

Comfort for the Grieving Heart

Provided by St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program

January 2017

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.

Old year has gone away with gift and candle,
Old year has gone away with thought and song.
Old year has given light and dark and season,
Old year has been too short and been too long.
Old year has given joy and disappointment,
Old year has given grief and strength to cope.
Old year was memory and was forgetting-
Another year is come: Give it your hope.

Author unknown. PATHways Center for Grief & Loss, Lancaster, PA

Here we are, yet again, in the midst of another cold and dreary time of year, when we are left reeling from the bustle of the holiday season and challenged to face the remainder of the winter months. The New Year brings about a time of change and rebirth during a season where we so often tend to feel withdrawn and isolated, merely by shorter days and colder nights and the desire to hibernate and keep insulated. This conflictual time of the year is often represented in how we behave and think: we make resolutions and the break them, we look ahead while still having a finger on the pulse of our past, we make plans yet anticipate them with a sense of dread and anxiety. On the surface, the New Year seems to be a time for excitement and opportunity, yet right below that surface, we acknowledge that this time of year brings about stillness and quiet that can at times be difficult to manage.

When we are grieving, the New Year also brings about a newness to our grief; as we anticipate stepping into 2017 without our loved one, we may once again feel a great sense of sorrow. We are entering a New Year without our loved one, and for many of you reading this, it may be the first "new year" experienced through the lens of your loss. You may find yourself focusing on what you have lost and having difficulty looking into the future and what it may bring. You may be experiencing a renewed sense of loneliness, or sadness, or despair. And, while these feelings are normal as we work through our grief, may I suggest we add one more feeling to that list?

As we prepare ourselves for a new calendar year, full of new holidays, new experiences, and new memories to be made, there is a process not only of looking back, but also of looking ahead... reminding ourselves who and what is of value to us. While much has been lost and changed, there is still much that remains. As we look ahead to the New Year, may we treat ourselves with gentleness as we grieve what has been lost and prepare ourselves for what is to come. As we navigate the next few months of cold and darkness, may we look for signs of spring, holding steadfast to the knowledge that spring will in fact arrive.

If you are one of the many who are experiencing renewed feelings of grief at this time of year, consider adding *hope* to the list of feelings that you may be revisiting. Hope lives in all of us; we may just need to use our time wisely in these cold winter months to nurture it and allow it to take root in our hearts.

-Mindy

Grief and Loss Support Group

Our next round of our 6 week Grief and Loss Support Group is scheduled for February 2017. This group 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. The group 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 **Wednesdays from February 22, 2017 through March 29, 2017 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 (building is located in front of Priscilla Payne Hurd annex of the hospital). **Registration for this group is required:** call (484) 526-2514 or email Suzann.Ditzel@sluhn.org



Newly Bereaved Workshop

This one-time workshop is for those who have 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, January 18, 2017 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm** We will meet at 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). **Registration is required:** call (484)526-2514 or email Suzann.Ditzel@sluhn.org

Open /Drop-in Support Groups

Please note changes in our Drop-In Group

Our Drop-In groups are designed to offer continued support to bereaved individuals who have already attended grief and loss programs through St. Luke's Hospice. Drop-In groups afford participants the chance to continue with supportive services. This group is facilitated, but directed by group members in terms of content and discussion. We currently offer 4 Drop-In Support Groups:

Easton: First Monday of every month from 4-5 pm at St. Luke's Hospital-Anderson Campus, Medical Office Building (MOB), 1700 St. Luke's Blvd, Easton, PA 18045 in Conference Room A.

Bethlehem: Second Monday of every month from 4:00-5:00 pm at St. Luke's Priscilla Payne Hurd Education Center, St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem Campus, 801 Ostrum Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015 in Room 112

Quakertown: Second Monday of every month from 6:30-7:30 pm at St. Luke's Hospital-Quakertown Campus, 1021 Park Avenue, Quakertown, PA 18951 in Taylor B Conference room.

