

Volunteer

NEWSLETTER

November 2009

Editor's note: With the holidays upon us, I thought that the wisdom and helpful suggestions of the following article, from the November 2007 issue, might be helpful...

HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

By JeanAnn O'Brien, Bereavement Coordinator

"How am I going to make it through the holidays?... I just want to fast forward from November through the holidays deep into January... Maybe I could just run away."

For those who have experienced the death of someone close, the holiday season often seems to intensify the already hard feelings. The bereaved person can feel even more set apart, different, at this time of year. Actually, the anticipation of the holidays is often as difficult - or even more difficult - than the holidays themselves. With some self-awareness, a little planning, and some changes in how you celebrate your holidays, there is hope that you will not only survive, but find some joy in the season.

Here are a dozen ideas that may help you navigate through the holidays:

1. Take good care of yourself.

Commit to doing all the things that you know are good for you: Resting and getting enough sleep; regular exercise; balanced, healthy diet; avoiding alcohol or drugs to mask the pain; and being with people who support and nourish you. Think about how you have coped in the past and draw upon those strengths again.

2. Have a plan and prioritize.

Having a plan is not going to take away the pain of the loss, but it will help you to avoid getting blind-sided by it. For example, if your loved one always carved the Thanksgiving turkey, plan who will do it this year - even plan to make it a ceremonial transfer of responsibility, if that

helps. Plan which things you feel you absolutely must do and what you can give up (e.g., you may decide that you absolutely must still have the grandchildren over, but the cards can go.)

3. Don't do things just because it is expected of you.

You may have always led the committee for the gift wrapping booth at the mall. Do not pressure yourself to do it this year. You do not owe an explanation to anyone; just say, "not this year."

4. Accept and even ask for help.

Don't try to do it all alone. If you want a Christmas tree, don't hesitate to ask someone else to set it up and decorate it for you (and take it down afterwards!). Tell people what they can do to help.

5. Accept that you'll have pain.

Again, nothing is going to take away the pain of your loss. Carry tissues with you; tell people you are with that you might cry and invite them to cry with you. Don't be surprised by the intensity and the range of emotions: anger, panic, depression, regrets, loneliness, as well as physical symptoms. This is normal. It is not a setback; it is how grief is.

6. Don't be afraid to change traditions.

Some things just may be too much. If there are certain traditions that are so definitively tied up with your loved one - that no one else can do or that you could not bear to see them do - change the tradition. Get new decorations, a new menorah, a new turkey platter, or change the times of events. It may just be for this year, but do what feels the most comfortable now.

- continued

7. Create new traditions

Perhaps you have thought about starting something new for some time. This might be a good year to start that new tradition. Again, discuss it with the rest of the family and see if there are some ideas.

8. Consider some type of memorial or remembrance to your loved one.

Make a donation in your loved one's name. Hang a Christmas stocking to hold notes written by family. Make a toast or light a candle. Have a place setting for the person with a beautiful rose on the plate. Buy a gift for your loved one and give it to someone who otherwise would not be getting a gift.

9. Don't try retail therapy.

Overindulging others with gifts will not take the hurt away and will just leave you with debt. This is the perfect time to give yourself the gift of simplicity and the joy that comes with it. On the other hand, if there are gifts you want to buy, but just find the mall overwhelming, on-line or catalog shopping may be a more comfortable alternative.

10. Don't isolate yourself.

Accept a few invitations - perhaps those from close family or friends. Choose the ones that sound most appealing at the time, but tell the hostess you may have to cancel or leave early. Do not feel obligated to stay - you do not need to add the burden of "hanging in there" to your grief. If you do shed a few tears or break down in grief, don't give yourself a hard time about it. It actually might provide others the freedom to express their grief.

11. Share your favorite stories.

Instead of trying to push back memories of the person you are grieving this holiday, ask friends and family members to share recollections of the person with photographs, stories, and mementos. Too often people with the best intentions will not talk about the loved one in front of you, thinking that it will cause you extra pain. You can set the tone for how much and when you want to talk.

12. Prepare yourself for January.

Sometimes the aftermath of the holidays can bring more sadness than the holidays themselves. Continue the self-care and planning and acknowledgement of your grief into the new year.

Holidays are difficult when you are grieving, but much extra stress can be relieved by following some simple plans, such as those suggested above. The National Funeral Directors Association suggests an affirmation such as, "In spite of my loss, I will try to enjoy this season." And remember that there is always hope that the holidays will not be as difficult in the future, as they are this year.



