



GRIEF SUPPORT AND CONNECTIONS FOR YOUR JOURNEY

In light of COVID-19 restrictions on large gatherings and public venues, Coastal Hospice provides grief support and education to families, friends, caregivers and others following the death of a loved one

Coastal Hospice provides grief support in four counties



loneliness,” said Howard Travers, Bereavement Care Manager of Coastal Hospice. “All of these thoughts and feelings are normal. The grieving process has no timetable. But if

via the online virtual platform, “Zoom.” These meetings are open to anyone who has recently suffered the death of a loved one. Individuals need not be affiliated with Coastal Hospice to participate in these online gatherings.

During these “Zoom” Grief Support Group meetings, participants work to help each other. The meetings provide a safe place to express feelings and talk about grief with others who have experienced similar losses. “After you have lost a loved one, you may be asking yourself: ‘Why can’t I get over it?’ You may experience many emotions: anxiety, worry, guilt,

these emotions are interfering with your life, it may be time to seek the professional help and support Coastal Hospice provides. While we do not offer grief therapy, our services are supportive in nature. We help individuals navigate through grief at their own pace.”

If you wish to know more about our “Zoom” virtual Grief Support Groups and how to download the “Zoom” app onto your laptop or computer to participate, please contact, **J. Nicole Long at 443-614-6142 or nlong@coastalhospice.org**. A full schedule of our virtual Grief Support Groups can also be found on the back page of this newsletter.

Be An Angel Campaign



our Be An Angel campaign. As of January 25, we have raised more than \$174,364 ... and we’re still counting! These funds will help to pay for the care we provide to patients who do not have financial resources or have needs beyond their insurance coverage. For perspective, a donation of \$25 can pay for a week of a patient’s medical equipment rental; a \$100 donation pays for a month of oxygen; \$500 covers a week of in-home hospice, and \$1,000 pays for three days of room and board at the Stansell House.

Thank you to the 1,349 donors who donated 1549 gifts to

In 2019-20, Coastal Hospice cared for 1,360 patients and their families across Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties, while providing more than \$400,000 in care for patients in need. Many patients and caregivers tell us what the assistance means to them, and we often reply it’s because “An Angel in your heart, they say, will give you guidance every day.” We truly appreciate your support and generosity. THANK YOU for being an “Angel.”

The Aloneness of Grief

by Kenneth J. Doka, PhD, MDiv.

“She was our Nana,” Greta remarked, “yet I seem to be the only one who grieves her death.” I knew enough about Greta to understand her comment. She was 12 years old when her mother died. Her grandmother stepped in to help raise her. When her beloved grandmother died years later, Greta felt alone mourning her. Nana had suffered from dementia for many years and, to most in the family, seemed a distant figure. Greta’s younger half-brother knew her only as a nice older lady who would sometimes visit and make pudding. Even Greta’s adolescent children only remembered her as a patient in an Alzheimer’s unit. There was no one to share stories or fully empathize with her grief.

Sometimes we may feel alone in our grief. Not because we are the only person affected by a loss, but rather because our grief reactions seem so different from those around us. Each of us is unique. Every relationship is different. We all grieve in our own way. One of my mentors, Rabbi Earl Grollman, liked to remind us that grief is like fingerprints or snowflakes; each individual reaction is different and distinctive. It is easy, then, even when others mourn alongside us, to feel that no one fully appreciates our loss. When we feel alone in our grief, it helps to realize that such feelings are normal and natural.

In reality, grief is always a singular experience; that is the nature of grief. To find the support that seems to be missing, it may help to speak with a grief counselor or join a support group. We may want to explore, perhaps with a counselor or within a grief group, both our reactions and our relationship. That may offer some clarity as to why others in our support system have different reactions or seem to have trouble understanding our grief. Perhaps then we can determine what can help us as we deal with our loss.

Greta wrote a letter to Nana that she read in her support group. It reaffirmed their special relationship and allowed Greta to thank Nana for being there when she felt so alone. As Greta reflected on her grandmother’s support as she dealt with the loss of her mother, she recognized how that support would help her now. Greta realized that the strengths she learned from Nana could help as she mourned her now. She remembered how her Nana reassured her, as they mourned together the loss of Greta’s mother and Nana’s daughter, that they did not need to feel the same. They simply needed to support each other. Greta acknowledged the legacy of her Nana; she could grieve her own loss in her own way and in her own time.

Just Another Year... or Not

by Jennifer Stern, LSW

Another year without those we love beside us. How can this be? How is it that time has the audacity to move on in spite of our sorrow?

No new memories created. Frozen in time. They live in our hearts, and in our minds, forever the same. Our memories a placeholder. Those last moments, days, months, years relived, recycled, so that we remain connected to

what was as we venture forward one moment, one step, one day at a time. Trying to wrap our minds around the insufferable truth that what was can never be again, all while doing the unimaginable, living. Pain. Anguish. Heartache. Indescribable heaviness.

