

Comfort for the Grieving Heart

Provided by St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program

April 2016

Sitting with Sadness

St. Luke's Hospice

484-526-2499

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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.

"Of course you feel sad. Someone you cared for deeply has died. The landscape of your world has changed, and you feel unsure of how to navigate it".

Alan Wolfelt, The Mourner's Book of Courage

Sadness...she is a strange bedfellow, an unlikely companion and ally in our journey of grief. Sadness is uncomfortable, yet needed. Painful, yet cathartic. Most of us don't know how to deal with grief, to consciously work with deep sadness. We try to deflect it, avoid it, and distract ourselves from it, but what it needs is attention and care. The dichotomy of sadness is that she is harrowing and scary, but once we spend time with her, she becomes a beacon of light for healing and growth.

Carl Jung, a renowned psychologist, put this contradiction in terms of the work our soul and spirit must do. Our "soul work" is the downward movement of the psyche. It is the willingness to connect with what is dark, deep, and not necessarily pleasant. "Spirit work," on the other hand, involves the upward, ascending movement of the psyche. It is during spirit work that you find renewed meaning and joy in life. Sitting with sadness is the bridge between our soul work and our spirit work – the hard work of the soul lays the groundwork for our spirit. Alan Wolfelt writes that "the spirit cannot ascend until the soul first descends. The withdrawal, slowing down, and stillness of sadness creates the conditions necessary for soul work".

When we fully experience loss and allow sadness in, we go through a transformation: *Grief slowly becomes joy*. The heaviness of deep sadness becomes lightness, an aliveness that is rich and meaningful. Perhaps this is why we connect so easily with others who have lost; we can see and feel and hear the transformation they have experienced and in turn we see hope and healing for ourselves. Sadness. Sit with her; allow her in and feel her working in you. She knows what she is doing and can lead your spirit to work.

-Mindy

"When we face our grief head on, the brain is forced to process it. It is only when we deny its existence we can become stuck in the grief cycle. So I encourage everyone to be brave enough to say 'this is my story, this is my pain' and by doing so you will be rewarded".

Zoe Clark-Coates

News & Events

Service of Remembrance

We gather periodically as family members of our patients and as a Hospice staff to remember those who have died. Our Services of Remembrance are inter-faith and are offered as a way in which we may take time to reflect, remember, and celebrate the lives and legacies of those who have passed from ours. The names of the deceased will be read at these services unless we are notified that you prefer otherwise. Please bring your family and friends and join us for this time of remembrance. For patients served by our **Bethlehem office and Hospice House**, who died between **November 1, 2015 and February 29, 2016** the Service of Remembrance will be held on **Sunday, April 3, 2016 at 3 pm** at Wesley Church, 2540 Center Street, Bethlehem, PA 18017, 610-865-5715.



Grief & Family Dynamics Workshop

Traditionally, the focus of grief has been on the individual, where support and treatment is focused on the individual's coping and adjustment. But grief does not have to be solely an individual process; along with our culture and religion, our family unit teaches us about death, dying and grief. Understanding grief from a family perspective allows family members to engage in grief work together, and to work on the healing process not only for the individual, but for the family as a whole. If you are interested in learning more about how families grieve, what are some causes of family discord during the grief process, and ways to work together as a family unit, please join us for a workshop on Wednesday, March 30, 2016 from 6:00 - 8:00 pm at The Pricilla Payne Hurd Education Center, St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem Campus, 701 Ostrum Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015 in **Room 104**. **Pre-registration is required.** Mindy.Watson@sluhn.org or 484-526-2314.

Open /Drop-in Support Groups

We offer 3 Open Groups to help meet the ongoing needs of bereaved individuals. Open Groups are supportive in nature and new members are welcome to join at any time. Our three groups meet:

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 **Friday, April 1 2016**.

First Wednesday of every month, from 7-8:00 pm at St. Luke's Hospital, Quakertown Campus, 1021 Park Avenue, Quakertown, PA. We will meet in the Cafeteria Conference Room. The next group will be **Wednesday, April 6, 2016**.

