



FAITH & HOPE HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE

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Epilogue

Bereavement Newsletter

July/August 2020

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A Wrong Way?

I'm adamant that there is no "right" way to grieve. Humans and our relationships are complex. We are incredibly diverse; no two people or relationships are the same. We each have our own ways to cope. Some need to be around others while some crave alone time to process their emotions. Some find writing therapeutic. Others find it daunting and simply undoable. So, I assure people that they are coping in their own way.

Someone recently asked me, "You say there is no *right* way to grieve, but is there a wrong way?" That caught me off guard and I didn't have an answer right away. I took some time to think on it, and here's what I've come up with: There is no right way to grieve, but there are some unhealthy ways to cope with grief.

(continued on p. 7)

Book Recommendation

Men We Reaped: A Memoir

by Jesmyn Ward

Jesmyn Ward writes about how she can no longer stay silent about the deaths that have occurred in her community in the small town of DeLisle, Mississippi as a child. Over a span of five years, Ward writes how she lost five young black men that meant a lot to her, one of which was her brother. These young black men all had different causes of death from drugs, accidents, murder, and suicide. Despite the deaths, these young black men are connected, because they were all of lower socioeconomic status.

Ward describes how socioeconomic status and race can have a profound effect on life and lead to death. Ward uses real-life stories to write about how she coped and grieved the loss of those dear to her. After all, the family history of violence, substance abuse, early deaths, racism, and women raising children on their own; Ward learns that her grief will never leave her, only change over time.

Review by Rosa Bautista

~

Published 2013; ISBN: 978-1608195213

A Note From Your Bereavement Services Coordinator

2020 continues and all the drama remains. It's a challenging time affecting us all. Every day is a new challenging and a new opportunity. We are seeing the resilience of individuals, families, and communities. This time of crisis and social upheaval also has the potential to create new opportunities, new ways of living and relating to one another.

We explore the topic of post-traumatic growth—the potential for something good to come out of traumatic events—in our new web series COVID Conversations. This series discusses the impacts of COVID-19 on grief and coping. We also look at the non-death losses of COVID-19 and how it overlaps with the “secondary losses” covered in this issue's Grief Explored.

I'm also excited for our new article series, Grief-tivity. (Grief + Activities). This series will provide crafty activities for all ages and budgets. These activities can be done alone or with others to help process grief and recall happy memories.

I continue to grow our bereavement services to meet the community's needs. I am currently putting together an online support group, but need input to know the best day, time, topics, etc. I want the group to fully meet the needs of the participants. So, I hope you'll complete a 10-question survey to help ensure the group is as useful and supportive as possible. You can find the details on page 4.

As always, know that you are not alone in your grief.



Reid Jacobs, APHSW-C, MSW, CT
Bereavement Services Coordinator



COVID Conversations

Faith and Hope Hospice is dedicated to bringing helpful information to our clients and community. This is especially true during the time of COVID. That's why we're producing a new web series called “COVID Conversations” which explores the impact of COVID-19 on hospice and palliative care patients, their families, and grievers. The series includes conversations with experts from across the country with a new topic each episode.

You can find the full web series at: faithandhopehospice.com/COVID

Episodes

- Caring for Elders in Skilled Nursing & Assisted Living Facilities During COVID-19; Brianna Garrison, MSW, LCSW-S
- Vicarious Trauma & COVID-19; Kayte Thomas, LCSW
- Grief in the Time of COVID-19; Kathie Supiano, PhD, LCSW, F-GSA, FT, APHSW-C
- Spirituality & COVID-19; Ann M. Callahan, PhD, LCSW

Grief Explored: Secondary Loss

Grief comes in many forms, death, job loss, ended relationships, life changes, relocations, to name a few. All of these can trigger grief in their own right. When a loss stems from a death, it's called *secondary loss*.

