

Grief does not tidy itself up on a schedule. It swells and recedes, catches you in line at the grocery store, quiets for a week, then knocks the wind out of you when you smell a familiar shampoo. The aim of grief counseling is not to erase what you loved. It is to help you carry it, to let memory become a source of meaning that can sit beside your life as it unfolds.

I have sat with people whose losses span every category the textbooks try to list. A father who died after a long illness. A sibling gone suddenly in a car accident. A beloved friend who stopped picking up the phone when depression took hold. A marriage that ended not by death, yet left a hollow that felt like one. The details differ, but the work shares a core premise: moving forward without forgetting is possible, and it looks different for each person.

## What grief looks like on the ground

The maps we learn early, the five stages, give language to some parts of grief, but in practice those stages do not proceed in a tidy line. Some days you might feel relief after a partner's chronic pain finally ended. The next, you grow angry you had to sign the hospice papers. Numbness can be a mercy at first, then a wall you cannot seem to climb. Time frames vary. I have seen acute grief stretch beyond a year and still be healthy when the person is connected, supported, and able to feel pleasure alongside sadness.

Body symptoms surprise many. Appetite often swings both ways. Sleep can fragment. Attention drifts, which is not a moral failure, it is a nervous system doing the hard work of reorganizing after a rupture. People tell me they feel like they are doing it wrong because they laughed at a joke, or because they did not cry at the memorial. Grief is not a performance. It is a relationship with what was lost, and relationships change shape.

A story: a client, I will call her Mara, could not bring herself to unpack her mother's winter coats for three years. Each time she opened the closet, her throat closed. We did not start by forcing a purge. We sat with [therapist](#) the coats as symbols, and with the comfort they gave, then scheduled twenty minutes, with tea, to fold one sleeve at a time. She saved one scarf. The act was not about coats. It was about giving permission to remember and to choose.

## When grief becomes stuck

There is no stopwatch here, but certain patterns suggest the grieving process could use more support. I pay attention to agency and flexibility. Is the person able to toggle between sorrow and a task of daily life for even a few minutes, or does the sorrow hold them in a grip that does not loosen? Can they name the loss without dissolving into panic every time? Do they judge themselves so harshly that isolation becomes the default?

Here are common signs it is time to consider meeting with a counselor or psychotherapist:

- Persistent inability to function in basic roles for many weeks, such as not eating, sleeping, or leaving bed most days.
- Intense guilt that does not match the facts, for example, feeling wholly responsible for a death that clearly had other causes.
- Risky coping, like escalating alcohol use to get through the night, or driving while dissociated.
- Panic attacks, intrusive images, or avoidance that looks like trauma symptoms following a sudden or violent loss.
- Social withdrawal that hardens into isolation, refusing contact with even trusted friends or family.

Clinicians sometimes use the term prolonged grief disorder, but labels are secondary. The practical question is whether your system feels trapped. If it does, there are well tested ways to help.

## The role of a counselor

A skilled counselor does not press you to "accept" or "move on." They help you build a relationship with your loss that changes over time. In individual counseling, the early phase often focuses on safety. We work to stabilize sleep, anchor the body, and clear practical obstacles that keep you underwater. I ask about your routines, supports, and moments in the day that feel even 5 percent easier. Those footholds matter.

From there, we weave remembrance with meaning making. Sometimes this includes writing a letter to the person who died, or to the self who lived before the loss. Sometimes we tell stories you have not voiced yet, the ones you keep pushing away at three in the morning. We pace it carefully. Flooding your system with grief rarely heals it. Sipping can be better than gulping.

People assume that counseling means talking only about sadness. I ask about irritability, relief, confusion, and the small pleasures that still reach you. If your faith tradition has rituals, we explore how to use them without feeling like you have to check every box. If you have no faith tradition, we can build secular rituals that feel personal, not performative.

A psychotherapist's training gives them a wider frame for how grief intersects with trauma, attachment history, culture, and nervous system regulation. For example, a sudden death sometimes leaves post traumatic stress symptoms. In that case, we might first use trauma informed tools before deep memory work, so your body does not bolt every time you approach the story.

