



FAITH & HOPE HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE

JOIN OUR CIRCLE OF CARE

Epilogue

Bereavement Newsletter

May/June 2019

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Grief and Sleep, Part II

In our previous edition, we discussed the ways that grief can interfere with sleep, as well as the importance of sleep hygiene and medications that help with sleep. Now, I'd like to provide information on non-medication techniques to help you sleep. You may be surprised to learn that there are many ways to help with sleep beyond medications. Many of these fall under the umbrella of mindfulness. Among these are guided imagery, progressive muscle relaxation, and yoga nidra.

Guided imagery focuses on getting the mind to think about something relaxing and not about the inability to sleep. Those thoughts can actually contribute to and worsen insomnia. *(Continued on page 6)*

Book Recommendation

Option B: Facing Adversity, Building Resilience, and Finding Joy

By Sheryl Sandberg and Adam Grant

Sheryl Sandberg opens up her heart to describe the acute grief and isolation she felt in the wake of her husband's sudden death. Her friend Adam Grant, a psychologist, told her concrete steps people can take to recover and rebound from life-shattering experiences. We are not born with a fixed amount of resilience. It is a muscle that everyone can build.

But this book goes beyond Sheryl's loss to explore how a broad range of people have overcome hardships including illness, job loss, sexual assault, natural disasters, and the violence of war. Their stories reveal the capacity of the human spirit to persevere and to rediscover joy. Resilience comes from deep within us and from support outside us. Even after the most devastating events, it is possible to grow by finding deeper meaning and gaining greater appreciation in our lives. (Summary from Goodreads)

Published 2017; ISBN: 0753548283

Grief Explored: Continuing Bonds

There are many ways that people have tried to understand grief. Sometimes these are referred to as theories by the scholars that develop them. They hope to understand the point of grief or the goal of mourning. Some seek to find the best way to grieve. (Spoiler: there is no best way). Grief is different for every individual and each relationship.

Still, most theories focus on helping people get through the grief, to sever the connection with the deceased and allow the griever to return to life as it was. There seems to be a focus on detaching from the person who died, a process to move on and seek closure or acceptance.

The Continuing Bonds model dismisses the idea that grief is seeking to detach from the deceased. Instead, it embraces the fact that grievers tend to incorporate the loss into their life. Grievers can find new ways to continue their connection with the person who died. The power of human connection is strong and can endure beyond death.

The first key component of Continuing Bonds is that it recognizes that grief is an ongoing and lifelong process. It's not a process to finish; instead, it becomes part of the griever. Continuing Bonds also acknowledges that it's normal to continue bonds with the deceased. And those bonds evolve and grow over the years too. The way a forty-year-old remembers and experiences her deceased mother is significantly different from the bond that she held at age fourteen, a year after her mother died.

Here are examples of how some of my clients have continued bonds with their loved ones who have died:

- Charlotte bakes her dad's favorite apple dapple cake every year on his birthday, even though he died seven years ago. Baking the cake gives her a physical reminder of her dad and cooking for him feels special. The aroma and taste trigger happy memories as well. She usually takes the cake to work and shares it and stories about her dad with her colleagues.
- John enjoys cuddling with his two kids on the couch, warm under the quilt his grandmother made when he was a kid. She is gone, but wrapping up in her quilt feels like getting a hug from her.
- Sandra and Andy found a novel manuscript that their son had written by hand. Their son had talked about wanting to be a writer for years, but they never knew that he'd actually started writing a story. With a little work, they were able to type out his notes, finished the manuscript, and found a publisher for his work. "Even though he didn't have kids and a family of his own, Ken has left a legacy. Reading his book always makes me feel close to him" Sandra says.

You can find more ideas at:

<https://whatsyourgrief.com/16-practical-tips-continuing-bonds/>

The Bereavement Newsletter is free resource made available for 12 months to the family and friends our hospice patients, and to the community at large.

If you would prefer to no longer receive this newsletter or if you would like to receive it beyond 12 months, please contact us at 818-559-1460 to update your preferences.