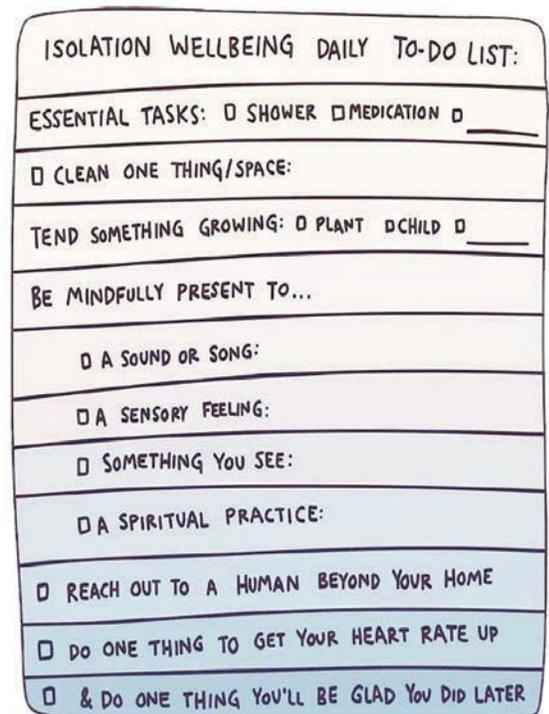
And yet, we are here.

We are here.

We are here to find ways to live meaningfully. With all of our love, our memories, our wishes, and even our unanswered prayers still miraculously beating within our broken hearts, we live. Every heart beat. Every breath. We live for them. For ourselves. For our memories. For what remains. For what is yet to be.

We are here to be their light. To shine on their behalf, in their memory and in their honor. We are here to tell their story. To speak their name. To emulate the qualities we loved most. We are here to love, to laugh, to remember well. To carry on.

We are here to live. May 2021 be a year of healing, of remembering, of living life consciously forward. With strength, courage and love in our hearts may we find our way through the darkness of grief and into the light of living intentionally.



@LINDSAYBRAMANE

How spring gardening can help you grow through grief



When Marla's husband, Ray, passed following an extended illness, the plants and flowers that she received from family, friends and neighbors filled her home. Though she appreciated the thought behind each one, she admits to being overwhelmed with the prospect of caring for the plants, overcome with grief and exhaustion as she was. In the end, she gave all but two of them away to family and close friends.

"Ray was sick for such a long time," said Marla. "And while I was grateful for the plants, I just didn't have it in me, at that time, to care for anything else."

But Marla held on to one potted plant that she remembers catching her eye.

"One of my dearest friends, who'd lost her own husband just a couple of years back, brought me a beautiful, though empty, enamel flower pot," she recalled with a smile. "But I was especially surprised because inside the pot was potting soil and tulip bulbs."

A card attached to the gift offered sympathetic wishes that she would soon find comfort and hope in planting and

nourishing the bulbs to full bloom.

"It was such a beautiful gesture and seemed to me that my friend understood my grief. It also gave me hope that there would be a time when things wouldn't seem so sad."

What Marla's friend also understood was the powerful life-affirming power that gardening can offer.

Whether growing a single tulip bulb indoors, planning a memorial flower garden, or digging in — literally — to a vegetable garden, gardening can be a tremendous source of healing. The physical effort mixed with mindfulness of purpose (a form of meditation) has the potential to yield rewards that nourish both body and spirit.

Eva Shaw, PhD., author of *Shovel It: Nature's Health Plan*, contends that those willing to dig in to the activity required of gardening "can find peace, health and happiness in your own back yard."

According to Shaw, when planning a garden, it's best to start small to ensure success. Starting with something as simple as a single indoor flower pot can be extremely rewarding.



Coastal Hospice Inc.
PO Box 1733
Salisbury, MD 21802
410-742-8732
www.CoastalHospice.org

NONPROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MAIL MOVERS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairman Stephen R. Farrow
Vice-Chairman Richard M. Laws
Secretary Michael P. Dunn
Treasurer Madalaine L. How
Imm. Past Chair Michael P. Dunn
President Alane K. Capen
At Large Wiltssy Payero-Edeen

Colleen "Cam" A. Bunting Andy Kim
David "Buddy" A. Dykes Robert M. Purcell
Filippa Etherton Dr. Tina Reid
Morgan Fisher Anthony S. Sarbanes
Parisa Gholamvand Dr. Sharon Washington
Roger L. Harrell Margaret M. Whitten
Dr. Lakeisha Harris



TO OPT OUT: You are likely receiving this publication following the death of a family member, friend or loved one who received care from Coastal Hospice. Grief support is a vital part of the hospice philosophy of care. This publication serves to share information you can use during this time and highlight upcoming events. If you do not wish to continue receiving this publication or have a change of address, please contact Melissa Dasher at 410-742-8732, ext. 621 or mdasher@coastalhospice.org.

UPCOMING GRIEF SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

These groups provide a time of respite and a safe place to express feelings in the grieving process. We offer these activities at no cost to any adult who has experienced the death of a loved one, even if they were not a patient of Coastal Hospice.

**Due to Covid-19
restrictions please call or
e-mail for dates, times, locations
and/or Zoom codes.**

**Nicole Long
443-614-6142
NLong@coastalhospice.org**

*One-on-one phone support or
in-person meeting available
by request.*

Dorchester County

Support Group

During COVID-19, in lieu of group meetings, please call for one-on-one visit.

Nicole Long 443-614-6142 NLong@coastalhospice.org

Somerset County

Support Group

During COVID-19, in lieu of group meetings, please call for one-on-one visit.

Nicole Long 443-614-6142 NLong@coastalhospice.org

Worcester County

Support Group

Zoom group meeting - Thursdays @ 1:00 pm

Wicomico County

Support Group

Zoom group meeting - Fridays @ 1:00 pm