



Comfort for the Grieving Heart

Provided by St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program

May 2016

A Time of Renewal

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.

*Tell your heart to beat again...Close your eyes and breathe it in
Let the shadows fall away...Step into the light of grace
Yesterdays a closing door, you don't live there anymore
Say goodbye to where you've been and tell your heart to beat again*
Danny Gokey

The tulip bulbs are peeking through, the weather is warming up and we have more light to our days. We leave behind the dark, cold months of winter and spring is now at our doorstep. Springtime is the season of renewal, but it can also be a season of doubt. After all, for something to be made new and fresh, it first has to have gotten old and worn.

Feeling sad during spring is understandable. We are reminded that there will be a time, soon, or perhaps later, when we have to move forward. Just as we must shrug off winter, so too must we begin focusing on the life ahead instead of the life left behind. We can't take our lost loved ones into this new season, except in memory and heart, and this realization can bring us new pain.

However, if we look deep into our broken hearts, we will find something that looks and feels a lot like spring. We will find that there is still a hope for a good life, for a happy life.. Renewed life is not just a choice you make, it is an opportunity you are given. This renewed sense of life is not something you can force, but it is something you open yourself to, something you come to trust; and as you learn to trust you take another step toward your healing. This is the legacy of grief's springtime. As your outlook toward the future begins to change, so does your outlook toward the past. You focus less on death and more on life, especially the parts of life that your loved one gave you and gives you still. You find that the unfolding of the grief process reminds you that you will survive. It reminds you that life has changed, and as with all change, growth emerges. And if you have not yet reached the "springtime" of your grief journey, just as with the seasons, you can know and hopefully be encouraged that spring will come. You will reach this step in your journey.

This spring may not feel quite as warm as you would like at this moment, but, there is a shift in the atmosphere that we can all appreciate and feel. You can have a renewed sense of life again...

-Mindy

Grief and Loss Support Group

We will be offering a 6 week Grief and Loss Support Group, which is for adults grieving the loss of someone significant in their lives. This group provides an opportunity to come together with others who have experienced the loss of a loved one and guides participants in understanding the uniqueness of their grief. Please note that this is not a therapeutic group; this group provides support, resources and education on the healing process. The group will meet on Thursdays from May 12, 2016 through June 16, 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 (building is located in front of Priscilla Payne Hurd annex of the hospital). Registration for this group is required. Please pre-register: Suzann.Ditzel@sluhn.org or



Teen Grief Workshop

This group will be for adolescents ages 13 to 17 years old, who have experienced a recent loss, and could benefit from validation for what they are feeling and thinking about their loss. There will be education about the uniqueness of everyone's grief and suggestions for some strategies to cope with their loss. We will meet on Friday, June 17, 2016 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Location to be announced. Registration is required: Mindy.Watson@sluhn.org or 484-526-2314.

“You will feel better than this,
maybe not yet,
but you will.
you just keep living
until you are alive again”

From *Call the Midwife*

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 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 MOB Conference Room, Side A, 1700 St. Luke's Blvd. The first group will be **Monday, May 2 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, May 4, 2016.**

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, May 6 2016.**



Newly Bereaved Workshop

This workshop is for those who have a lost a loved one within the past 1-3 months and will provide education on the first few weeks and months of grief following a death. We will cover understanding common grief reactions, coping strategies, self-care throughout the grief process and beyond, and the uniqueness of your grief experience. These workshops will be offered on a bi-monthly basis. We will be meet on Wednesday, May 25, 2016 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm in Room 104 The Priscilla Payne Hurd Education Center, St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem Campus, 801 Ostrum Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015 (building is located in front of Priscilla Payne Hurd annex of the hospital). Please register if you are interested in attending: Mindy.Watson@sluhn.org or 484-526-2314.

Featured Website:

www.soaringspirits.org

Soaring Spirits is a national program with the one goal of supporting and connecting widowed people with each other. It is designed to be a safe place for widowed individuals to begin the process of rebuilding their lives. The Soaring Spirits programs are not focused on the losses their community has experienced, rather on the life they still have ahead. On line support consists of a pen pal program, where widowed individuals correspond via email for peer support, a blog that is written by several different widowed people, online forums for 24 hour social support, and a variety of social media platforms. Soaring Spirits has regional social events that provide an opportunity for in-person gatherings with other widowed people in the local community for understanding, friendship, and peer support (the Lehigh Valley Chapter can be contacted via email at soaringspiritslvpa@yahoo.com). Soaring Spirits programs are designed to connect widowed people with each other, based on the powerful connections of shared experiences.



Survival Tips for Grief

1. Allow your grief
2. Express your grief
3. Be patient with yourself
4. Keep busy
5. Keep a journal
6. Exercise Daily
7. Be willing to change things

We trust that beyond the absence;

There is a presence.

That beyond the pain;

There can be healing.

That beyond the anger;

There may be peace

That beyond the hurting;

There may be forgiveness

That beyond the silence;

There may be the word

That beyond the word;

There may be understanding

That through understanding;

There is love

Gates of Prayer
(Jewish Book of Prayer)

*Developed from Journeys with Grief: A Collection of Articles about
Love, Life and Loss, edited by Kenneth J. Doka, Ph.D., MDiv.,
Hospice Foundation of America, 2012.*

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 the Bereavement Office at (484) 526-2499 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.

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.

Stepping Stones for Adolescents is a group for teens ages 11-16 that meets at Lehigh Valley Hospice for teen peer support. Call (610)969-0330 for more information.

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.