

GRIEVERS LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN

PROJECT GOAL: Books & Resources for Grievors. FREE. Accessible. Meaningful.

Grief, debilitating and disorienting, is un-knowable until one comes face-to-face with the death of a loved one. Dealing with anguish and trauma, grievors can feel dismissed, isolated, and misunderstood by our “get-over-it-already” culture. Yet grief often persists for a lifetime and grievors need compassion and meaningful resources to find their way to healing and renewal.

PROJECT CONTEXT

In 2020, approximately 3.4M deaths occurred in the U.S., up 16% from historic numbers. Previous research determined that 57% of the population was grieving—i.e., every other person is dealing with some kind of loss, most painfully a sudden, young, or out-of-order death. Today, those numbers are climbing as U.S. Covid deaths exceed 650K.

Children are equally impacted—every year 5.3M children experience the death of a parent or a sibling before they turn 18; this number more than doubles to 13.3M for young adults under the age of 25. Many of these traumatic losses come with secondary losses – such as loss of family functionality, or loss of a supportive environment – for which they need compassionate and informed adult caregivers.

Grief takes its toll both physically and emotionally. Grievors often suffer from body-numbing pain in addition to mind-numbing sorrow. Mental health issues include depression, inability to sleep, anger, anxiety and, alarmingly, suicidal thoughts. Complicated grief can last for years; bereavement is a lifetime condition.

Grievors seek multiple means to cope with their grief. Research shows that reading books ranks high on their list of most beneficial, positive activities.



MISSION

Grievors Library offers the companionship of free books and resources to those among us living with grief. Borrow a book you need; return a book you no longer need.

VISION

Every bereaved individual in our community feels supported in their grief with free, accessible books and resources.

NEEDS STATEMENT



Grievers, especially during their first year of bereavement, deal with intense emotions while trying to make sense of life without their loved one. Grievers are often haunted by a sense of betrayal, guilt, or emptiness. They are looking for answers: how to cope with their grief? how to support a bereaved child or teen? what religious or spiritual practices resonate? why a loved one has died of cancer, or AIDS, or took their life?... These and many other questions are covered in the hundreds of thoughtful books, written by experts and grievers alike, that occupy the canon of grief literature.

But, finding the right book can be difficult because grievers often suffer from “grief brain” - a state of feeling confused and overwhelmed. Also, grief books are not classified in an easy system at local libraries; many good books are self-published, or out of print; and booksellers only promote the latest books made available from publishers. At Grievers Library we have created a simple system of book topics that we will use to stock our Book Boxes:

bereavement	
<i>books focused on the experience of grief</i>	
grief, in general bereaved child bereaved teen	anticipatory grief complicated grief grief memoir
relationship	
<i>books that address your special relationship to the loved one who has died</i>	
fetal/ baby loss child loss parent loss spouse/partner loss	sibling loss grandparent loss friend loss pet loss
type of death	
<i>books that explain how your loved one died affects your grieving process</i>	
cancer death combat or military death covid or morbidity death	drug overdose death suicide death traumatic or sudden death
religious	
<i>books that offer a faith-based perspective to your grief experience</i>	
Buddhist Christian	Jewish Muslim
spiritual	
<i>books that encourage self-reflection, mindfulness and meditation</i>	
meditation + body movement mediums + the afterlife	prayers + poems rites + rituals
medical	
<i>books about disease, dying, death and the neuro-physiological effects of grief</i>	
death + dying mental illness	morbidity psychology

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Grievers Library is a volunteer-driven and donation-supported PILOT PROJECT, located in Seattle WA, that provides free books and internet-based resources to bereaved individuals suffering from the death of a loved one. The project will launch in Spring 2022 and will be the first of its kind in the country.



The physical **Grievers Library** will be located in five dedicated Book Boxes in different Seattle neighborhoods, each stocked with a curated selection of grief-related books and monitored by volunteer Library Stewards.

The virtual **Grievers Library** will access library books world-wide through a link to the [World Catalog](#), a database of over 2 billion titles in over 10,000 libraries. The Grievers Library website will also include a directory of free bereavement services available, both locally and nationally, and crisis hotlines.

The **Grievers Library** website will maintain an active Facebook group to publish its “Quote of the Week” (griever submitted) and allow members to contribute and comment.

In addition, **Grievers Library** plans to provide books on grief, trauma and loss to the Seattle Police for community chaplains to leave with families who are confronted with a sudden traumatic death, such as homicide, suicide, accident, etc.

At **Grievers Library** all resources and services are provided for free.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **FREE & ACCESSIBLE** | Grievers Library aims to make it EZ for bereaved individuals to find practical and inspirational support for their grief journey through books & internet resources.
- **MEANINGFUL** | All book selections, resource recommendations and project decisions must fulfill the project’s primary tenet of serving the needs of bereaved individuals.
- **SUSTAINABLE** | The project can only be sustained through the generosity of our community, including a corps of dedicated volunteers and donations of grief-related books, plus monetary gifts, grants & sponsorships.



