



# Comfort for the Grieving Heart

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Provided by St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program

January 2016

## New Year, New Hope

**St. Luke's Hospice**

*"Where there's hope, there's life; it fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again"*

**Bereavement Team:**

*Anne Frank*

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January marks a new beginning: the turning of a page, a brand new calendar, a brand new year. Most folks look forward to the rebirth of a new year; it is a time of dreaming, of new ideas, of new possibilities. We make resolutions, create goals, and find ourselves with renewed hope for what the year may bring.

**Nan Sell-Parry, LCSW**  
Family Services Manager

When we are grieving, though, we may have a very different outlook on the new year. It can be difficult to conjure up excitement, and we may have moments where we feel stuck and sad, lonely and tired, angry and confused. Depending on where you are in your grief journey, you may face the year with anxiety and longing for the comfort of the past. You may be fearful of what the new year may bring and wonder if you can handle any more challenges. Your emotions may be so raw that finding a way to get through one day is overwhelming; the notion of what to do with a whole year may seem unfathomable.

**Rev. Anne G. Huey**  
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As we prepare ourselves for a new calendar year, full of new experiences and new memories to be made, there is a process not only of looking back, but also of looking ahead. Grief can be a reminder of what is really important to us, what we really value, and what brings us joy. It reminds us that we are still here, we have a future, and that we can in fact have some control over our future. While much has been lost and changed, there is still much that remains.



**If you would like to be added to or removed from our mailing list, or if you would prefer to receive an electronic copy, please contact Dawn at (484) 526-2499.**

The passage of time will always bring about a new year. When you are ready, I encourage you to consider giving yourself permission to look for hope again. Perhaps this is a resolution, but maybe it is more of a new perspective to consider. Have hope that the new year will bring challenges that may turn into growth. Have hope that each day may bring happiness. Have hope that you can be patient with yourself and your grief. Have hope that the pain will lessen as your love deepens. Have hope that there will be smiles among the tears. While you may have to re-learn how to invite happiness, joy, and optimism back into your life, your ultimate motivation and goal will likely be the deep, enduring love you feel for the loved one you have lost. There is no end to the depth of that love.

*-Mindy*

# News & Events

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## Open /Drop-in Support Groups



Perhaps you've thought about attending a group but weren't sure if it was for you. Maybe you've already participated in a group and are looking to reconnect to people who understand. Our Open Groups are for bereaved individuals who are looking to explore issues related to their grief and garner support from others who have experienced a loss. This group is not a structured, educational group, rather a space to meet and explore how grief is effecting us. Registration is not required for either group but you may contact the Bereavement Department with any questions.

Our first Open Group meets on the **first Friday of each month** from **10-11am** at St. Luke's Hospice House (2455 Black River Road, Bethlehem.). Our next meeting will be on **January 8, 2016 (please note that this is the 2nd Friday of the month. We will meet this week, as the first Friday of the month falls on New Years Day).**

We will be offering a second Open Group on the **first Wednesday of every month, from 7-8:30 pm** at St. Luke's Hospital, Quakertown Campus, 1021 Park Avenue, Quakertown, PA. We will meet in the Cafeteria Conference Room. The first group will be **Wednesday, February 3, 2016.**



*“Hope begins in the dark, the stubborn hope that if you just show up and try to do the right thing, the dawn will come. You wait and watch and work: you don't give up.”*

*Anne Lamott*

## New Support Groups



We will be offering two new support group options in the upcoming months, and we hope you will consider being a part of them if you are looking for additional support in your grief journey.

We will be offering a 6 week Grief and Loss Group, which is for adults grieving the loss of someone significant in their lives and provides an opportunity to come together with others who have experienced the loss of a loved one. This group will guide participants in understanding the uniqueness of their grief, and provides resources and education on the healing process. The group will meet on Wednesdays from February 17-March 23, 2016 from 3:30 to 5:00 pm at St. Luke's Priscilla Payne Hurd Education Center, St. Luke's Bethlehem Campus (801 Ostrum Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015) in **Room 104**. *Registration for this group is required.* Please pre-register: Mindy.Watson@sluhn.org or (484) 526-2314

We will offering a Mindfulness and Grief Support group, which is an 8 week group, which will explore mindfulness based practices that will allow you to tap into your natural resilience. Mindfulness enables us to live in the present and examine what we are truly feeling in the here and now. This group will on Mondays from February 8, 2016 through March 28, 2016 from 3:30-5:30 pm at St. Luke's Priscilla Payne Hurd Education Center, St. Luke's Bethlehem Campus (801 Ostrum Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015) in **Room 104**. *Registration for this group is required.* Please pre-register: Suzann.Ditzel@sluhn.org or (484) 526-2514

## New Years Resolutions

### for the Bereaved



This year, I resolve to....