FOR THE TOOLBOX

[One of the first things I learned from Bereavement Coordinator JeanAnn O'Brien was this great tool. I have used it countless times when working with hospice families. All team members have the mission of pain relief and here is one non-pharmacological way to ease pain.- Carol Kummet, Bereavement Coordinator]

REFRAMING

Here is a reframing tool that I have found very helpful in working with the bereaved.

Often bereaved family members express feeling guilty about something that happened while their loved one was ill - "I should have visited more often" ... "I could have been more patient" ... "I should have said 'I love you,'" etc. Whenever someone mentions feeling guilty, I ask them to talk about it briefly in detail. Then I ask them to consider the following:

Guilt is the appropriate response for when you have committed a sin or a crime. Did you commit a sin or a crime?

When they respond "no," I suggest that what they are feeling might actually be regret; wishing that things had been different. I go on to explain that neither regret nor guilt are particularly pleasant emotions to feel, but regret does not take a toll on your spirit like guilt does. I then further bolster them with the age-old wisdom that **we do the best we can with what we know at the time.**

There is plenty of pain in grief without the burden of feeling guilty. This simple reframing from guilt to regret often provides some relief.



FAMILY SURVEYS

"Hospice allowed my husband to live his last week in a loving and caring facility. I will always be grateful to each and every one who cared for him. [He] wanted to be at hospice because he knew how they cared for patients."

"Everybody at hospice was wonderful, caring and very professional. [The nurse] in charge the night of my mom's death seemed to create a peacefulness within the room. Hospice is very fortunate to have her."

"All of the ladies who cared for my husband treated him like family. They were there when we needed them, left us alone when appropriate. Love and thanks to all."



OLUNTEER CORNER

By Frank Genovese
Evergreen Hospice Field Volunteer

As a new volunteer, I would like to share my thanks and thoughts for the three days of training we participate in to become a volunteer. Those three days of training were the finest, most insightful teachings about how to interact with people at any time, let alone with patients who are at the most crucial point of their life's journey. I have attended many different self help, leadership and management development classes in my life, but none compares to what I learned from the loving, caring, compassionate, beautiful team of human beings at Evergreen Hospice Core Training.

The first key lesson that provided me with a great start with my first patient, was that of having compassionate presence for the patient you are asked to serve. The idea is to eliminate our prejudices and perspectives so we can be there for whatever the patient needs. As a result, we're in the present moment with the patient, we create space for the patient, and we're ready to serve their needs completely. My thanks for that most unique life lesson. And it is truly a gift to have the lesson followed by firsthand experience.

The second, equally valuable lesson, that will also serve me all my life, is the idea of conducting a Life Review. A few weeks before coming to hospice, I had the privilege of attending a leadership development seminar with Deepak Chopra, who identified one of the four keys to leadership as Story Telling. Perhaps I will share a great story of a Life Review I did with my first patient at

another time, but suffice to say that people love to tell their stories to those who will listen. The book we are given to help us accomplish this with our patients ("Legacy - Reflections along the Way") is such a great tool, and I heartily recommend to all of you that you buy the book from the hospice center and complete it for yourself. Ultimately, it is an aid to understanding the meaning of our story; the essence of our journey through life. If you can come to know and understand your own story, you can improve your understanding of the stories of others. Sharing your story with family and friends can also lead to beautiful stories coming from them as well.

These two lessons, as I have used them, have always produced sacred moments.

This work can teach us so much about all life, and I saw that in the panels and discussions and presentations during the training. I felt so excited to be a part of this team and to become a contributing member. I felt awe as I was interviewed for this role and was accepted. I have been given the greatest gift, and I look forward to opening it again and again. I am here in the name of love and service. I am here to understand more about life, all life including mine, as I participate and grow into the life I have been given.

And of course, one last lesson: I will never approach washing my hands in the same way as long as I live!

Blessings to all of you who serve; thanks to all of you who participate here at Evergreen Hospice - for being willing to learn, practice and share your story.

Death ... is the name given to the change which comes when one leaves the coarse atmosphere of the earth and enters the finer one of light ... something like the sun setting in one place and rising in another.

~Kirpal Singh

A Note About Submissions

We welcome and greatly appreciate any submissions (recipes, book reviews, stories etc.) and comments you care to make. You have my promise that I will always acknowledge receipt of anything anyone sends me.

Please send your submissions and comments to me at: l_loba@hotmail.com. Or, you can leave a typed version in Melissa's folder in Reception or call 425.899.1040 and leave a message.

