

**SPRING: April-May-June 2021**



As difficult as it is to acknowledge at times, the truth is that the challenges in life often give us unexpected gifts and opportunity for growth. To say that this past year has been a challenge for most of us would be a monumental understatement.

But as the days become longer and warmer, I do believe that there is a sense of hope brewing. As I spend more time outdoors in the fresh air and sunshine, observing Mother Nature at her best, I feel a new strength and I hope that you do too.

My first response to this new found strength is gratitude. Gratitude and optimism. I feel that even though there is most likely still a long road ahead that most of us are individually and collectively recovering on some level and finding a glimmer of "normalcy."

There is no question that the double whammy effect on folks by not being able to say their proper good-byes due to facility visiting restrictions, or not gathering for a celebration in their loved one's honor for support and closure due to COVID-19 has amplified the pain associated with their loss. Hence, the double whammy, no proper closure, isolation and very little support.

And yet miraculously in the midst of all the chaos, pain and sadness there have been some very positive and surprising benefits that have developed. I believe many people have actually become closer as the reality of forced separation has created a space for deeper conversations and sharing. For many this past year has been a time of self-evaluation, reflection and recalibrating priorities to create a better living environment. We have found creative ways to celebrate, communicate and bring community back into our lives. It is truly a testament to the strength and flexibility of the human spirit! In general, people are reaching out to each other now more for support and comfort. Things are not taken for granted as easily and people want to help each other as they are able. We are programmed to survive and somehow, we manage to do just that!

So... along the line of positive actions, what have you observed? I encourage you to start a gratitude list and add to it every day. Focus on the good and the good will be amplified. It is the Law. The Law of Attraction!

My hope for you is that your faith and resilience grow and blossom during this difficult time. Although we are unable to meet in groups yet there is support available as you continue your bereavement path via Zoom, FaceTime and individual telephone support. Please consider joining me for one or all the new ways that we are virtually connecting. Peace to you. Dr. Karen



## Feeling a Little Droopy? With Karen Turek, D.D., Ph.D.

Have you been dealing with low energy? It seems to be a common theme during these difficult times when many are overwhelmed by loss and stressful demands. If you are feeling this way it may help to know that you are not alone. Much of the world is experiencing stress and worry of the unknown. These are unsettling times to say the least! Although we cannot change much of what is happening in the world, we can change our approach to how we deal with our own stressors. Here are a few simple things that we can incorporate into our daily rituals that will bring relief during these difficult times:

**Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate!** One of the most common contributors to low energy is dehydration. Make sure you follow the golden rule of thumb in calculating your daily water intake needs: body weight divided by two (2) equals the amount of water needed to keep everything flowing efficiently, i.e.-if you weigh 150 pounds you should be drinking 75 ounces of water per day. *Water*, not coffee, tea or other drinks that are made with water. Additionally, adding electrolytes is very important. Add the juice of a lemon to provide the extra benefit of stepping up the flavor and nurturing your cells. It's a win-win!

**Exercise:** Try ten (10) minutes of chair yoga every day to wake up those sleepy minds and bodies! Join us on April 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm, via Zoom, for our monthly Bereavement Support Workshop featuring "Simple Chair Yoga for the Mind and Body."

**Diet:** Spring is in the air and it is a good time to lighten up those heavier winter recipes. Consider adding more fresh vegetables and fruits into your diet. Green leafy vegetables like kale, arugula, spinach and romaine lettuce are packed full of amazing nutrients that will rev up your metabolism. We will be learning more about the benefits of "Eating Clean" on May 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm, via Zoom in our monthly Bereavement Support Workshop. Recipes and ideas will be shared. If you have any great, healthy and delicious recipes please share them as well!

**Connect with Positive People:** Turn off the news and pick up an uplifting book! Check out our group book studies (information is provided in this Newsletter) and connect with others who are on their path of healing after the loss of a loved one.

**Create a Comfortable Nest:** A cluttered environment is a breeding ground for low energy. Your home is your sanctuary. Fill it with light, relaxing music, fresh flowers and love. If you respect it, it will give you great joy and comfort! Join us on June 29<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm, via Zoom, to explore the "Magic Vase" and how one simple act can recalibrate our environment and ultimately our lives.

Finally, be good to yourself and others! Remember, this is an ever-changing world and we have the ability to make it beautiful. The little changes we make will uplift our low energy and clear a way for a healthier and happier life. You have the power! Hope to see you soon.

Contact Dr. Karen to get on the Zoom email invite list for Groups, Book Studies and Workshops at [karen@aplushospicecare.com](mailto:karen@aplushospicecare.com).





