Dear Community Hospice Family

Community Hospice’s Bereavement program provides support groups, individual counseling and education to help guide you and your family, as you struggle with the grief process. All services are free of charge and open to all. We understand the healing power involved, potentially for you and for others, in self-expression and invite you to submit an article for consideration for future publication. Please feel free to contact anyone on the Bereavement Care Team to either submit your personal story or to address any questions or concerns. Please Note: Our weather policy is that if local schools are closed due to extreme weather, all activities will also be cancelled.

I Forgot – Author: Michelle Dallacheisa

It seems to me that my very first writing assignment has something to do with the topic of forgetfulness…. Only I can’t quite remember the actual topic title. Thus, it seems like the perfect assignment to start.

My mind has been all over the place lately. Really, since my husband was diagnosed with cancer and passed away last year. They call it “Widow’s Fog”. It has a name. My forgetfulness has a diagnosis, a legitimate reasoning for this fog I’ve been living with. Some days it really bothers me. Oh, I’ve been forgetful before, but nothing to this extent.

Before our lives changed by what I refer to as “the storm”, I had a pretty good handle on life. I knew the schedules, the groceries we needed, family member’s phone numbers, how to get from one place to the next and so forth. My mind was pretty well organized, neat, and everything was in its proper file. Files that could be opened in a second to recall the information that had just been requested. My system could handle an efficient amount of information as well as the latest updates. You could say that for my age I had the latest version of “mom-ware”.

For the past year and a half, that system was put to the test. It has failed me on more than a few occasions. First, it started off with an overload of information. The system was suddenly expected to handle information coming in on a conveyor belt that was running at warp speed! Most of the data made it into some kind of filing container, some of it getting misfiled and the rest, well, just left to hover in oblivion forever. Then, survival mode kicked in. I was working, running between work to the hospital to be with my husband, and managing the kids and household. When I couldn’t be at home, I had to plan and schedule help to fill in my absence. I was treading water at best. If it hadn’t been for the life vest of my family and friends, I surely would have drowned in the first 10 foot wave! Alas, the encircling sharks would devour all that I thought I had left in me when my husband passed away. The devastated shock set in. Simple decisions I used to be able to make now required the advice of the closest person to me. I could barely remember what I had done just 10 minutes ago. The mountain of uncertainty and disbelief that I was staring up at almost seemed impossible to navigate. At the bottom of this mountain, I soon became engulfed by a dense fog. I’d set out to go somewhere and miss the turn or get confused over where to go first. The days slipped by without any direction and sense of accomplishment. I’d even forget about events on the calendar, like my son’s basketball game. What had happened and why can’t I seem to make my way through this fog?

Little by little, the fog has lifted. Most days I function in a misty haze. My “mom-ware” system had taken a hit; hacked by a virus! Despite this condition, I’ve started to climb the mountain. To-do lists keep me anchored and my safety net is my faith. After all, it’s a journey, and I’m learning how to navigate this thing they call “widow fog”.

— Michelle Dallacheisa

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— Michelle Dallacheisa
Understand Instead – Author: Rachel Rupp

Judgement. Most people don't understand that along with all the other mess and pain that comes with being a widow is the very uninvited guest called judgement. People watch us. If we aren't crying enough, well, she must not be too upset about losing her husband. Crying too much? Well, she'll never make it on her own, poor thing. And dating after? Well, there had better be a suitable amount of time to mourn or you're obviously a horrible person. Still sad after too many years? Well, when are you going to get over it? Seem like nothing we widows do can make people happy. I actually had a friend on Facebook stop commenting on anything I posted after I started dating someone.

Like she disapproved of the amount of time I took to date. Truth is, unless you've lived it, you have no idea what it feels like. And I don't want to hear that you understand because you lost your grandma two years ago. Do I feel for your pain? Yes. But don't tell me you know how I feel. Your spouse is different. "And the two shall become one flesh.” Well guess what? When the other half of you is violently ripped away, you aren't just hurting. You're shredded. I once had a cat latch on to my hand in a moment of distress and fear. When I finally got her off, the skin on my thumb was shredded. The ER doctor told me she couldn't stitch it. You can't stitch shredded skin. You can't make the ends meet up the way they once were. It's the same concept when you lose a spouse. You can't stitch it back together. The ends don't meet up anymore. Like the lumpy scars on my thumb where the skin didn't quite meet up, the scars on my soul are rough, jagged and discolored.