Thank you! – Linda Loba, Editor



UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

FREE SEASONAL FLU SHOTS AT NOVEMBER SUPPORT MEETING

Celia Harper, RN, the Hospice Infection Control nurse, will be available at the volunteer support meeting on Thursday, November 19th to give free seasonal flu vaccinations to volunteers. Celia will be available from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. so you can have your flu shot just prior to the start of the support meeting. We will let you know when the H1N1 vaccine will be available for volunteers. Let's stay healthy this winter! For additional times and places, contact Celia at: ceharper@evergreenhealthcare.org

FLU INFORMATION

For more information and links concerning the flu, please see the Evergreen Healthcare website at: http://www.evergreenhealthcare.org/top_nav/health/swine_flu.htm

LIGHT UP A LIFE CEREMONY NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

This beautiful event is held for the families of those who have died in our care, especially those who have died in the past two years. Volunteers and staff are needed to be ushers and servers for this event. If you would like more information, or would like to help out with this evening, please call Janlee Lewis at 425.899.1076.

EVERGREEN THRESHOLD CHOIR LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS

Being present as the person crosses the threshold from this world to whatever is next is not for everyone, so if you cannot imagine yourself doing that, you can still be a part of the Threshold Choir. We do lots of singing in the hallway of the hospice center so the music drifts down both wings (staff enjoys it, too). We put lots of good energy into the building, and in so doing, we heal ourselves, also. The world is spinning awfully fast some days and sitting and singing quiet meditative songs is a great way to slow down and be present to life. Come by and see what the music is about - let us sing to you. (Females only, sorry gents) We meet every Thursday in the Reflection Room. For more information, contact Sue Bartels at 206.361.3742

BE ON YOUR TOES: ORDER NUTCRACKER TICKETS EARLY

Discounted tickets to Pacific Northwest Ballet's The Nutcracker can be ordered now. This holiday classic is perfect for children and the entire family. When you go to the link below, ignore the minimum ticket requirement. That has been waived for Evergreen employees and volunteers.

To order, go to: https://etm.patrontechnology.com/o/PNB/p/run_module.php?__module__=1104&__tmp_action__

ADOPT A SENIOR CITIZEN DOG

Visit www.olddoghaven.org to see the senior dogs who are in need of homes or sponsorship. This organization helps dogs to live their last years with people rather than in shelters. Many of the pets are turned over to Old Dog Haven when their owners become too ill to care for them.

HEAD OF USO THANKS EVERGREEN HOSPICE

Hospice volunteer Jon Randolph met Sloan D. Gibson, President and CEO of the USO. Mr. Gibson's father died in the care of Evergreen Hospice and he asked Jon to pass on his deepest thanks for the wonderful care given to his father.

LAP BLANKETS NEEDED

With the cold weather, our patients are in need of lap blankets. If you knit, crochet, sew, or can tie a knot, please consider making some lap blankets to donate to Evergreen Hospice. For more information contact Criss East at cmeast@evergreenhealthcare.org

(For fleece to make blankets, contact Janlee for information and pickup.)

AND...FABRIC DONATIONS WELCOME

We can always use donations of new fleece fabric to give to our crafters to sew into hats, mittens, and lap blankets. If you are not a seamstress but would like to contribute, this is a good way to do it. You can drop off donations at the hospice center. Please include your name and address so we may thank you properly!

MOVIE TICKET DISCOUNT FOR EVERGREEN STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

Movie discount tickets are available in Human Resources for \$7.50 each, and are good for the following theaters: AMC Lowes, Cineplex Odeon & Magic Johnson. Volunteers need to wear their badge when they pick up tickets. Call extension 2511 for more information. These make great holiday gifts!

PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY WHEN CALLING FAMILIES FROM HOME

Using our home phone risks our own privacy. If you do not have Call Blocking as the default on your home phone, you can dial *67 + number you are dialing. This will block your number from showing up on patients/families' caller ID for that specific call.

REMINDER: IN-SERVICES AVAILABLE ON VIDEO AT HOSPICE

Making End of Life Decisions presented by Cynthia Tomik, MSW and Janet Kuller, MSW

Pain and Symptom Management: Signs and Symptoms of Approaching Death presented by Patty Wiltz, RN

Spirituality in End of Life Care presented by Carol Kummert, MSW

Working with Alzheimer's Patients and in Skilled Nursing Facilities presented by Sue Bartels, MSW

Understanding and Responding to Requests for a Hastened Death, presented by Helene Starks (NEW)

These are available for viewing at hospice at any time; just call Janlee to reserve viewing space.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



ANNUAL SEASONS OF HOPE LUNCHEON

Date: Thursday, Nov. 12

Location: Lynnwood Convention Center

Evergreen Healthcare is honored to present the First Annual Seasons of Hope Luncheon, benefiting Evergreen's Hospice and Palliative Care Programs. Join us in supporting this important luncheon, scheduled for Thursday, November 12, 2009 at the Lynnwood Convention Center, by becoming a Table Captain. The Seasons of Hope Luncheon is a great way to introduce and engage family, friends, colleagues and others to Evergreen and the many programs that Hospice and Palliative Care have to offer.