## Bereavement Support Groups

A Plus Hospice Care is here to support you through the loss of your loved one. Our Bereavement Program offers a variety of options tailored to give you the opportunity to choose the level and amount of bereavement care that is best for you during this time of social distancing. We provide individual counseling sessions for family members whose loved ones have been on our service via telephone or FaceTime as well as Bereavement Group and Book Study via Zoom.

**To best stay connected at this time we are offering:**

**Bereavement Support Group via “Zoom”:** On the **First Tuesday** of the month we will provide an open forum support group to share our feelings as we move through the grieving process. **2:30-3:30 pm.**

**April 6th**

**May 4th**

**June 1st**

### **Book Study Group via “Zoom”:**

Our **April and May** book is: “Sleeping, Dreaming and Dying” by The Dalai Lama

**April 14th and 28th at 1:00-2:00 pm** and **May 12th and 26th at 1:00-2:00 pm**

Our **June** book is: “Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom” by John O’Donohue

**June 7th at 1:00-2:00 pm** and **June 24th at 1:00-2:00 pm**

### **Bereavement Support Workshops via “Zoom”**

**April 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm** “Simple Chair Yoga for the Mind and Body.”

**May 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm** “Eating Clean”

**June 29<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm** Exploring the “Magic Vase”

**Contact Dr. Karen to get on the Zoom email invite list for Groups, Book Studies and Workshops at [karen@aplushospicecare.com](mailto:karen@aplushospicecare.com).**

## **The Path of Acceptance. Does It Ever Get Any Easier?**



I am often asked by the bereaved, “does it ever get any easier?” Well, what I have learned is that “easier” is very much relevant to one’s acceptance of loss and the ability to release their control over certain things in life. “Easier” vs. “harder” implies that you can measure where you are physically, behaviorally, emotionally and socially at any given point in time during the grieving process. Most everyone has good days and bad days. The loss of a loved one is a shock to your system no matter what the circumstances of the death are. The thing about life after loss is that no matter what, someone is missing. Acceptance of your current situation is a big step in healing your heart after loss. Leaning into the pain and taking positive steps towards creating a new “normal” will soften the pain and your life will grow in different directions that may surprise you. Obviously, not the life that you had imagined or hoped for but with acceptance a life that is meaningful. So, does it ever get easier? Grief is a rocky road but the sharp edges do soften on a road well-traveled which can be interpreted as “easier.” Keep putting one foot in front of the other on your path of healing. After a while your feet will be less tender and perhaps not bleed as often making your path a little easier. **Karen Turek, D.D., Ph.D.**

# The Symptoms of Grief

The grieving process is a very personal journey and this uncharted territory can be confusing and very complicated. The following are **some** of the facets of grief that can be expected. Many times these symptoms can be overwhelming and generate a great deal of fear. Be gentle on yourself and seek support when needed.

## Physical

1. Disrupted sleeping patterns. Restlessness and/or extreme fatigue.
2. Tightness and/or pain in the chest, abdomen and throat. Headaches. Unable to breathe deeply.
3. Crying, deep sighing and a feeling of emptiness. A feeling of disconnectedness.
4. Appetite and weight change.

## Behavioral

1. Confusion, slowed responses, forgetfulness.
2. Sensing the loved one's presence in dreams and waking times.
3. Needing to tell the loved ones death story.

## Emotional

Abandonment • Anger • Anxiety • Apathy • Fear • Guilt • Irritability • Loneliness • Longing • Meaningless • Numbness • Relief • Sadness • Vulnerability

## Social

1. Lack of initiative and interest.
2. Withdrawal, avoiding friends and family and social interaction.
3. Deeply sensitive. Easily hurt by others words and actions.



**If you have any questions about the grieving process or are seeking bereavement support, please do not hesitate to contact me. Dr. Karen (775) 329-0900**



## How long does grief last?

The length of the grief process is different for everyone. There is no predictable schedule for grief. Although it can be quite painful at times, the grief process should not be rushed.

It is important to be patient with yourself as you experience your unique reactions to your loss. Generally, with time, support and solid grief work things really do get better.

However, it is normal for significant dates, holidays, or other reminders to trigger deep feelings related to your loss. Taking care of yourself, seeking support, and acknowledging your feelings during these times are ways that can help you cope. Remember grieving is a process and it takes as long as it takes. Trying to rush through can cause pain down the road. Take your time and heal well!

*"There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are messengers of overwhelming grief... and unspeakable love."*  
Washington Irving