## Attachment, love, and emotionally focused therapy

Emotionally focused therapy, known widely from its work with couples, offers a powerful grief lens. At its core, EFT maps the dance between attachment needs and the ways we reach for or protect ourselves. In grief, the attachment figure is gone or changed. The internal alarms fire. You might cling, numb, push others away, or swing between poles.

In couples grieving together, EFT helps partners share the softer emotions beneath blame or silence. I worked with a couple after their second trimester loss. He coped by fixing things, she needed to cry in his arms. Each mistook the other's strategy as not caring. In sessions, we slowed the cycle until they could name their deeper fear of losing each other too. Once they felt safer, they could attend the ultrasound clinic again, not because the risk vanished, but because they were not walking in alone.

EFT also applies in individual grief work. We trace the moments you reach for the person who died, what you needed from them, and how to let those needs be held in new ways, by others and by yourself. This is not replacing the person. It is updating your internal attachment map so your nervous system can stand on steady ground again.

If you search for a Relationship counselor after a death that shifts a marriage or partnership, look for someone trained in emotionally focused therapy. Ask how they work with grief in a couple system, not just individual sorrow.

## Practical scaffolding matters

Early grief brains do not manage complex tasks well. That is not laziness. It is load. Plan concrete supports. Simplify meals to repeatable rotations. Batch paperwork in twenty minute chunks with breaks. Use a timer. Place keys in a dish by the door, every time, so you do not add frantic searches to the list.

Colleagues tell me they worry about competence at work after a loss. Data entry errors go up. Patience goes down. Where possible, negotiate adjustments for a few weeks, not as a plea, but as smart risk management. Shorter shifts, lighter caseloads, or pairing on critical tasks can prevent bigger mistakes later. Supervisors who understand grief as a health process, not a character flaw, keep teams safer.

Grief counseling often includes these practical moves. A counselor helps you externalize the problem. Instead of "I am failing," we name the context: "My cognitive load is triple normal right now, and here is how we will navigate that." The frame reduces shame and frees energy for the work that heals.

## Memory without paralysis

People fear that, if they let memories in, they will never stop crying. The paradox is that invited memories sting less over time. Avoided memories gain power. The nervous system expects the tiger around the next corner when it has no proof the street is safe.

There are dozens of ways to build memory safely. Some prefer private rituals, some want community. Small acts count. I have watched a client set the table for four after the family moved to three, then pause, breathe, and choose to leave the extra plate for one dinner a month. Another client made a playlist of songs her father loved, then set a rule: she would listen for ten minutes on Sunday mornings with coffee, not at random times that left her incapacitated before meetings.

Here are five simple rituals many find helpful:

- Light a candle by a photo at a set hour each week, then blow it out with a spoken memory.
- Keep a memory journal in the kitchen, one line a day, no pressure to write essays.
- Cook a favorite recipe on a birthday, invite one friend to share it, and tell one story before eating.
- Plant a perennial in a pot and move it with you if you change homes, a living symbol that travels.
- Create a small “memory box” with a scarf, a ticket stub, a card, and open it on anniversaries for ten minutes, then reclose.

The point is not the object. It is the rhythm. Your body learns that you can touch the memory, cry or smile, and return to the present.

## Special situations: sudden loss, ambiguous loss, and disenfranchised grief

Not all griefs [Counselor](#) are granted public space. A breakup that ended an engagement. A miscarriage at eight weeks that no one else knew about. An estrangement from a living parent. These are losses that do not always bring casseroles, yet they take the same fierce labor to integrate.

Ambiguous loss, a concept coined by Pauline Boss, includes losses without clear endings. A partner with dementia who recognizes you one hour and not the next. An addiction that steals a sibling in pieces. Here, the task is to expand your tolerance for both/and truths. You love them, and they are not who they were. You hope, and you allow the reality that tomorrow may not improve. A counselor helps you build rituals for what is missing, not only for what is gone.

