

Comfort for the Grieving Heart

Provided by St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program

June 2016

The Little Things

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.

Of all the imaginable things he most misses about her, the thing he really wishes he could do again is hold her hand in his. She had a way of folding her index finger into his palm, hiding it inside. And he always felt that nothing in the world was impossible when she did that. Of all the things he could miss, that's what he misses the most.

A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman

Ove is a man who is grieving. His world has become lonely and isolated since the passing of his wife, and in an attempt to feel connected, he tries to recall the small things that he misses most about his wife, and the most important detail of the way she held his hand is imprinted on his mind. This small memory keeps Ove connected. It keeps him from forgetting.

As we move through grief, the fear of forgetting is ever present in our mind...the fear that we will forget their voice, forget their smile, forget their words, forget the details of a shared life. The idea that our loved one will be forgotten is based on fear; the idea that "out of sight, out of mind" somehow translates to us, or our friends and family, no longer thinking of our loved one and, in essence, forgetting. To have loved ones who have passed, and not think of them does not mean they didn't exist, or that they had any less impact on our lives. Nor does it mean we love them any less. What it may represent is that life goes on, and current matters occupy space in our minds. Our grief now coexists with our life; and forgetting, although a fear, is rarely an option for anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one.

The author of the website Refuge in Grief writes "memory has a will of its own. Little things, innocuous things, bring parts of our life rushing back. So many people are afraid that time will take away their memories, the last pieces of love they've stored away. We think we've forgotten so much, but our minds are far better historians than we can imagine. We have memories stitched so deeply into our beings, it takes very little to bring them out." So, is your fear of forgetting necessary? Our minds have ways of channeling our memories and helping us tap into the deep reserve that holds our love and relationship with those we have lost. It may take prompting, nurturing and a little encouragement, and it does not mean that you love any less if remembering takes work, but the little things are tucked away, safe. And far, far away from being forgotten.

-Mindy

Grief and Loss Support Group

Our next round of our 6 week Grief and Loss Support Group is scheduled for August 2016. 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 August 17, 2016 through September 21, 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:** call: Suzann.Ditzel@sluhn.org or



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 and Hospice House**, who died between **March 1, 2016 and June 30, 2016** the Service of Remembrance will be held on **Sunday, August 14 at 3 pm** at Church of the Assumption, 4101 Old Bethlehem Pike, Bethlehem, PA 18015, (610) 867-7424. Please RSVP to Anne Huey at (484)526-2835 or Anne.Huey@sluhn.org

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 Medical Office Building, Conference Room Side A, 1700 St. Luke's Blvd. The next group will be **Monday, June 6 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, June 1, 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, June 3,**



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, July 20, 2016 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm The Pricilla 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:** Suzann.Ditzel@sluhn.org or 484-526-2514.

Featured Website:

www.thedinnerparty.org

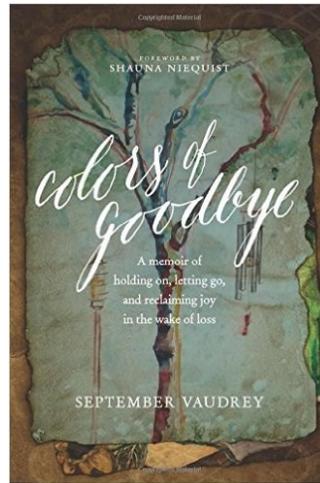
The mission of this organization is to transform life after loss from an isolating experience into one marked by community support, candid conversation, and forward movement. They accomplish this through beautiful, unstructured dinner parties hosted by friends for friends, and “invite those who’ve experienced significant loss - whether a parent, partner, sibling, or friend - to dive into long-tabooed territory, sharing a defining part of ourselves that rarely sees the light of day.” Their focus is on the 20 to 30 year age group and is intended to help support young people who’ve experienced significant loss, by offering a supportive environment in which their shared experiences offer a springboard toward living better, bolder, and more connected lives. The organization also places importance on creating spaces and tools for those who have yet to experience the death of a loved one, so they can learn to be better friends or partners to those who have. This is a new and growing organization, and while the closest chapter of dinner parties is in the Philadelphia area, they are crowd-funding to increase awareness and start more chapters. They write, “*The end goal? We foresee a day in which Dinner Parties are as pervasive as AA meetings, and as culturally acceptable and readily accessible as yoga and meditation classes: a day in which young people who have experienced loss are recognized not as objects of pity, but as better listeners and better leaders, characterized by profound empathy, resilience, and agency.*”



“The grief of losing my father has come in waves over the years, as it does with most people. His love and devotion as a father provided my closest, most intimate relationship. Dad, and our time together, is in my bones. While reflecting on him, the memories themselves seem to boil down into certain ‘essences’ of Dad.”

Jennifer Grant

Featured Reading:



“Colors of Goodbye: A Memoir of Holding On, Letting Go, and Reclaiming Joy in the Wake of Loss”,
September Vaudrey

In this newly published book, the author explores the personal and deep pain associated with the death of a child. Combining literary narrative and raw reflection, the author walks through one of life’s most difficult losses and explores how she slowly becomes opened to the ways she is carried through her loss. It’s a story of love and tragedy in tandem; a deeply personal memoir from a life forever changed by one empty place. And at its core, *Colors of Goodbye* calls to the deepest part of our spirits to know that that life can be beautiful still, even after the loss of a loved one has shaken us to our core.

Available at www.amazon.com

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 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.

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, 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.

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.

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.

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.