“It's easy to judge. It's more difficult to understand. Understanding requires compassion, patience, and a willingness to believe that good hearts sometimes choose poor methods. Through judging, we separate. Through understanding, we grow.”

Family Fun Day/Camp Reunion

ALL families are invited to enjoy the park’s many activities! In addition, Community Hospice invites you to visit the pavilion for pizza, a memorial opportunity for the family and grief support literature. At 3pm a special slideshow presentation of our 2019 “You’re Never Alone” Summer Camp Experiences will be shown for all to enjoy. Whether you attend camp or want to see what it’s all about, this is always a special video. The first 50 people to RSVP will receive a discounted admission rate of $10.00 per person. We only ask that you arrive by 2:30pm to receive this special discount. Community Hospice is covering the remaining costs of admission. There is a maximum of 5 people per family to RSVP for the discounted rate. Youth who are registered in our “You’re Not Alone” program and have attended a youth event in the last year will have FREE admission to the park. Sunday, September 15 from 2pm-4pm Sluggers & Putters, Canal Fulton

Save the Date – More Details to Come

Community Remembrance Trees
The Community Remembrance Trees will be set up in various counties. Memorial ornaments will be available in November and December to hang on the tree.

Angel Tree-Lighting Memorial Service
Our staff and volunteers strive to create a supportive experience where we offer comforting words, music, an interactive candle-lighting ritual and memorial opportunities. Sunday, November 24 – 5:00pm Community Hospice Truman House Outdoor Pavilion, New Philadelphia

Family Christmas Party
Sunday, December 8 – 2:00pm Community Hospice Truman House

Counseling & Support
Community Hospice offers individual in-person counseling, support groups and telephone support. If there are other dates/times for groups that would be beneficial to you, we welcome all feedback and suggestions. If you would like information on our program services, please contact the Bereavement Care Team at 1-800-947-7284 or e-mail bereavement@myhospice.org.

Bereavement Mailings
Did you know that you can request the bereavement mailings to be stopped? If you find the mailings are unnecessary or you no longer need them, call us at 1-800-947-7284 or e-mail bereavement@myhospice.org to remove your name from the mailing list. Please note that you can access the newsletter and calendar by visiting our website at www.MyHospice.org.
Community Hospice Support Group Information
Please contact the Bereavement Care Team to RSVP for Support Groups.

Hope & Healing
These groups focus on providing information about the grief process; to share experiences; and to lessen the feelings of isolation. Join us as we explore healthy coping strategies and discuss some of the ways the loss of a loved one can affect our lives.

Tuscarawas County
Thursdays at 3pm
July 18, August 1 & 15 & 29, September 12 & 26
Martinelli Center

Carroll County
Mondays at 3pm
July 22, August 5 & 19, September 9 & 16
Community Hospice Carrollton Office

Stark County
Tuesdays at 3:30pm
July 23, August 6 & 20, September 3 & 17
Community Hospice Stark Office

Columbiana County
Wednesdays at 3pm
July 24, August 7 & 21, September 4 & 18
Community Hospice Columbiana Office

Tuscarawas County
Wednesdays at 4:30pm
July 24, August 7 & 21, September 4 & 18
Martinelli Center

Grief is NO Picnic
Summer is a time of sunshine and warm temperatures. We’ve planted our gardens, anticipating the beauty and serenity that comes from all our hard work. Now it’s time to get out, relax, vacation, and go on picnics. Picnics can be full of warmth, laughter and good times, but sometimes the wind blows the sand and the ants seem to be everywhere. We can plan ahead, but when the death comes, our emotions can catch us off guard. We are sometimes surprised and unprepared for the associated losses and the adjustments we must make. Helping to identify those specific losses can help identify what course of action we need to take. It may be finding new purpose in life, creating new routines, making new companions and discovering new interests. It sounds simple, but after a lifetime of doing things one way, it can be the most difficult challenge we face. And nothing will ever totally eliminate that empty space in our hearts. We only learn to live with it. So, what’s in your life’s picnic basket? What do you want to see when you open it? What supplies do you need to put in it? How prepared are you for the grief journey ahead? Who or what is your blanket that keeps you protected? Are you able to put things in their appropriate container, kept safe until you are ready to open it? Have you put yourself in an air tight container that keeps everything/everyone away? Are there people and/or things in your life that need a healthy spray of insecticide? What are the things you need in your basket to improve the quality of your picnic? Do you have good friends and good food to nourish your body, mind and spirit? Do you have a plan for your day? Life is a journey. Sometimes there’s some rain, but the sun always comes out.