Sudden loss often carries trauma. If you witnessed the death or learned through violent detail, your mind might replay images on loop. Techniques from trauma therapy, like bilateral stimulation, paced breathing, or carefully titrated exposure, help your body learn the story can end without catastrophe now. We do this work with care. The goal is not to erase what you saw, but to let your system file it in the past so the present can breathe.

Disenfranchised grief needs advocacy. A psychotherapist can put words to why you feel crazy in a room that pretends nothing changed. Language reduces the sense that you are the only one who sees the hole in the floor.

## Children and teens grieve, too

Adults often ask me whether to shield children from a death. Protection matters, but secrecy rarely serves. Children know when something is wrong. Give concrete language at a level they can digest. Avoid euphemisms like “went to sleep,” which can create bedtime terror. Name the cause in simple terms. Then invite questions, and expect them to come in bursts, not all at once.

Kids grieve cyclically. A seven year old may cry hard for a day, then run to the playground. That is not indifference, it is a nervous system taking breaks. Teens can look sullen or avoidant when they are numb. Open doors without forcing. Anchor routines. Limit new demands for a while. If school performance drops sharply, loop in counselors early, not as discipline, but as care.

A relationship counselor can help parents align on how to talk with their children when one partner wants to “push through” and the other wants to make space for feeling. Families who navigate grief with a shared plan tend to find their footing faster.

## Culture, faith, and permission

Grief practices vary widely across cultures and faiths. Some mark defined mourning periods, others weave remembrance into daily life with altars or prayers. In my work with clients from diverse backgrounds, I ask about the rules they grew up with and whether those rules still serve them.

I worked with a man from a tradition where mourners do not view the body. He wanted to say goodbye at the hospital anyway. We explored what that might mean to his elders, then crafted a private moment with a chaplain’s support. He honored his family and his own need at once. Conversely, another client felt pressured to host a crowded memorial in a small apartment. She chose a quiet graveside visit with just two friends and wrote personal notes instead of speeches. There is no single right way. There is only what fits you and your community.

If you are in Northglenn or nearby, you will find both formal and informal supports, from houses of worship to hiking groups that host memory walks on local trails. A Counselor Northglenn familiar with community resources can bridge the gap between therapy and daily life, connecting you with people who understand the landscape where your grief lives.

## Grief and the body

People rarely arrive in counseling expecting digestion to be on the agenda, but grief physiology runs through the gut, lungs, and muscles. Breath tightens. Shoulders creep toward ears. Stomachs clench. Without addressing the body, talk therapy can limp.

Simple body based practices help. Lengthen the exhale for a few minutes each day to shift your nervous system toward rest. Place a hand on your sternum and one on your belly, and feel the warmth. Step outside for sunlight within an hour of waking, which nudges your circadian rhythm back into line. Move in ways that are gentle. Ten minutes of walking, not a dramatic boot camp. Hydration and salt matter more than people think when tears are frequent.

If a client grips their jaw when we approach a memory, we pause, invite a yawn, or tap the collarbone lightly for thirty seconds. These are small switches on a larger board. None are cure-alls, and none replace medical care when needed, but they give you leverage over a body that otherwise feels bossed by grief.

## Risky shortcuts and kinder ones

I am direct with clients about the lures that look like help but often deepen the hole. Alcohol can numb the sharp edges for a night, then rebounds anxiety the next day. Binge watching until 2 a.m. Microwaves your sleep. Doomscrolling turns the nervous system brittle. The problem is not any single drink or show. It is the pattern that robs you of recovery time.

Kinder shortcuts exist. Set a wind down routine that asks little of you. Warm shower, lights low, the same playlist each night, a short paragraph from a familiar book. Keep conversations after 9 p.m. To topics that soothe more than activate. If you wake at 3 a.m., get out of bed for ten minutes, sip water, sit in a chair, then return. This signals your brain that the bed is for sleep, not rumination.

Counseling does not outlaw comfort behaviors. It helps you choose them on purpose instead of sliding into habits that hurt.

## How individual counseling and couples work intersect

After a loss, partners can grieve on different clocks. One might want to talk, the other to move. Sexual desire often shuts down, then restarts in fits. Well meaning advice from friends can make things worse. In my practice, I often pair individual counseling with brief couples sessions so both tracks inform each other. You can process private pain one week, then sit with your partner the next to share what helps and what hurts.

