



# Comfort for the Grieving Heart

Provided by St. Luke's Hospice Bereavement Program

PLEASE  
HANDLE WITH CARE  
**FRAGILE**

November 2016

**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

Grief can make us fragile. Physically we feel different, emotionally we are more vulnerable and cognitively, well cognitively sometimes we have no idea whether we are coming or going. Grief touches every fiber of our being and each movement we make can feel as though we are walking on thin ice. Will today be the day that we break? Or will we dodge the crack in the ice for yet another day?

Being in tune with the fragility of our grief is an important part of our healing. When we experience the loss of a loved one, our instinct is often to turn from the pain and avoid it. After all, who likes feeling helpless? Who likes feeling sad? Who likes feeling angry...guilty...numb? In our grief, it is hard to imagine that anything good can come from it; it's impossible to imagine feeling any better, let alone trusting that there might be some wisdom from which to gain from our new unwanted friend, grief. But this is exactly what grief asks us to do...it asks us to open up to the pain and be vulnerable, for in order to reconstruct our lives and feel whole again, we must experience the brittleness of being broken.

So how do we experience the vulnerability of grief in a way that comes from a place of courage? Find your voice and dictate what you need; whether you need someone to listen to you vent or if you need someone to call at 2:00 a.m., ask. Allow others to be close to you – you may not need or want anything from anyone at the moment, but sometimes just having someone present is healing and transformative. Share your story, share your photos, share your life. Talk about your loved one's importance to you, for in doing so, you breathe new life into your loss. Accept offers for help – whether they are tasks around the house, running errands, or writing thank you cards - be open to offers for tangible help when they are made, as it takes some of the weight off of the cracked ice. Consider getting out of the house. Accept invitations to socialize and take baby steps towards interacting with others. Know your limitations and have a Plan A, and also a Plan B and a Plan C, in the event you become overwhelmed and feel that you cannot see the commitment through. Verbalize your plans to your friends ahead of time so they can support your need to leave or take a break without having to converse about it while you are in the moment.

Finally, treat yourself delicately. Your whole self. Head, heart, soul...be patient and gracious to your healing and allow each part of yourself the time and love it needs and deserves. The ice will get thicker and the risks of it breaking will lessen.

*-Mindy*

## Grief and Loss Support Group

Our next round of our 6 week Grief and Loss Support Group is scheduled for November 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 November 2, 2016 through December 14, 2016 from 4:00 to 6:00 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: (484) 526-2514 or email [Suzann.Ditzel@sluhn.org](mailto:Suzann.Ditzel@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, November 17, 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:** [Mindy.Watson@sluhn.org](mailto:Mindy.Watson@sluhn.org) or 484-526-2314.

## 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 group directed 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 Pricilla 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.

**“People go through challenging moments of losing people and of having their life threatened from illness and real grief. But they get through it. And that's the testament to the human spirit. We are fragile, but we are also divine.”**

**Sheryl Crow**

### Grief & The Holidays Workshop

Whether it is a birthday, anniversary or holiday, special days on our calendar keep memories alive that are near and dear to us. Yet, not everyone anticipates holidays and special occasions with joy and, particularly for those of us who have lost a loved one, the holidays can be a time of sadness, pain or anger. The waves of grief can overwhelm us and the stress of the holiday season can seem daunting. There is no right or wrong way to handle the holidays, but planning ahead and understanding your needs and limits on these special days can help.

Please join us for a 2 hour workshop on **Monday, November 7, 2016 from 6-8 pm** to explore strategies to help cope during the holidays, and beyond. We will meet at the Priscilla Payne Hurd Education Center on the St. Luke's Bethlehem Campus (801 Ostrum Street, Bethlehem). For more information and to register, contact Mindy at (484) 526-2314 or email [Mindy.Watson@sluhn.org](mailto:Mindy.Watson@sluhn.org).



**Life is fragile. Hold it carefully.  
People are fragile. Handle them gently.  
You are fragile. Take it easy.**

**John Pavlovitz**

### 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 **July 1, 2016 and October 30, 2016** the Service of Remembrance will be held on **Sunday, December 4, 2016 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](mailto:Anne.Huey@sluhn.org)

### 4th Annual Luminaria Ceremony



We will be having our annual Luminaria Event on **Saturday, November 12, 2016** (Rain date November 13, 2016) at St. Luke's Anderson Campus, 1872 St. Luke's Boulevard, Easton, PA 18045 from 4:00 - 6:00 pm. Please join us for this time of reflection and honor of those we have lost. For more information, please call St. Luke's Infolink at 1-866-785-8537.

## Additional Places to Find Support and Share Your Story

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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](mailto: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](http://www.thecompassionatefriends.org)

**TCF of Lehigh Valley** meets at Sacred Heart Hospital, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 421 Chew Street in Allentown. The group meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday each month from 7:30 – 9pm. For more information, call 215-536-0173.

**TCF of Easton** meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](http://www.dhospice.com) or call 215-345-2838.