What’s ahead for you?
-Karen Kincaid, MA, PCC
Administative Office
716 Commercial Avenue SW
New Philadelphia, Ohio 44663
1-800-947-7284

Social Activities
Social Activities are led by trained volunteers and provide an opportunity for individuals who have experienced loss to gather and socialize with others.

**Adult Coloring Group**
**Thursdays at 2:00 pm**
August 1, September 5
Altercare of Coshocton
1991 Otsego Avenue, Coshocton
Call Sarah at 740-575-4326 to RSVP.

**Carroll County Breakfast**
**Tuesdays at 9:00 am**
July 9, August 13, September 10
Carroll County Airport Restaurant
253 Airport Road SE, Carrollton
Call Clarissa at 330-324-0076 to RSVP.

**Women’s Sharing & Caring**
**Tuesdays at 1:00 pm**
July 16 – Uncle Primo’s Restaurant, New Philadelphia
August 20 – Taggart’s Ice Cream, Magnolia
September 17 – Atwood Lake
Call Cathy at 440-439-6417 to RSVP.

**PathSeekers-Outdoor Adventures**
**Sundays at 2:30 pm**
July 14, August 11, September 8
Location changes monthly.
Call Pam at 330-691-5538 to RSVP.

**Out to Lunch Bunch**
**Wednesdays at 12:00 pm**
July 10 – Raven’s Glenn, West Lafayette
August 14 – Bob Evans Restaurant, Dover
September 11 – Broad Run Cheesecouse, Dover
Call Norma at 330-339-9283 or Gerri at 330-365-9465 to RSVP.

**Men’s Breakfast**
**Thursdays at 8:30 am**
July 25, August 22, September 26
Dee’s Family Restaurant
1109 Bowers Avenue NW, New Philadelphia
Call Andrew at 740-610-8741 to RSVP.

*Grief is the last act of love we have to give to those we loved.*
*Where there is deep grief, there was great love.*
Educational Support Groups

“It’s OK that You’re Not OK” Space is limited to the first 10 people who RSVP.
Fridays at 4pm – July 26, August 23 & September 27 – Lake Community Library, Uniontown
It’s OK That You’re Not OK: Meeting Grief and Loss in a Culture That Doesn’t Understand by Megan Devine.
Please read Part One for the first meeting. Megan Devine’s hard-won wisdom has the power to normalize and validate the experience of grief. If you’re tired of being asked, “Are you better now?” read this book for a fresh perspective.

What is really normal during grief? This educational support group will help those grieving identify what is “normal” during grief. Being familiar with the wide variety of grief reactions that are entirely normal can be very helpful, especially because while we grieve, we tend to feel out of control and anything but normal.
Wednesday, July 17 at 4:30pm  Community Hospice Carrollton Office
Wednesday, July 24 at 4:30pm  Community Hospice Columbiana Office

Coping Techniques & Strategies  During grief, we have many different physical, mental, and emotional reactions, but many of us do not know how to cope with these reactions. In this educational support group, we will discuss different techniques and strategies that have been found to be helpful to those experiencing grief.
Monday, August 19 at 4:30pm  Community Hospice Carrollton Office
Wednesday, August 21 at 4:30pm  Community Hospice Columbiana Office

Meaning Making After Loss
This an educational support group activity in which you will look at turning points or chapters in your life and explore the losses that have happened. Through exploring these and answering questions about your experience, you will may come to understand its meaning for you then and now.
Wednesday, September 4 at 4:30pm – Community Hospice Columbiana Office
Monday, September 16 at 4:30pm  Community Hospice Carrollton Office

Living with Loss
No one is immune from the various losses that one can experience over the course of a life time. Whether it is the loss of a loved one, the loss of a long time residence or job, or the loss of our health or independence, there is a good chance that we will all experience it at some point in time. This educational support group will provide an open discussion on “Living with Loss” and the healing that can take place through the grieving process.
Friday, August 9 at 10:30am  Windsorwood Place
Wednesday, August 28 at 11am  Community Hospice Truman House Pavilion

“We are all Broken that’s how the Light gets in”
Ernest Hemingway