

## Steve Parker

### **Bio:**

Steve got a job in a gym and later used personal training to help himself and others look and feel better physically and emotionally. He applied those lessons again after his daughter, Alyssa, died in 1997 to help him on his grief journey. This session is about helping others find a way to get a little relief from the grief they carry, whether they are someone who has never exercised or want to continue at their level or beyond. Steve found himself running his first marathon in memory of Alyssa, though was never a distance runner. He found thousands of others doing the same. Steve plans to share examples and ideas to be of help, not only physically but emotionally. This will be an interactive session.

### **Fitness and Grief: Taking Care of Yourself Mentally and Physically is the Key!**

Physical fitness can help you cope in the grief process. Our physical health helps our mental health. It is not the only solution but can be an important part of the healing process. Exercise brings a sense of purpose and focus to an out-of-control situation with seemingly no hope. Exercise triggers the release of neurotransmitters such as endorphins, serotonin, dopamine, glutamate, and GABA, which are well-known for mood control. You have to walk before you run... literally and figuratively! Exercise can be a diversion and give you back the sense of control that you lost on this journey. In this session, Steve will give ideas and simple ways to get started and/ or enhance what you are already doing so you can help yourself move in the right direction. You will understand how exercise benefits each person and how to start the process of making an individual plan.