A relationship counselor trained in emotionally focused therapy will slow you down, help you notice the protective moves you each make, and create a space where softer emotions can land. The goal is not to eliminate conflict. It is to make conflict safer so you do not add secondary injuries to primary grief.

## Working with a psychotherapist: what to expect

The first session usually maps your story and your supports. Expect practical questions about sleep, appetite, medical issues, substances, and safety. Expect to do less in the first meeting than you think. Slow is fast here. You should leave with at least one concrete practice to try before the next session, and a sense of whether this person’s style fits you.

Over the next weeks, we will likely alternate between stabilization and memory work. If trauma is prominent, we will add trauma specific methods. If depression darkens things beyond grief, we might coordinate with a physician to assess whether medications could be a bridge. I am conservative with meds in grief, but there are cases where a short course for sleep or anxiety protects health while the deeper work unfolds.

Mental health therapy is a broad umbrella. Grief sits under it, though grief is not a disorder. Your therapist should respect that distinction. We are not fixing you. We are supporting a natural process that is stuck in some places and overwhelming in others.

## When to ask for help

You are not weak if you cannot do this alone. No one does. Here are situations where professional counseling usually makes a clear difference:

- You keep reliving the death with images you cannot stop, and it interferes with daily life.
- Friends have pulled back because they feel helpless, and isolation deepens your sadness or anger.
- Guilt or self blame loops so intensely that you avoid places or people you used to love.
- You feel numb most of the day, punctuated by bursts of rage or panic that surprise you.
- You are using alcohol, cannabis, or sedatives more days than not, and cuts feel impossible.

If you are in crisis, including thoughts of harming yourself, call a local hotline or go to the nearest emergency department. Grief is survivable, and help can hold you through the worst nights.

## Finding the right fit

Credentials matter, but fit matters more. When you search for a counselor or psychotherapist, read their bios to see if grief appears as a specialty and ask about their approach. If emotionally focused therapy or attachment work resonates, look for those words. If you need someone who understands the intersection of grief with medical caregiving, ask whether they have worked with caregivers. If culture or faith is central, ask how they incorporate those frames.

If you live near Northglenn, you will find practitioners who balance practical supports with depth work. A Counselor Northglenn who knows the local medical systems, hospice networks, and community groups can save you energy at a time when energy is scarce.

Give yourself permission to interview more than one therapist. Ask how they pace memory work. Ask what a hard session looks like and how they help you leave grounded. You are hiring a partner for a chapter of your life that deserves care.

## Grief's long tail, and what moving forward can mean

Years after a death, people often feel surprised by new waves of sadness around milestones. A college graduation without a grandparent. A new baby named for an uncle. These are not setbacks. They are reminders that love stays, and that the shape of missing changes.

In my office, I keep a small bowl of river stones. Clients sometimes carry one out in their pocket after a hard session. The point is not magic. It is a form of weight you choose. Grief is a weight none of us would pick, yet with time, support, and practice, it can become a stone you carry with dignity. Not a boulder that keeps you pinned to the ground, but something that reminds you of what mattered, even as you plant tomatoes, read to your child, laugh with friends, and take on work that stretches you.

You are not leaving the person behind by building a life that fits you now. You are letting them come along in a way that does not break your knees. A good counselor, whether you find them as an individual counseling specialist, a relationship counselor, or a broader mental health therapy provider, will not rush this. They will sit beside you while the river slows, and they will help you notice the first day you wake and realize the light feels gentle again.