First Monday of every month from 4-5:00 pm at St. Luke's Hospital, Anderson Campus, 1600 St. Luke's Boulevard, Easton, PA 18045. Meeting room will be determined, please check with main desk. The first group will be **Monday, April 4, 2016**.



Supporting Children & Teens Workshop

If you are in a position of parenting or working with children and teens who have experienced a loss, please join us for a workshop to learn basic skills in supporting grieving children. We will cover how children grieve, the impact their developmental level has on their grieving, and ways to help support and facilitate healing. We will meet on Wednesday April 13, 2016 from 6:00 - 8:00 pm at The Pricilla Payne Hurd Education Center, St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem Campus, 701 Ostrum Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015 in **Room 103**. **Pre-registration is required.** Mindy.Watson@sluhn.org or 484-526-2314.

"What soap is for the body, tears are for the soul."

—Jewish proverb

Featured Website:

www.photogrief.com

Language is limited when it comes to expressing the experience of grief. How can one truly explain the depths of their pain or accurately describe the memory of their loved one's smile? Sometimes there just aren't the right words and sometimes you don't feel like talking; yet there's benefit in being able to express and examine how you feel.

Photogrief.com was developed by two mental health professionals who also experienced their own individual losses. The site offers prompts and exercises to help with the expression of emotion, remembrance of your loved one, and finding hope and strength.

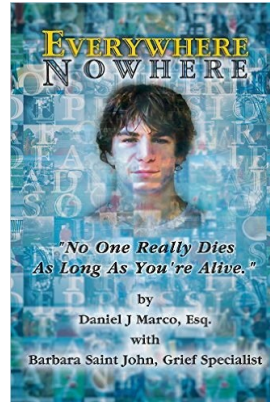
Through the use of photography, the site encourages the use of snapshots and portraiture to create images that allow you to spend time reflecting on your emotions and to feel closer to your loved ones memory. With or without prompts, you can use your camera - any camera - to help process your emotions through visualization and imagery. Make sure to visit the Photo Archives page to see how people are honoring their loved ones, expressing their emotions and using photos to help them through their healing process.



Welcome, Suzann!

We are very pleased to announce that Suzann Ditzel has joined the Bereavement Team as our second coordinator/counselor. Suzann has an M.S.W. and was previously one of our hospice per diem social workers. We are looking forward to her continued contributions, and welcome her warm and generous spirit to the team!

New Reading:



Everywhere Nowhere

By Daniel Marco &
Barbara St. John

From the first moment of the indescribable loss of a child in a senseless murder to the loss of everything he knew, his career, his wife, his life, to the beginning of his recovery, Daniel J. Marco tells his story of loss, of love, of crippling and debilitating grief, and of the moments when he begins to see the light of life, again. He tells of his journey from the inside, while he's still in it; a journey he is still on today, but one that is now laced with considerable light and hope.

Barbara Saint John, Grief Specialist of over twenty years, helped Marco find his way to that place in his journey, and together, they wrote this book to share their perspectives in this compelling, comforting, hopeful tale of survival and moving from tragedy to a new normal.

Described as a beautiful, heartbreaking and inspiring read, the author allows you to look into his life, and shares it all in a way that makes the unimaginable relatable.



“The funny thing about tears is that when they fill our eyes, that's when we see most clearly”.

Kyle Idleman

Honoring the Journey

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 is a local non-profit organization providing emotional and social support to family members and caregivers. They offer support groups, educational workshops and mind/body classes in their Allentown, PA office. Programs are free, but registration is required. Call 610-861-7555 or email 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, 2nd floor, 421 Chew Street in Allentown. The group meets the 2nd 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 2nd Tuesday each month from 7:30 – 9pm. For more information, call 215-536-0173.

TCF of Easton meets the 2nd 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 1st 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 www.givinggriefavoice.com

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, 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.

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 1st and 3rd 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 or call 215-345-2838.