The Grievers Library will launch in November with five distinctive purple Book Boxes in Seattle.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

- The vast literature around death, loss and grief is difficult to navigate. Many important books are out of print, self-published or hard to locate. The public library classification system is opaque and confusing to the uninitiated.
- Grief services/support available on the internet are equally vast and can be unreliable.
- Individuals suffering a sudden traumatic loss need immediate access to information and resources.
- Parents, educators, family and friends need critically important literature to support the difficult challenges of bereaved children and teens.
- Grievers often feel isolated and misunderstood and seek opportunities to give service to their fellow grievers.



CLIENT POPULATION

Grievers Library is intended to serve any individual - child, teen or adult - who is mourning the death of a person or pet, at any stage of their grief journey.

This pilot project will be located in five geographically-distinct neighborhoods in Seattle beginning in May 2022

PROJECT OVERVIEW

- The Grievers Library is preparing to launch with physical Book Boxes, WorldCat book listings & internet resources in May 2022.
- In its first year, the Grievers Library will be run as a pilot project to polish its operations and determine the feasibility of its model and operations.
- In subsequent years, the Grievers Library will provide support materials to assist similar endeavors in additional communities.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Grievers Library will provide Seattle grievers – children, teens & adults - with a selection of relevant books to find comfort, strength and resilience while facing their loss.
- Grievers Library will serve a wider audience of grievers through access to meaningful resources on the internet, including library books through the World Catalog.
- Grievers Library will convene a community of Seattle grievers to serve as volunteers and will create opportunities for them to build new friendships and meaning while in service to others.
- Grievers Library will provide useful books and brochures to victims of traumatic loss through a partnership with the Chaplaincy Program at the Seattle Police Department.
- If this pilot project proves successful, Grievers Library will assist interested entities in additional municipalities to replicate its operations.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- Careful planning of all aspects of project operations – including realistic launch date.
- Creating bibliographies & using GL taxonomy to hyperlink WorldCat lists on website.
- Researching, editing, formatting and mounting free internet resources on website.
- Installing Book Boxes in accessible & comforting locations.
- Purchasing & cataloging relevant books to curate inventory in Book Boxes.
- Recruiting & training dependable volunteers, especially “Library Stewards.”
- Creating an outreach program with grief support groups, professionals and nonprofits.
- Utilizing social media to reach a broad audience of griever & supporters.
- Building a PR portfolio for media interest in mission & vision.
- Building a loyal donor base within the community.

METRICS FOR GAUGING SUCCESS

December 31, 2022, the Project Manager will submit a one-year report evaluating the pilot program’s success against the following metrics of success:

5 reciprocal relationships with peer organizations

10 “grief shares” submitted to blog each week

15 media and author blog mentions

25 books returned or donated each month

100 books “borrowed” each month

500 members in Facebook group

1,000 donated volunteer hours

5,000 visits to website

\$10,000 in donations & sponsorships



GRIEVERS LIBRARY
Take Comfort. Take a Book.

our mission

Grievers Library offers the companionship of books to those among us living with grief.

Borrow a book you need;
return a book you no longer need.

learn more at
www.grieverslibrary.org

MARKETING STRATEGY

- Info postcards distributed to grief professionals, religious leaders, funeral homes, & social service agencies
- Reciprocal relationships with peer organizations
- Outreach to local grief support groups & Facebook groups
- Active Facebook page with weekly postings from Grievers Library blog
- PR – radio, newspapers & TV
- Public Speaking – panels, workshops & conferences

FUNDING SOURCES

- New and used book donations from griever, authors & publishers
- Monetary gifts from griever & supporters of Grievers Library
- Grants from family foundations & sponsorships from corporations
- Occasional fundraisers

ANNUAL BUDGET (2022)

REVENUES	
Individual Gifts	\$2,500
Foundation Grants	\$5,000
Corporate Sponsorships	\$2,500
TOTAL:	\$10,000
EXPENSES	
Mailings – printing + postage	\$1,000
Office Supplies – labels, printer ink, misc.	\$250
Internet – incl. Tech Soup	\$250
Book Purchases, incl. shipping costs	\$8,000
Misc. incl. charitable registration, volunteer refreshments, travel, etc.	\$500
TOTAL:	\$10,000

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Grievers Library operates as a pilot project in Seattle under the aegis of **Friends of Survival**, a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) national nonprofit organization located in Sacramento, CA (EIN 68-0006749) and registered with the Charities Program in WA State. Friends for Survival provides bereavement services to persons grieving a suicide death.

PERSONNEL

Marilyn Koenig, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Friends for Survival

Marilyn leads both the local chapter and the national nonprofit which has been providing suicide bereavement support services since 1983. All staff and volunteers working for Friends for Survival have been directly impacted by a suicide death.

Susan Reynolds, Project Manager of Friends for Survival (volunteer)

Susan acts as the liaison between the Sacramento office of Friends for Survival and the Seattle office of the Grievers Library providing operational oversight and support.

Pamela Belyea, Project Manager of Grievers Library (volunteer)

Pamela, co-Founder and Director Emerita of a multi-million-dollar arts organization, will lead a corps of volunteers to build, install, stock and maintain the Grievers Library Book Boxes, as well as provide office support for book purchasing, labeling and cataloging. In addition, Pamela will work with a UW graduate library student to develop the library's operations plus research and mount internet resources on the website, including hyperlinked World Catalog book listings.

**For further information, please contact Pamela Belyea
friends@GrieversLibrary.org**