- \* Not put a timeline on my grief. Loving someone means loving them for my lifetime whether they are physically present or not.
- \* Tell their stories, the happy & the sad, they will live on through me.
- \* Encourage others to share memories.
- \* Teach others that they cannot “make me cry”, my tears are an outward expression of how I am feeling.
- \* Understand that crying or otherwise expressing my pain is healthy & normal. “Doing well” means I am expressing myself.
- \* Understand that others may not understand my pain and it isn't fair to expect them to do anything but listen
- \* Do something nice for myself every day.
- \* Know that if today I can not do everything that needs to be done, tomorrow is another chance to get it done.
- \* Cry when I need to, laugh when I can, and not feel guilty about either one.
- \* Let go, bit by bit, of the guilt, regret, and anger because I know holding on to these can be damaging.
- \* Take a risk and let others into my life and heart.
- \* Take care of my physical, emotional & spiritual self.
- \* Reinvest in life a little bit each day....

*Adapted from Tanya Lord, The Grief Toolbox*

## For the Young Ones....



### Heart Wreath Activity

Cut pieces of construction paper into 1'x11' strips, and then fold each strip in half. On one half of the strip, write “what I learned in 2015” and on the other half write “what I hope for in 2016”. Facilitate a discussion with your child about their experiences last year, and what they hope for in the new year, and complete each of the sentences. You can use several strips of paper and talk about the many different feelings and emotions they have had, and come up with ways they can experience hope in the new year (I will remember grandpa on his birthday, I will say a prayer for my aunt, etc...). Once completed, staple the open end of the paper together to form a heart shape. Once the hearts are formed, glue the sides together to form a circle, and then add a ribbon or piece of paper on the top and hang the wreath up. This is a great activity for Valentine's Day!

### Featured Website:

[www.opentohope.com](http://www.opentohope.com)

Open to Hope is a non-profit foundation with the mission of helping people find hope after a loss. Open to Hope is an online website where bereaved individuals share their stories of loss, hope and love. The site provides an online forum to “support people who have experienced loss; to help them cope with their pain, heal from their grief and invest in their future”. Be sure to check out the Open to Hope Radio Show page, which has helpful podcasts that address many different facets of grieving, such as losing a sibling, the use of humor in grief, and military loss to name a few.

# Honoring the Journey

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## Additional Places to Find Support and Share Your Story

This is a listing of free bereavement resources in the area. If you have a need for something and don't see it on this list, please call Mindy at (610) 997-7139 for referrals to other services.

**Cancer Support Community of Lehigh Valley with St. Luke's** offers the Hope and Healing Series, a series of creative classes at St. Luke's Cancer Center-Anderson Campus. Programs are free, but registration is required. Call 610-861-7555 or email [info@cancersupportglv.org](mailto:info@cancersupportglv.org) to register or for more information.

**The Compassionate Friends** offers ongoing support groups for parents, grandparents, and adult siblings grieving the loss of a child, grandchild, or sibling.

**TCF of Lehigh Valley** meets at Sacred Heart Hospital, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 421 Chew Street in Allentown. The group meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday each month at 7pm. For more information, call 484-597-0240.

**TCF of Quakertown** meets at St. Luke's Hospital, ground floor, 1021 Park Ave in Quakertown in Taylor Conference Rooms A&B. This group is held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday each month from 7:30 – 9pm. For more information, call 215-536-0173.

**TCF of Easton** meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday each month from 7-9pm at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2115 Washington Blvd. in Easton. For more information call 610-866-5468.

**TCF of Carbon County** meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday each month from 6:30 – 8:30pm in the Palmerton Community Ambulance Association, 501 Delaware Ave in Palmerton. Please call 610-826-2938 for more information.

**Gentle Yoga for Grief, Stress, and Life Transitions** offered by Wendy Littner Thomson, M.Ed., LPC, RYT. First session offered for free to caregivers whose loved one recently received hospice services from St Luke's Hospice. For location, times, or more information, please call 610-730-1992.

**St. Francis Retreat House** holds monthly grief support groups on the first Tuesday from 9:30-11:00 am or the first Thursday from 7:00-8:00 pm. Located at 3918 Chipman Avenue, Easton PA. Please call 610-515-9028 for more information.

**Free Spirits** is a group of more than 2 dozen older widows who go out to lunch once a month to keep active and offer support to each other--and to newer widows. Most are members of Church of the Manger UCC, Bethlehem. Call 610-866-8223 for more information.

**Soaring Spirits Regional Group Lehigh Valley** is planning to hold monthly social gatherings for widowed individuals to provide opportunities to connect with others in a positive, caring, and supportive environment. For more information, please call Sonja Handwerk at 610-297-0057, email [soaringspiritslvpa@yahoo.com](mailto:soaringspiritslvpa@yahoo.com), or follow on Facebook at Soaring Spirits International Group Lehigh Valley.

**Grand View Hospital Hospice** offers many groups and services that change seasonally. Please call 215-453-4210 for more information.

**GriefShare Groups** are a faith-based, evangelical approach to grief and loss. GriefShare groups are provided at several locations in the Lehigh Valley. To find a location near you, please visit [www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org).

**Lehigh Valley Health Network** offers grief support services in the form of counseling, support groups, and workshops for adults and children, as well as a lunch club for women. For information, please call 610-969-0330.

**VNA/Hospice of Monroe County** offers a support group the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday each month at noon. Call 570-421-5390 for more information.

**Doylestown Hospital Hospice** offers a variety of support groups, including a widow/widower group, a young survivors group, and an adult loss group. Visit [www.dhospice.com](http://www.dhospice.com) or call 215-345-2838.