

Feelings of loss can intensify during the Holidays, support group is there

For many, the holiday season marks a special time of year of festive celebrations and gatherings with family and friends. It's a time to look ahead with excitement to the approaching New Year. For those struggling with the death of a loved one, the holidays can be a difficult time full of painful reminders that may magnify their sense of loss.

Holiday songs play, television commercial images remind us of the season, homes are decked to the hilt. Sounds and sights of the holidays can seem inescapable. Coping with grief at such a time seems discordant with the world around us. Feelings of loss tend to be intensified.

The best way to help those who are grieving during the holidays is to let them know you care. Remember them and let them know their loved ones are remembered also. St. Joseph's Hospice grief counselors emphasize that friends and family members should never be afraid of saying or doing the wrong thing, because making an effort and showing concern will be appreciated.

Those who have experienced grief share the following advice:

1. Be supportive of the way your friend chooses to celebrate the holidays. Some may wish to follow long-held traditions, others may choose to change their rituals.

2. Offer to help with tangible tasks such as baking, cleaning or decorating. Seemingly simple tasks can be overwhelming when dealing with grief.

3. Invite the person to attend a religious service with you and your family.

4. Offer to help with holiday shopping or share your favorite catalogs and on-line shopping sites.

5. Invite your friend to your home for the holidays.

6. Inquire if your friend is interested in volunteering with you during the holidays. Doing something for someone else, such as working with children or serving at a community meal, may help him or her feel better about the holidays.

7. Make a donation in memory of your friend's loved one, as a reminder that his or her loved one is not forgotten.

8. Remember to avoid telling your friend that he or she should be "over

it." Grief is an individual process and there are no right or wrong ways to grieve.

9. If your friend wants to talk about the deceased loved one or feelings associated with the loss, LISTEN. Don't worry about being conversational.

10. Remind the person you are thinking of him or her and the loved one who died. Cards, phone calls, and visits are great ways to stay in touch.

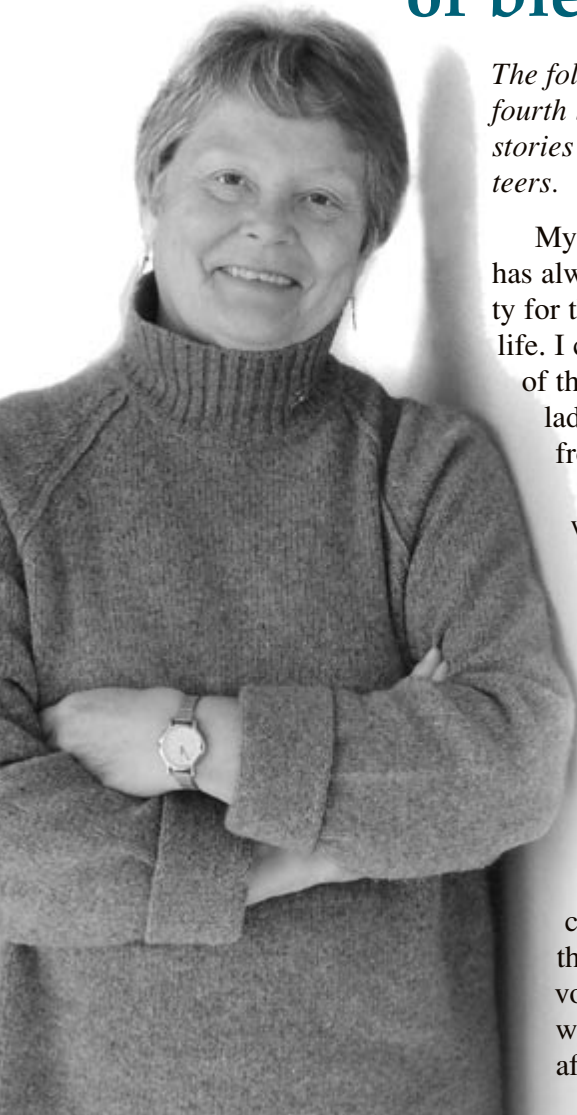
St. Joseph's Hospice Grief Education is a valuable resource that can help those adults who are struggling with grief and loss. Grief support groups will provide mutual support and education at no cost to any adult who has lost a spouse, a child, other family member, or someone

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St. Joseph's Area Health
Services
600 Pleasant Ave.
www.sjahs.org

Hospice volunteer gives back in gratitude of blessings bestowed upon her



The following is the fourth in a series on the stories of hospice volunteers.

My philosophy on life has always been that I must repay society for the blessings I have received in life. I chose a career in nursing because of the influence of three outstanding ladies (all nurses and all have died from complications of cancer.)

My parents were key in my work ethic and how I must repay what has been given me. They too died from complications of cancer.

After my retirement from nursing, I found that there was a void in my life. An advertisement in the local paper which offered a class on “Hospice Volunteering” caught my eye. This was the very way I could in some small way repay those so near and dear to me. By volunteering time to sit with those who have the misfortune of being afflicted with a chronic disease, I

I find the joy of hospice is being able to assist people to *live* right up to the end.

Dee Anderson
Hospice volunteer

could give back.

Hospice has given me so many rewards. I have met many compassionate and caring people that I wouldn't have had the opportunity to meet if not through volunteering. The clients that I have been assigned to are the most special people, and I wouldn't have made their acquaintance if not for hospice. It has allowed me to care for others and, in some small way, repay those that have shared so much with me.