Movie Recommendation

Up (2009) PG, 1h 36min
Animation, Adventure, Comedy

Starring: Edward Asner, Christopher Plummer, and Jordan Nagai

The movie focuses on 78-year-old Carl Fredricksen who travels to Paradise Falls where he and his wife, Ellie, planned to visit, but she died before they could go on their dream trip. The movie opens with a montage showing Carl and Ellie's young life, their marriage and major life events before Ellie becomes ill and passes away.

The movie gives a good background on Carl's life, especially the relationship

between he and his wife. We see how he copes with her death, embraces the continuing bonds approach to grief, and how he adjusts to life as a single senior. It also explores the difficult decision that many seniors must make about moving to an assisted living or skilled nursing facility vs. continuing to live independently at their home.

This animated film is accessible to children and quite lighthearted and comedic throughout most of the movie. It can be used to bring up the difficult topic of death and dying. And it remains relevant and enjoyable for adults.

Losing a Loved One, When There Was No Love

People are complex, puzzling creatures. Our relationships are no different. So much focus is placed on "losing a loved one," that other relationship types get lost in the mix. Not everyone who loses a family member loses a loved one. A lifetime of hurt or a clash that has lasted for years may steal away the love that one might have had. So much bereavement support focuses on the "loss of a loved one." What if you didn't love them or they didn't love you? How does that affect grief? How does it affect how people think a person should grieve?

"Rachel", 38, tells her story like this, "My grandfather was a powerful force in my family and our church. To most of the world he was a nice guy and an active member of our community. But he sexually abused me from the time I was twelve until I moved away for college, nearly twenty years ago. I've not spoken to him since. When he died,

everyone expected me to be sad. On the contrary. I was glad to see him go. My family thought I was a monster for feeling this way. Most didn't know about the abuse and the two I told refused to believe me. They all think I should be sad that he's dead. Well, I say screw 'em! I'm just glad that man won't be able to hurt me, or anyone else, ever again.

Another client, "Jan", 55, shared her experience. "My mom disowned me when she found out I'm a lesbian. I've tried to reconnect with her so many times over the years. But she never wanted to speak to me, unless I decided to stop being *that way*- that's how she put it. I can't change who I am and I refuse to live in the closet. I wanted my mom to accept me for me. That never happened. I went to visit her when she was sick and on hospice. Before I could say hello, she spit at me and yelled for me to leave. *(continue on page 7)*

Self-care is a concept that's often misunderstood. Hearing the term tends to conjure up images of day spas, aroma therapy and unplugging from all electronic devices. While these can be good forms of self-care, they may not be realistic for most of us, most of the time. Also, self-care extends far beyond self-indulgent activities. Consider self-care to be a form of self-awareness, self-compassion, and self-healing instead of a narcissistic luxury. It is a necessary skill that's needed to thrive.

There are two main types of self-care: Macro & Micro. The first, macro, includes regular habits that are done on an ongoing basis that contribute to one's overall health and wellbeing.

These can include eating a healthy diet, getting plenty of sleep, and regular exercise. Taking medications as prescribed and keeping regular medical and dental appointments fall into this category as well. To me, these are the very basic forms of self-care. There are plenty of other routines that can be utilized as well.

Regular vacations, whether two weeks on a cruise or taking a long weekend *staycation*, can recharge a person. The regular routine of vacations can build reserves for stressful times, too. Being aware of stressful times and taking action to circumvent them are crucial as well.

Volunteering is yet another form of self-care. That sounds counter-intuitive. Altruistic acts do benefit others by definition, but they can provide a sense of pride and joy to the giver. It is important, however, that the giving stays reasonable and not at the expense of the giver. It can be easy for some of us to offer more than we are capable of giving.

But these macro activities are bigger, long-term methods. Micro interventions can be used as needed or throughout the day, despite activity or location. These methods require minimal time and energy but can have big payoff. They are also no cost options as well.