We invite you to help us meet our goal by filling a table of ten. Our goal is to fill the Lynnwood Convention Center with 500 guests who are willing to support Hospice and Palliative Care services at Evergreen by making a financial contribution at the luncheon.

Table Captains can participate in one of two ways: purchasing a table of ten and filling it with your guests or serving as the table host by purchasing your own individual ticket and inviting nine of your guests to join you by purchasing their own seats at your table. We promise to make it easy and rewarding for you and your guests.

For more information on supporting the Seasons of Hope Luncheon by becoming a Table Captain, or for additional information on registration, Tribute Memorials or underwriting opportunities, please contact the Evergreen Healthcare Foundation Office at 425.899.1900 or caelliott@evergreenhealthcare.org.

We plan to have a table of hospice volunteers so if you are interested in attending please contact Sheri or Criss.

JEANANN'S THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

Healing is in our rage. It is in our confusion, our guilt, our remorse, our loneliness...in these things, not beyond them or outside of them. Acknowledging them will make them count toward change. Experiencing these feelings will mysteriously reveal healing's presence, and the new softer energies that will direct the days to come.

~Molly Fumia

LIGHT UP A LIFE MEMORIAL CEREMONY

Date: Wednesday, December 2

Time: 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Evergreen Hospital Galleria

All volunteers and staff are invited to attend the annual Light Up A Life memorial ceremony. This beautiful event is held for the families of those who have died in our care, especially those who have died in the past two years. The ceremony which begins at 7:00 p.m., includes readings and musical offerings from staff and volunteers. At 7:30 p.m. guests are invited to hang tags with their loved ones' names on the Tree of Remembrance. Light refreshments including warm cider will be served at a reception after the tree lighting.

If you would like more information or would like to help out with this evening, please call Janlee Lewis at 425.899.1076.

HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE VOLUNTEER SUPPORT MEETING

Date: Thursday, November 19

Time: 7:00 -9:00 p.m.

Location: Hospice Center Conference Room, Kirkland

Purpose: To continue to grow as a community of compassionate volunteers

Hospice volunteer Rob Lo recently attended a lengthy silent meditation retreat. He will share his experience and we will discuss the similarities between a silent retreat and a person at end of life who, due to illness, is unable to speak. In both situations the person is alone with his or her thoughts.

NEEDLEWORK GROUP

Date: Tuesday, November 10 (this month only)

Time: 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Location: Hospice Center front room

The Needlework Group is starting up again, and we hope you'll join us. Bring anything you're working on, or just bring yourself and spend some time chatting with your fellow volunteers. (And staff are always welcome, too!)

CRAFTING PARTY

Date: Saturday, November 21

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Location: Plaza Building kitchen area, 11800 NE 128th Street, Suite 200, Kirkland

We will be making beaded nametag lanyards and/or fleece hearts. We'll meet in the kitchen area of the Plaza building (corner of Totem Lake Blvd and 128th Street). The cost is \$10.00 per person. We will provide supplies, but if you have special beads you would like to use, feel free to bring them.

REIKI CIRCLE –THIRD FRIDAY *AND* FIRST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH

Time: 7-9 p.m. Fridays and 8:30-10:30 a.m. Saturdays

Location: Hospice Reflection Room

A Reiki Circle is a time for Reiki practitioners to get together and share stories and support one another. We also exchange treatments. We would like to extend an invitation to any staff or volunteers who may want to get more information about or experience Reiki. These circles are being led by Compassionate Touch volunteer Narmin Halani and Hospice RN Therese Thomas.

END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

Date: Saturday, December 5

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Location: Hospice Center Conference Room

Time: This party will replace the December inservice/support meeting.

CLASS AT THE CENTER FOR LIVING AND DYING:

**Spiritual, Religious and Cultural Care
at the End of Life**

Join us for a workshop with a panel of experts from various religions. We will explore ways to serve patients who have diverse cultural and religious traditions.