Lehigh: Third Monday of every month from 3:00 - 4:00 pm at Dinkey Memorial Church, 1742 Dinkey Road, Lehigh, PA 18212.

"Infuse your life with action. Don't wait for it to happen. Make it happen. Make your own future. Make your own hope. Make your own love. And whatever your beliefs, honor your creator, not by passively waiting for grace to come down from upon high, but by doing what you can to make grace happen... yourself, right now, right down here on Earth."

Bradley Whitford

Volunteer Opportunities Available

We need you! Specially trained volunteers are an integral part of the St. Luke's Hospice team, and we are always looking for individuals who are wanting to serve as a welcome friend to our patients and their family members. Volunteers share their time and talents in many ways; they visit with patients in their homes or at St. Luke's inpatient Hospice House, and they also assist with a variety of administrative duties and help at special events. If you have thought about volunteering, please consider donating your time and talents to St. Luke's Hospice!

For more details, please contact Juana Van Steenvoort, Volunteer Coordinator at (484) 526-7124, or visit <http://www.slhn.org/volunteerNOW>

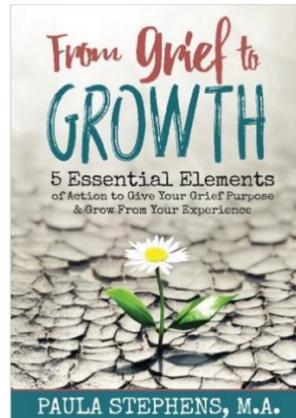
(Due to the sensitive nature hospice volunteering requires, we ask that applicants who have experienced the loss of a loved one wait until they have completed a bereavement period of at least one year before applying to become a hospice volunteer).



Lehighton News :

To all of our friends in the Lehighton area, we hope you have noticed that we are working hard to grow our programming in the northern part of our service area. In addition to our monthly drop-in group (every 3rd Monday of the month), we are also offering workshops and groups on a rotating basis. We hope that if you have bereavement needs, you will join us. Our next drop-in group will be January 16, 2017 and our next round of our 6 week Grief and Loss support group is scheduled to start March 21, 2017. To register, please contact Suzann at (484) 526-2514 or Suzann.Ditzel@sluhn.org

New Reading



From Grief to Growth: 5 Essential Elements of Action
by Paula Stephens

In this new release, the author leads the reader through five game changing elements that provide a road map to a joyful life after loss. The author writes how she went from hiding in the shadow of her son's death to living in the sunshine of his life. With humor and wit, she shares the stories of the death of her father, her middle son's drug rehab, and her own struggles to heal. Her practical tips and examples of how others have healed will light the way for anyone wanting to find the light after the loss of a loved one.

www.amazon.com

Hope is like the sun, which, as we journey toward it, casts the shadow of our burden behind us. - Samuel Smiles

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. www.thecompassionatefriends.org

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 610-837-7924.

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

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 social gatherings for widowed individuals to provide opportunities to connect with others in a positive, caring, and supportive environment. For more information, contact Sonja Handwerk at 610-297-0057 or soaringspiritslvpa@yahoo.com.

HALOS - CLC is for parents, grandparents and adult siblings who have experienced the loss of a child or sibling to suicide. The group meets every 4th Thursday from 6:30-8:30 pm at Hughes Library in Stroudsburg, PA. Register with Alice Keyes at (570) 236-1168

Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Center offers an Open Group on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 5:30-7:00 pm. Registration is required, contact Deb at (610) 347-9988 or deb@bradburysullivancenter.org. The Center is located at 522 W. Maple St., Allentown, PA 18101. There is no charge for the group.

GriefShare Groups are a faith-based 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.

St. Francis Retreat House holds monthly grief support groups on the first and third Tuesday of the month from 9:30-11:00 am. Located at 3918 Chipman Avenue, Easton PA. Please call 610-515-9028 for more information.

GRASP - For families who have experienced a death due to substance use. Group meets every 3rd Monday of the month from 7-8:30 pm at 1st Presbyterian Church in Allentown, Room 118. Please register with Nancy Howe (484) 788-9440

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.

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