For example, when Jane Doe's spouse died, she experienced the grief of the death, naturally. The death also caused secondary losses in the form of decreased household income, lost ability to live independently, and lost sense of security. Her future, so carefully planned out, now a haze of mystery. She lost her sense of self and seriously questioned her faith in God.

These are all common secondary losses and grief. If you experience these, it's important to lean on your support system. Let your loved ones know if you're struggling. Ask for help. Secondary losses are often invisible to others. Even the closest of friends can be oblivious to the distress unless they are told about it.

Enter the COVID-19 pandemic. The current pandemic is creating losses affecting the entire world. There are the primary losses: deaths caused by the coronavirus. The virus continues creating secondary losses, some that society has never experienced. The virus is robbing us of core beliefs, values, expectations, and traditions. Spending the final days and hours with a dying loved one provides comfort to both dying and the surviving family. Having this time together helps the grieving process. COVID-19 is robbing many of that opportunity for people in hospitals or living in long-term care facilities which limit or refuse outside visitors.

COVID-19 also robs us of important rites and rituals, and that may leave a life-long scar. Funerals, for example, are one of the most important rituals across all cultures. These rituals provide a place to express emotion, facilitates communal mourning and mutual support. Funerals are safe places to mourn aloud. Yet, most funerals are being severely scaled back. Many funeral homes are restricting funerals to 5-10 attendees. I've had one client who was

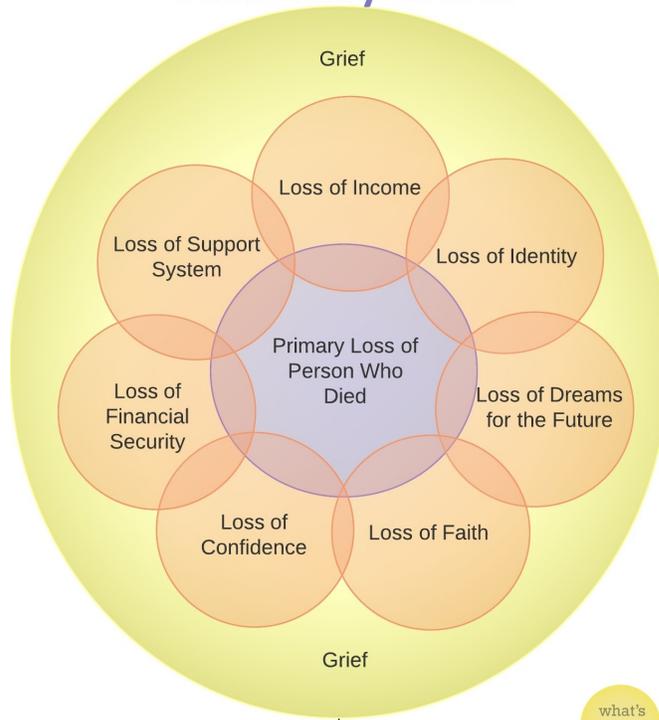
was allowed only two attendees. Choosing which two caused a rift in the family. People who live out-of-state are frequently prevented from attending due to travel restrictions.

Even people not directly affected by death are being seriously impacted from missing the birth of a grandchild to once in a lifetime trip. Millions of Muslims planning the sacred pilgrimage to Mecca had their plans canceled as the local government chose to severely limit the number of attendees. Many will never again have the opportunity to make the pilgrimage.

All of this stemming from one tiny virus. So, where do we go from here?

Thankfully, many of the COVID-related losses before and after a death can be supplemented with technology in the form of video calls. They don't fully replace physical presence, but they come close. These virtual visits do allow more people to attend funerals and stay connected with family in long-term care facilities. Hospice staff can help facilitate virtual visits in the facility with the patient and the family in their home. Grief support and counseling are also helpful and available from Faith and Hope Hospice.

Secondary Losses



Recipes from the Heart

This is a favorite recipe because it is YUMMY! My mom and I have always made blueberry scones at home. When we're having a bad day or just stressed out — always helps!