One of the easiest methods is to take a time out. If you are feeling overwhelmed, upset or anxious, allow yourself five minutes to take a break. If you are at work, step away from your desk, shut your office door, or take sanctuary in a restroom stall. Take five minutes to remove yourself from a situation. Silence your phone, close your eyes, and disconnect from the world. After your break, you can return to the previous situation a bit renewed and with new clarity. During your break, you can also go for a short walk. Just five minutes can change your environment and get the blood flowing. This has the added benefit of burning off some excess emotional energy.

Some people find solace in prayer and spiritual practice. Say a short prayer to ask for help or to express gratitude. This can have significant benefits. You might also read a passage of scripture or an inspirational book. These can also be accessed online if you don't have a physical text handy.

There are far too many forms of self-care to list here. I encourage you to learn more about self-care and find macro and micro level practices that work for you. You may not know what will work best; so, there may be some trial and error. Keep trying. Whether recently bereaved or just living life, self-care has an important role for us all.

Self-Care and Mindfulness Meditation Workshops

Faith and Hope Hospice & Palliative Care is hosting two workshops in June. All are invited to attend one or both of the workshops and there is no charge to attend.

Self-Care: Monday, June 3, 2019 @ 1:30-5:30pm

Participants will learn what self-care is and is not, why it's important and will learn several techniques to care for body, mind, and soul. We will also discuss the role that music can play in supporting self-care.

Presented by:

Reid Jacobs, APHSW-C, MSW, Bereavement Services Coordinator; Reid has over twelve years of experience in hospice and end of life care, including direct patient care, education, and administration. He is also an experienced teacher, leading numerous trainings at local and national conferences, as well as hospice employee and volunteer trainings.

Rene Torres, MT-BC, Music Therapist; Rene received his degree in Music Therapy from California State University, Northridge. Since then, he has had the opportunity to lead trainings at both regional and world conferences. As a board-certified music therapist, he uses music to support the individual needs of each client. Music experiences include music for relaxation, songwriting, and lyric analysis.

Mindfulness Meditation: Friday, June 7, 2019 @ 1:30-5:30pm

Participants will learn about mindfulness meditation and the benefits that it offers. The workshop will also teach four specific techniques and participants will be led through using each.

Presented by:

Daniel Ahearn, CCAPP, founder of PTHWRK, an LA-based mindfulness meditation service. Daniel uses his 15+ years of mediation experience and studies to help people discover an expansive meditation practice for themselves. He holds a counseling degree from UCLA and is currently pursuing a masters in spiritual and depth psychology from Antioch University.

Pasadena Public Library
285 E. Walnut St., Pasadena, CA 91101

Please register by Friday, May 31 by calling 818-559-1460 or email
reid@faithandhopehospice.com

Visit http://bit.ly/june_workshops for more info.

*This program is not sponsored by the Pasadena Public Library. Attendees should park off-site in surrounding parking lots or use street parking as parking is restricted in the library parking lot.

Self-Care Resources

Check out these books for more information on self-care and for specific ideas for you to try

- An Invitation to Self-Care, Tracy Cleantis
- Self-Compassion: Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself; Kristin Neff
- The Self-Care Solution: A Modern Mother's Must-Have Guide to Health and Well-Being; Julie Burton
- Self-Care for Introverts; Barrie Davenport
- From Coping to Thriving; Hannah Braime & Will Moyer

Grief and Sleep, Part II (continued from page 1)

There are many guided imagery techniques, but generally involve guiding a person's mind to calming images or scenes to facilitate a relaxed state. This may be done in person or via recording.

Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) focuses on contracting and relaxing specific muscle groups throughout the body, typically starting with the head and moving down the body to the feet and toes. This process helps to physically relax the body, getting it ready for sleep. PMR also gets the mind's focus off of the inability to sleep.

Yoga nidra combines aspects of both guided imagery and PMR with the additional focus on breathing. Yoga nidra does not require contorting into odd poses, nor do you need a yoga mat. Instead, the participant finds a relaxing position sitting or lying down. The person leading the session guides the participant in simple breathing exercises, as well as some guided imagery and

muscle relaxation. Again, these sessions can be done in person or via recording.

I recommend recordings that are available via audio CD and audio downloads. These can be used whenever you need help getting to sleep.