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Phone: (303) 898-6140

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Hours:

Monday: 9:00 AM–4:30 PM (online sessions via Zoom)

Tuesday: 9:00 AM–4:30 PM (in-person sessions)

Wednesday: 9:00 AM–4:30 PM (online sessions via Zoom)

Thursday: Closed

Friday: Closed

Saturday: Closed

Sunday: Closed

Open-location code (plus code): V2X4+72 Northglenn, Colorado

Map/listing URL:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Marta+Kem+Therapy/@39.8981521,-104.9948927,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m6!3m5!1s0x4e9b504a7f5cff91:0x1f95907f746b9cf3!8m2!3d39.8981521!4d-104.9948927!16s%2Fg%2F11ykps6x4b>

Map Embed

Socials:

<https://www.facebook.com/martakemtherapy/>

Marta Kem Therapy provides counseling and psychotherapy services for adults in Northglenn, Colorado, with support centered on relationships, anxiety, depression, grief, life transitions, trauma, and emotional wellness.

Clients can connect for in-person sessions at the Northglenn office on Huron Street, and online sessions are also available by Zoom on select weekdays.

The practice offers individual counseling, individual couples counseling, breathwork sessions, and ketamine-assisted psychotherapy in a private practice setting tailored to adult clients.

Marta Kem Therapy serves people looking for a thoughtful, relational, and trauma-informed approach that emphasizes emotional awareness, attachment, mindfulness, and somatic understanding.

For people in Northglenn and nearby north metro communities, the office location makes it practical to access in-person care while still giving clients the option of virtual support from home.

The practice emphasizes a safe, respectful, and welcoming care environment, with services designed to help clients navigate stress, relationship strain, grief, trauma, and major life changes.

To ask about availability or next steps, prospective clients can call or text (303) 898-6140 and visit <https://martakemtherapy.com/> for service details and contact options.

Visitors who prefer map-based directions can also use the business listing for Marta Kem Therapy in Northglenn to locate the office and confirm the address before arriving.

## Popular Questions About Marta Kem Therapy

### What does Marta Kem Therapy offer?

Marta Kem Therapy offers individual counseling, individual couples counseling, breathwork sessions, and ketamine-assisted psychotherapy for adults.

### Where is Marta Kem Therapy located?

The in-person office is listed at 11154 Huron St #104A, Northglenn, CO 80234.

### Does Marta Kem Therapy offer online therapy?

Yes. The website states that online sessions are available via Zoom on select weekdays.

### Who does Marta Kem Therapy work with?

The practice states that it supports adult individuals dealing with concerns such as relationships, anxiety, depression, developmental trauma, grief, and life transitions.

### What is the approach to therapy?

The website describes the work as trauma-informed, relational, experiential, strengths-based, and attentive to somatic awareness, emotions, attachment, and mindfulness.

### Are in-person sessions available?

Yes. The site says in-person sessions are offered on Tuesdays at the Northglenn office.

### **Are virtual sessions available?**

Yes. The site says online Zoom sessions are offered on Mondays and Wednesdays.

### **Does the practice mention ketamine-assisted psychotherapy?**

Yes. The website includes a ketamine-assisted psychotherapy service page and explains that clients use medication prescribed by their psychiatrist or nurse practitioner.

### **How can someone contact Marta Kem Therapy?**

Call or text [\(303\) 898-6140](tel:3038986140), email [marta@martakemtherapy.com](mailto:marta@martakemtherapy.com), visit <https://martakemtherapy.com/>, or see Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/martakemtherapy/>.

## **Landmarks Near Northglenn, CO**

**E.B. Rains, Jr. Memorial Park** – A well-known Northglenn park near 117th Avenue and Lincoln Street; a useful local reference point for nearby clients and visitors heading to appointments.

**Northglenn Recreation Center** – A major community facility in the civic area that many locals recognize, making it a practical landmark when describing the broader Northglenn area.

**Northglenn City Hall / Civic Center area** – The city's civic hub near Community Center Drive is another familiar point of orientation for people traveling through Northglenn.

**Boondocks Food & Fun Northglenn** – Located on Community Center Drive, this is a recognizable entertainment destination that helps visitors place the area within Northglenn.

**Lincoln Street corridor** – This north-south route near E.B. Rains, Jr. Memorial Park is a practical directional reference for reaching destinations in central Northglenn.

**Community Center Drive** – A commonly recognized local roadway connected with several civic and recreation destinations in Northglenn.

If you are planning an in-person visit, calling ahead at (303) 898-6140 and checking the map listing can help you confirm the best route to the Huron Street office.