The series gives people experiencing grief a chance to learn more about grief, connect with others, and receive support. Each session begins with a presentation from a grief educator, followed by small groups focused on different types of loss.

Most small groups are led by two trained facilitators, creating a supportive space where participants can talk, listen, ask questions, and learn from one another.

In its first year, coalition members developed programs, built community partnerships, and created a sustainable model for support. Their work led to the first **Growing Through Loss** series in April 2024.

Since then, the SCVGC has hosted five six-week sessions of Growing Through Loss, giving community members free opportunities to learn, connect, and receive support.

What began as a conversation after one workshop has grown into an ongoing effort to make grief resources more accessible throughout the St. Croix Valley and surrounding communities. At its heart, the coalition holds a simple belief: **people should not have to navigate grief alone.**

Helping Families Navigate Senior Care With Confidence

By Cindy Fussy, RN, and Andy Hemenway (Co-owners of Care Patrol)

Choosing care for an aging parent or loved one can be one of the most difficult decisions a family faces. Emotions can run high, family members may have different opinions, and important questions about safety, finances, health needs, and quality of life all need to be considered. Even when everyone wants what is best for their loved one, disagreements can quickly arise.

At Care Patrol, our team is made up entirely of clinicians who understand the complexities of healthcare and senior care. With an average of more than 20 years of senior-care experience, our clinical team brings the knowledge, perspective, and compassion families need to navigate these challenging decisions.

We help families understand their options, whether that means assisted living, memory care, in-home care, or another solution. We take the time to understand each individual's needs, preferences, and circumstances, then help identify appropriate communities and care services that align with those needs.

We cover the Twin Cities metro area, and our service is completely free to families. That means families can access professional guidance, personalized recommendations, and valuable resources without adding another financial burden during an already challenging time.

Perhaps one of the most important things we provide is a path from **emotion to information**. When families have access to knowledgeable, objective guidance, difficult conversations can become less about who is right and more about **what is right for their loved one**.

Senior-care decisions don't have to divide a family. With the right support, families can approach difficult choices with greater clarity, compassion, and confidence.

At Care Patrol, our clinicians are committed to helping families find care solutions that support their loved one's safety, dignity, and quality of life while giving families greater peace of mind along the way.



Still Waters Mediation is partnering with Care Patrol to offer continuing education workshops. More info to come!
 To learn more about Care Patrol, visit: <https://carepatrol.com/twin-cities-east-st-paul/>