There are many resources available by searching Amazon, Barnes & Noble, YouTube, and your smartphone's app store. Some of these resources are free, but I urge my clients to look for recordings made by trained, licensed professionals. Here are a few of my top recommendations:

- Belleruth Naperstak, ACSW, BCD; Healthful Sleep
- Marianne Zaugg, PhD, DCH, Deep Sleep- Guided Imagery Series
- Siddharth Ashvin Shah, MD, MPH; Rest Peacefully & Manage Sleep Disorders
- Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD; Guided Mindfulness Meditation, Series 1

To One in Sorrow by Grace Noll Crowell

Let me come in where you are weeping, friend,
And let me take your hand.
I, who have known a sorrow such as yours,
Can understand.

Let me come in -- I would be very still
Beside you in your grief;
I would not bid you cease your weeping, friend,
Tears can bring relief.

Let me come in -- I would only breathe a prayer,
And hold your hand,
For I have known a sorrow such as yours,
And understand.

Bereavement Services Available

In addition to this Bereavement Newsletter and our periodic mailings, Faith & Hope Hospice can also provide:

- Resources via email
- Workshops
- Support groups (*coming soon*)
- Phone-based support
- In-person counseling for individuals and families

Contact Reid at **818-559-1460** or email him at reid@faithandhopehospice.com to request these additional services.

Recipes from the Heart

Daddy loved this pie and always asked for it for his birthday instead of a cake. My sisters and I looked forward to his birthday because we knew we would get to have this pie. We also got to help Mother make it, crushing the crackers and squeezing the lemons. I think this was actually one of the first recipes I ever learned to make, just after scrambled eggs. And Daddy was never a fan of anything too sweet. I think that's why he wanted the Ritz cracker crust instead of graham cracker crust like most recipes have. He would even save at least one bite of meat from dinner to have after dessert. Daddy's birthday was in early summer and to this day, the smell of lemon and the first warmth of the summer sun remind me of him. –Sarah J.

Lemon Icebox Pie

Ingredients

1 sleeve Ritz crackers (for crust)

1 can (14 oz) sweetened condensed milk

3 eggs separated

3 lemons, juiced

5 tsp sugar

1/2 tsp vanilla extract

1. Prepare crust by crushing enough crackers to fill a 9 inch pan with 1/4 inch of crumbs. Line whole crackers around the side of the pan. Set aside.
2. Mix sweetened condensed milk, egg yolks, and lemon juice. Pour mixture into crust.
3. In a clean bowl, beat egg whites into soft peaks. Add sugar and vanilla; then beat into stiff peaks. Spoon onto lemon filling.
4. Broil at 500° until meringue is golden brown on peaks.
5. Refrigerate until chilled and ready to serve.

Losing a Loved One, When There Was No Love *(continued from page 4)*

I still love her though..." This has impacted how other people respond to Jan's grief as well. She told me, "My wife thinks it's ridiculous that I'm grieving over someone who treated me so badly. But she was, is, my mom, no matter what. I've always held hope that she would come around, that we could forgive each other, but now I know that won't ever happen."

I've met so many people over the years with similar experiences. The pain from those experiences can last a

lifetime, complicating the grief process. Even though there is no one, right way to grieve, it's important to know that our relationships will affect the way we grieve.

At Faith and Hope Hospice, we understand that grief takes on many forms and is unique to each individual and each relationship. Our team is here to support and not judge. If you are mourning and need to talk to someone, please feel free to give us a call. That's the reason we're here.



FAITH & HOPE HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE
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1575 N. Lake Ave.
 Suite 208
 Pasadena, CA 91104

Faith and Hope Hospice & Palliative Care is a family-owned company based in Pasadena, CA. We are a member of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and accredited by The Joint Commission.

Faith & Hope was established in 2007 primarily due to personal experiences the founders had.

Meeting our patient's psychosocial needs is our priority. We provide comfort care wherever our patients live by using a holistic approach toward their illnesses. We also recognize that tending to the family's emotional needs is as crucial as the patient's needs.



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