The ALS Association Western PA Chapter Launches Bereavement Support Group

Specifically for family members who have survived the death of a loved one to ALS.

Grief is an experience we will all go through at some point in our lives - most likely, multiple times. It may be the death of a family pet, close friend, or an immediate family member. While grief is a universal experience, it is also a unique experience to each person going through the mourning process. There is no right way to manage grief, but there are healthy, more effective ways to cope.

The ALS Association Western PA Chapter supports over 300 families struggling with ALS, more commonly known as Lou Gehrig’s Disease. “Families affected by ALS have a very difficult journey. It begins with the acknowledgement that they are fighting a disease with no treatment and no cure and then realizing that the outcome is certain death. The impact that ALS has on an entire family is profound and the fact that the person with ALS still has a brain that stays alert and aware to the world around them, makes it exceedingly difficult on everyone at the end of life stages of the disease.” said Merritt Holland Spier, Executive Director of The ALS Association Western Pennsylvania Chapter. “Assistance for those who have been through the struggle of ALS and are grieving the loss of their loved one is not something our Chapter has been able to offer in the past. But we are going to change that. We want our families to know that we are there for them through the entire journey and that includes helping them through the pain of losing their family member to ALS,” revealed Ms. Spier.

The Western Pennsylvania Chapter of the ALS Association has partnered with the Good Grief Center for Bereavement Support, a service of Ursuline Support Services, and will be offering a series of bereavement support groups starting on Wednesday, October 15, 2014. The group will meet weekly for six weeks and will provide education and support on how to effectively cope with and better handle the mourning process. For more information on how to register for the group, please contact The ALS Association Western PA Chapter at (412) 821-3254.

The Western PA Chapter of ALS is committed to leading the fight to treat and cure ALS through global research and nationwide advocacy while also empowering people with Lou Gehrig’s Disease and their families to live fuller lives while providing them with compassionate care and support. Find out more at www.cure4als.org.

The Good Grief Center is a comprehensive bereavement resource and referral center that builds a more compassionate community through grief awareness, education, support and hope; creating a safe place where all who have experienced the pain of death may come to work through loss and learn to manage grief. http://ursulinesupportservices.org/services/good-grief-center/