I also have an opportunity to teach the public about hospice and how it is so important to those who are approaching the end stage of life. I find the joy of hospice is being able to assist people to *live* right up to the end. They are surrounded most often by loved ones and are resting in their home. Hospice staff are exceptional, and when I hear a family member say that a person from hospice is “their angel,” I fully understand.

Hospice: Not a place, but a face

Throughout our lives, all of us encounter difficult and challenging situations. Most of us can remember someone who helped us during those times - a grandparent, a special teacher, even a stranger who became a friend. The recollection of these “faces of caring” bring comfort and calm in the midst of crisis.

Yet when recalling end-of-life situations of those we love, many of us have different recollections. These memories may include the hurt on the face of a loved one in pain; the sorrow on the face of a family member who did not get the opportunity to say goodbye to a dying relative; the stress on the faces of those making difficult decisions about end-of-life choices without guidance or support.

November is Hospice and Palliative Care Month. This month, hospice professionals and volunteers work to raise awareness of this invaluable system of care. Those who provide hospice and palliative care offer pain and symptom control, dignity, and spiritual and emotional care for both dying persons and their loved ones when a cure is not possible.

Hospice and palliative care puts a “face” on quality end-of-life care - the faces of nurses, doctors, social workers, spiritual caregivers, home health aides, homemakers, and volunteers who provide services and support to families during one of life's most challenging times.

“Thank you”

The following are acknowledgements that St. Joseph’s Hospice has recently received from thankful families:

“...The staff of the hospice helped my father end his life with the same pride and dignity that he lived his life with. We are forever grateful to you for that. It meant the world to not only my Dad, by my sister and me....”

“...Hospice was there when the last days were pronounced, their help right to the end of his life and beyond. Then the follow-up lessons learned after death were very helpful...”

“...It only takes a moment to change a person’s life. The moments that Hospice shared with our family touched our hearts at a time of great need. We will be forever blessed and grateful for those precious moments...”

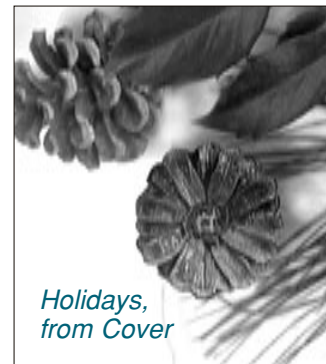


“...Hospice makes a difference between your loved one struggling to go home to Jesus or drifting into his arms...the difference between dignity at the end of life or shame and pain...”

“... people from Hospice were the most caring and compassionate people I had ever met. They were always there when needed, were willing to take time for the family as well as my wife, and provided the best care for her. May

God bless you all...”

“...We would like to thank all of you for the excellent care that was given to dad by the hospice staff, home health aides and volunteers. Each of you had a special way of making him feel that you really cared and loved him. We call you “God’s angels on earth.” His final days on earth were very meaningful and fulfilling because of all of you. God Bless you all...”



Holidays, from Cover

close to them through death. For registration or information contact Lucinda at (800) 566-3311 ext 481 or 237-5481.

Coping With The Holidays

Saturday, Nov. 18, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Riverside United Methodist Church in Park Rapids. (Light lunch provided at no cost.)

Coping With The Holidays

Saturday, Dec. 9, 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. at May Creek Lodge in Walker.

Hospice staff

Chris Broeker, PHN, Hospice Manager
 Dr. John Lageson, MD, Hospice Medical Director
 Lucinda Peterson, LSW, Hospice Social Worker
 Laurel Hed, LSW, Hospice Social Worker
 Rev. Bob Light, M.Div, MA, Hospice Chaplain
 Betsy Meyer, Volunteer Services Coordinator
 Jill Grimes, CHPN, Hospice Clinical Coordinator
 Nora Simpson, PHN, Hospice Nurse
 Marlene Lindgren, RN, Hospice Nurse
 Suzette Free, LPN, Hospice Nurse

St. Joseph’s Hospice
600 Pleasant Avenue
Park Rapids, MN 56470
218-732-4552



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For more information about hospice services or for more information about volunteering, call 218-732-4552.

If you choose to no longer receive this newsletter please call 218-237-5482 or 1-800-566-3311 ext. 482 and ask to have your name removed from the mailing list. Thank you.



St. Joseph's Area Health Services
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 600 Pleasant Avenue
 Park Rapids, MN 56470

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 (Make checks payable to St. Joseph's Hospice)

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 In memory of _____
 In honor of _____

Please send acknowledgment to

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 600 Pleasant Ave.
 Park Rapids, MN 56470

Thank you for your gift!

Hospice fundraiser lights up lives, supports programs

Love. Light. The two seem to be one in the same. St. Joseph's Hospice celebrate both when lighting the Christmas tree on Park Rapids' Main Street.

It does so in memory of those we have loved and lost as well as in honor of those currently receiving care in the Hospice program.

As the holiday season nears, the community again has the chance to honor or remember a loved one during St. Joseph's Hospice annual Light Up A Life fundraiser.

Anyone can purchase one

**Light Up A Life
 Program and Tree
 Lighting**

6:00 pm

Friday, Nov. 24

Meet you at the Main Street
 Christmas Tree in
 downtown Park Rapids

or more lights at \$5 each to help light the tree. Every light on the tree symbolically represents a life. You designate who. (See cutout at left.)

Money raised supports the caring work of hospice throughout the communities in St. Joseph's service area.