Saturday, November 14, 2009

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Location: Bothell

Cost: \$125.00 per class (discount for hospice volunteers - \$80 per class.)

Log onto www.centerforlivinganddying.org to register

IDT TIMES AND LOCATIONS:

South Team. **New Location**

Location: 2600 S.W. Holden St.,
Seattle 98106
Day: Friday
Time: 8:30-10 a.m.

North Team

Location: Edmonds office
21616 76th Ave. W, Edmonds 98026
Day: Tuesday
Time: 8:30-10:30 a.m.

Central Team

Location: Evergreen Plaza
11800 NE 128th St.
Kirkland 98034
Day: Thursday
Time: 8:30-10 a.m.

Inpatient

Location: Kirkland
12822 124th Lane NE, Kirkland 98034
Day: Tuesday
Time: 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
[Note: This meeting is especially helpful to inpatient volunteers, whose input regarding patients on the wings is very welcome.]

If you have questions please feel free to contact Melissa, Criss, or Sheri. Thank you.

– Evergreen Hospice Volunteer Department

Poetry Corner

Praying

It doesn't have to be
the blue iris, it could be
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few
small stones; just
pay attention, then patch
a few words together and don't try
to make them elaborate, this isn't
a contest but the doorway
into thanks, and a silence in which
another voice may speak.

~ Mary Oliver ~

(Thirst)

HAPPY NOVEMBER BIRTHDAY

Robert Lo, Compassionate Touch, 11/3
Sally Brennan, Field, 11/10
Stephen Dapogny, Field, 11/10
Nancy Miller, Field, 11/17
Phyllis Charles, Reception, 11/19
Christine Hughes, Reception, 11/25
Shino Posey, Inpatient & Field, 11/26
Vicki Gombos, 11/27
Judy Shor, Reception, 11/29



HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAY

Louise Dippenaar, Field, 12/3
Dianne Dunn, Field, 12/10
Irene Robertson, Field, 12/14
Susan Jacobson, Field & Compassionate Touch, 12/16
Glenda Guinn-Gilles, Field, 12/22
Dori Rachel, Compassionate Touch, Inpatient, 12/23
Carrie Sjaarde, Compassionate Touch, 12/24
Patricia Johnson, Reception, 12/30
Jane Quirk, Inpatient, 12/30

HELPFUL HOSPICE CONTACTS

Melissa Lubatti
Inpatient Volunteer Coordinator
Animal Assisted Therapy Volunteer Coordinator
MRLubatti@evergreenhealthcare.org
425.899.1028

Criss East
Field Volunteer Coordinator - North & South teams
CMEast@evergreenhealthcare.org
425.778.2814

Sheri Standley
Palliative Care Volunteer Coordinator
Field Volunteer Coordinator – Central team
SJStandley@evergreenhealthcare.org
425.899.3290

Janlee Lewis
Office Assistant –
Bereavement & Volunteer Depts.
JNLewis@evergreenhealthcare.org
425.899.1076

Celia Harper
Hospice Infection Control Nurse
206.730.6288

Hospice Main Telephone Line
M-F, 8a.m. - 5 p.m.
425.899.1040 or 425.899.1070
**Note: Both numbers will be answered 24 hours/day
and 7 days/week**

Hospice Toll Free Number
1-800-442-4546

Hospice Fax
425.899.1099

Hospice After Hours
425.899.1070

Hospice Bereavement
425.899.1040

HELPFUL HOSPICE LINKS

Evergreen Hospice Volunteer Information
and Application Forms
[www.evergreenhealthcare.org/services/hospice/
hospicevols/default.htm](http://www.evergreenhealthcare.org/services/hospice/hospicevols/default.htm)

National Hospice Foundation
www.hospiceinfo.org

National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
www.nhpco.org

Hospice Foundation of America
www.hospicefoundation.org

Hospice Web
www.hospiceweb.com

Delta Society (Dog therapy training and certification
program.)
www.deltasociety.org

Four Seasons Oasis Bookstore and Gallery
(Very extensive collection of books on bereavement;
especially miscarriage)
www.fourseasonsoasis.com

Free Workbook on Advance Care Planning
(A workbook called "Your Life, Your Choices" to help
people do advance care planning.)
[http://www.hsrdr.research.va.gov/publications/internal/
ylyc.pdf](http://www.hsrdr.research.va.gov/publications/internal/ylyc.pdf)

The Center for Living and Dying
www.centerforlivinganddying.org

The Sacred Art of Living Center
www.sacredartofliving.org