



Silver, white
Winters that...

As we move into the heart of winter, when the weather is cold and sometimes dreary, it is important to remember the significance of self-care for the heart and soul. The loss of a loved one often brings about major life changes and many times our own well-being, and ultimately our health, are compromised as those changes unfold. Good self-care is essential for healing our bodies, minds and spirits during this critical time.

Making a list of “your favorite things to do” even if you don’t feel like doing them at this time. This is a positive way to affirm hope for the future as you begin the grieving process. It is essential to remind yourself that you are in a tender state and engaging in even seemingly simple activities like taking a warm bath, reconnecting with daily rituals, lite exercise, sitting in the sunshine, talking with a friend, reading an inspiring book, journaling or taking a short walk will benefit you on all levels. Be good to yourself! Gift yourself with something positive that will nurture you inside and out.

In this Newsletter you will find information about our Bereavement Support Group, Book Study and other opportunities to connect with others who are moving through the bereavement process as well as informative articles to support you on your path of healing.

Blessings and Peace at this difficult time. Dr. Karen



Melt into
Spring!



Dust Of Snow by Robert Frost

*The way a crow ...Shook down on me
The dust of snow...From a hemlock tree
Has given my heart...A change of mood
And saved some part ...Of a day I had rued*

For the Widower

The loss of a spouse is a life changing event and impacts every facet of everyday living for men and, of course, women as well. However, men express and experience grief differently than women and many times they are unable to come to terms with the fact that they couldn't fix what is unfixable. There are numerous factors that shape how a person grieves: culture, religion, and the relationship to the person they have lost.



Generally, men tend to grieve alone and share very little about what they are feeling. Many are taught, from an early age, that the expression of their emotions may be a sign of weakness, vulnerability and loss of control. It is not unusual for a man to become stoic and show very little outward emotion toward their loved one's death. There are three important facets to consider while processing the death of a loved one. They are broken down as follows:

Bereavement-The state of being deprived of a loved one by death.

Grieving-The complex emotional response to bereavement.

Mourning-Culturally patterned expectations about the expression of grief. This includes rituals such as celebration of life gatherings, funerals and memorials. Support groups and talking with a grief counselor can be valuable tools for working through the mourning process.

As outlined above, the outward expression of grief is called mourning. Most everyone will grieve when someone they love dies. However, healing after loss requires the process of mourning as well. Be gentle on yourself and consider the following suggestions to help restore balance to your life:

Accept the grief- Do not try to be "strong for others," take time to cry and acknowledge the pain.

Talk about it- Share your grief within the family; do not attempt to protect them by silence. Find a friend to talk to or join a support group.

Stay active but don't overdo- Engage in purposeful work that occupies the mind, but avoid frantic activity just for the sake of staying busy.

Practice good self-care- The loss of a loved one creates a great deal of stress. At the moment you may feel you don't care. That will change. Your life is valuable, care for it. Make an appointment with your MD for a wellness check.

Eat well- During this time of emotional and physical depletion your body needs good nourishment more than ever. If your appetite is poor, a vitamin supplement might be helpful.

Exercise- A short walk out in nature can do wonders for your mind, body and spirit. Feelings of mild depression can be lightened by the biochemical changes brought by exercise and may help you sleep better.

Take good care and may you find solace and peace on your path of healing.

Prayers for your journey. Dr. Karen



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 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.**

January 5th February 2nd March 2nd

Book Study Group via “Zoom”:

Our **January** book is: “The Five People You Meet in Heaven” by Mitch Albom

January 13th at 1:00-2:00 pm and January 27th at 1:00-2:00 pm

Our **February** book is: “Living Beautifully with Uncertainty and Change” by Pema Chodron

February 10th at 1:00-2:00 pm and February 24th at 1:00-2:00 pm

Our **March** book is: “To Begin Again: The Journey Toward Comfort, Strength, and Faith in Difficult Times” By Rabbi Naomi Levy

March 10th 1-2 pm March 24th 1-2 pm



January Zoom Bereavement Workshop

January 19th at 2pm

Vision Boards “Creating a Vision for the Future”

Vision boards are valuable and simple tools that assist in creating a platform for experiences we want to draw into our lives. Pictures, images and words, or positive affirmations, can help to formulate new patterns of thinking by strengthening our focus on how we wish our future to unfold as we move along the bereavement journey. Visualization often helps to stimulate emotion and...emotion is a major factor for activating creativity.

Bring out those old magazines that you’ve saved and start thumbing through to find pictures that represent, or symbolize, the experiences you wish to attract into your life. As you arrange them on our board watch the magic unfold. You may also want to include affirmations, inspirational words, quotations, and thoughts that support you in this time of healing. We cannot change the loss that we have experienced... but we can choose words and images that inspire us to find joy as we focus on our good and the future that lies ahead!

Please email or text so that we can add you to our Zoom Group List and send you a materials list. Hope you will join us! Dr. Karen - karen@aplushospicecare.com, (775) 351-7346



Lessons from the Sacred Art of Living:

The Four Dimensions of Spirituality

After putting yourself aside in service of your dying loved one, it is time to take care of you. Before you can start caring for yourself it is helpful to know where you're hurt. I know the first reaction may be "EVERYWHERE!!" So let's break it down a little.

Similarly, to the way a doctor evaluates a patient's symptoms to diagnose disease, you must focus your attention on what is hurting most. Examining and measuring the emotions connected to your experience is a way to diagnose the cause of your suffering. Through introspection, insight and understanding of your inner feelings, a sense of "self-truth" is discovered. Buddhist texts assert that when truth is discovered suffering can end. One effective "tool" for easing the suffering experienced during grief is what is known as *leaning into the pain*. What does it mean to lean in to pain? It means that we let ourselves feel what we need to feel in order to begin the healing process. No band aids, or temporarily covering up the wound, allowed! First it is necessary to understand what may be causing the pain. By using the four dimensions of spirituality as a guide you will begin to clarify and gauge your deepest feelings after loss.

The Four Dimensions of Spirituality are: Meaning, Forgiveness, Relatedness, and Hope.

Meaning refers to your reason for getting out of bed every morning.

Forgiveness deals with those experiences, feelings, grudges, etc. that you need to let go of.

Relatedness is defined by the sense of connection you have with the people and things that matter most to you.

Hope describes how you trust what the future holds.

Try taking just one of these at first, whichever aspect of your spirit is in most need of healing (feeling the most amount of pain), and go inside. Contemplate what this spiritual dimension means to you. How would you rate yourself on a scale of 1-5, from peaceful (1) to painful (5)? The point of this exercise is to bring your awareness to yourself.

Knowing the cause of your pain is the first step in the journey towards healing the pain. Journaling and talking with loved ones, or a professional, about your grief can be remarkably beneficial throughout the healing process. Join a grief support group or set up an appointment for one-on-one discussion.

Hope to hear from you soon. Dr. Karen (775) 351-7346.



Walking With Grief - Author Unknown

Do not hurry as you walk with grief; it does not help the journey.

Walk slowly, pausing often; do not hurry as you walk with grief.

Be not disturbed by memories that come unbidden.

Swiftly forgive; and let Christ speak for you unspoken words.

Unfinished conversation will be resolved in Him. Be not disturbed.

Be gentle with the one who walks with grief. If it is you, be gentle with yourself.

Swiftly forgive; walk slowly pausing often. Take time, be gentle as you walk with grief.

Come now live in us. Let us stay in You, since if we be all in You

we cannot be far from one another, though some may be in heaven, and some upon earth.