



Comfort for the Grieving Heart

Provided by St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program

March 2017

Stops Along the Way

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.

NBC has a new hit drama...This Is Us... a series that follows fraternal twins Kate and Kevin along with their adopted brother Randall as their lives intertwine. Kate and Kevin were originally part of a triplet pregnancy, but, their biological brother was stillborn. Their parents, Jack and Rebecca, are intent on bringing home three babies, and decide to adopt another newborn (Randall), a child who was born on the same day and abandoned at a fire station. In one recent episode, we learn about Dr. K, who delivered the triplets and who is instrumental in the start of this family's life together. We learn that his wife died 14 months prior and that they had a lost a baby of their own when they were starting their family.

Interspersed throughout this episode, we see clues on how Dr. K is processing the loss of his wife; he gets into an argument with his son about moving on and dating again, he talks to his deceased wife at the breakfast table, he has kept her medicine and makeup as is, and he breaks down at her gravesite and wonders if he can ever continue without her. At one point in the story, we see a moment between Dr. K and the main character, Jack, where Dr. K shares his story of his own child passing away at birth, and encourages Jack to consider adopting the abandoned baby. As he reflects on this interaction, a change is ignited in Dr. K and he begins to reexamine his wife's death. We then later hear Dr. K talking to his wife again saying, "I told a young man about the baby yesterday. I haven't spoken to anyone about that in a really long time...it seems he may have taken the worst thing that's ever happened to him in his life and tried to push on. There isn't a minute that goes by that I don't think of you. But I hope that this is what you would want me to do". At the end of the episode, we again see visuals of how Dr. K is processing his loss, this time cleaning out his wife's medicine and accepting an offer for dinner.

Yes, it may be fictional, and it may be a drama on television that is only one hour long. But what we see in that short, scripted timeframe is that there is movement in grief. It is illustrated in a way that we see Dr. K's deep pain, we see his courage, and we see his hope. We see it clearly as Dr. K rejects the advice of his son, we see it as he painfully expresses his thoughts at the gravesite, we see it in his own advice given to Jack, and we see it when he bravely challenges himself to try new things. What we learn in this one hour episode is that there are points along the way of Dr. K's grief experience that altered his view and changed how he integrated his loss.

What we don't learn is whether or not he continued in this manner, or if it was too uncomfortable and he retreated. What we do clearly see are finite points along the way that planted seeds for Dr. K, which ultimately prompted him to look at life and loss differently. This is what is important. After we experience death, we all have stops along the way that urge us to look at our grief in different ways. They may not always be clear, or even what we feel is helpful; however, the important piece is that we are open to them. That we take chances. That we retreat if needed. That we use the points that meet us in our grief, and let them gently lead us.

-Mindy

6 Week Grief and Loss Group

Our 6 week Grief and Loss Support Group will start again in May 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 Tuesdays from May 23, 2017 through June 27, 2017 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm at St. Luke's Anderson Campus, Medical Office Building, 1872 St. Luke's Boulevard, Easton, PA 18045. **Registration is required:** Suzann.Ditzel@sluhn.org or call Suzann at (484) 526-2514

Creative Arts and Grief Group

Artists have always used their art to express despair, to find meaning in life and transcend emotional struggles. Human suffering has inspired some of our greatest artwork. After a trauma such as a loss, art can help us express and release painful and stressful emotions, and allow us to do this in a safe manner. Our artwork can also give us a sense of empowerment, capability and freedom that your grief experience has taken from you. Creative arts are a powerful tool to reinforce your resiliency and find hope.

Join us for a 7 week Creative Arts experience, where we will use various forms of art to help in your healing process. This group will meet Wednesdays from May 3, 2017 through June 14, 2017 from 3:30 to 5:30 pm. We will be meeting at the Banana Factory, 25 W. 3rd Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015. **Registration is required:** please contact Suzann at 484-526-2514 or Suzann.Ditzel@sluhn.org.

Open /Drop-in Support Groups

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 the following Drop-In Support Groups:

Easton: First Monday of every month from 4:00 - 5:00 pm at St. Luke's Hospital-Anderson Campus, Medical Office Building (MOB), 1872 St. Luke's Blvd, Easton, PA 18045 in Conference Room A.

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.

Bethlehem: Fourth Monday of every month from 6:00 - 7:00 pm at St. Luke's Pricilla Payne Hurd Education Center, St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem Campus, 801 Ostrum Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015 in Room 112. (starting March 27, 2017)

No art experience or expertise is needed, and there is no fee for this program.



“At the deepest level, the creative process and the healing process arise from a single source. When you are an artist, you are a healer. A wordless trust of the same mystery is the foundation of your work and its integrity”

Rachel Naomi Remen

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, Carbon County office and Hospice House**, who died between **November 1, 2016 and February 28, 2017** the Service of Remembrance will be held on **Sunday, May 7, 2017 at 3 pm** at Wesley United Methodist Church, 2540 Center Street, Bethlehem, PA 18017, (610) 865-5715. ***Please RSVP to Anne Huey*** at (484)526-2835 or Anne.Huey@sluhn.org

Newly Bereaved Workshop

This one-time 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 **Thursday, March 16, 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*** please call Mindy at (484)526-2314 or email Mindy.Watson@sluhn.org



Lehighon News :

Lehighon Open Group: We meet for our Drop In/Open Group on the **Third Monday of every month** from **3:00 - 4:00 pm** at Dinkey Memorial Church, 1742 Dinkey Road, Lehighon, PA 18212. All members of the community who are in need of bereavement support are invited to attend.

Grief and Loss Support Group: We will be offering another round of our 6 week Grief and Loss Support Group on **Tuesdays from 3:30 - 5:30 pm from March 28, 2017 through May 2, 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. To register, please contact Suzann Ditzel at (484) 526-2514 or Suzann.Ditzel@sluhn.org

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.