-Ani Bedzhanyan, RN

Blueberry Scones

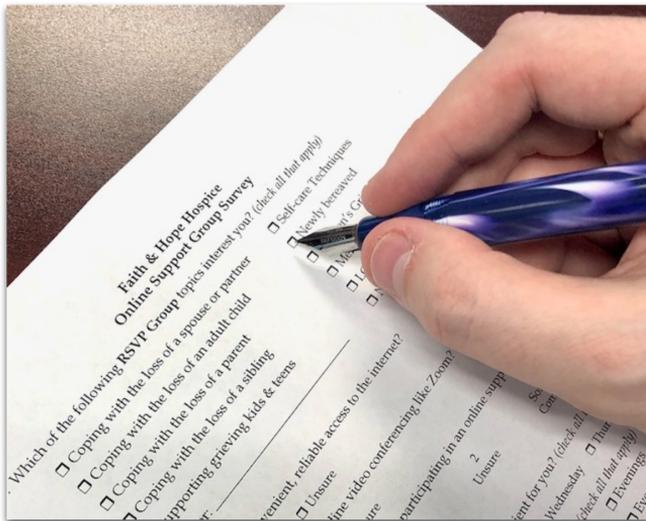
Ingredients

4 cups flour	1/2 cup butter
6 tablespoons sugar	2 large eggs
4 1/2 teaspoons baking powder	3/4 cup whole milk
1/2 teaspoon salt	1 1/2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries

Directions

1. In a bowl, mix the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt, then add the butter and mix until it turns into crumbs.
2. In another bowl mix the eggs and milk, whisk then add to the other bowl until all ingredients are moistened together.
3. Place onto floured surface, then gently add the blueberries.
4. Divide the dough into 8-10 pieces on a greased baking sheet.
5. Bake at 375 degrees for 15-20 minutes, then enjoy!

Online Support Group Survey



Faith & Hope Hospice is seeking to expand the grief support services we offer while adapting to changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are currently looking to offer online support groups for people coping with grief during the pandemic.

Our groups will be led by a social worker, trained volunteers, and may occasionally host a guest speaker. All groups will take place online with video conference through Zoom. This is to practice social distancing to prevent spreading the coronavirus. Online groups also allow more people to attend and avoid driving. All groups will be

offered at no cost to the family and friends of hospice patients. Other members of the community are welcome to participate too.

Before we start the groups, we need to hear from our community to ensure that the services we provide match the needs of those we serve. You can participate by completing the 10-item, online survey. You can access the survey by scanning the QR Code below or visiting our website:

faithandhopehospice.com/survey



At this moment many things might not feel normal and as if the world is upside-down. The novel coronavirus might also have you feeling disconnected from your loved one, since the stay at home order has been enforced. We are all experiencing a collective amount of grief with people losing their jobs, becoming infected, passing away and the economy collapsing. Low income minorities with health issues are at greater risk.

One of the biggest challenges that minorities are facing is living in an overpopulated home or densely populated community. Families who live in an overpopulated home are at greater risk of becoming infected. Family members who become infected may find it challenging to isolate or practice social distancing since space at home may be limited. There are cases where sick family members continue to work despite being sick due to the lack of paid sick leave.

Living in a predominantly low-income community, I have witnessed people who do not have the privilege to stay at home. Instead, families face the challenge of going to work and putting themselves at greater risk of catching the virus and potentially infecting others. Most of these families are employed in businesses that categorize their employees as “essential workers,” such as maintenance workers, grocery store employees and the farm industry. These jobs are mostly employed by minorities and are at higher risk of infection. Most families are content with knowing that they continue to be employed, regardless of the circumstances, just to be able to meet basic human needs, such as food and shelter. Since essential businesses have remained open, it puts minorities at higher risk of becoming infected and spreading the virus. The stay at home order, unfortunately, is not an option for many people working in essential businesses as it disqualifies people from being able to receive unemployment benefits.

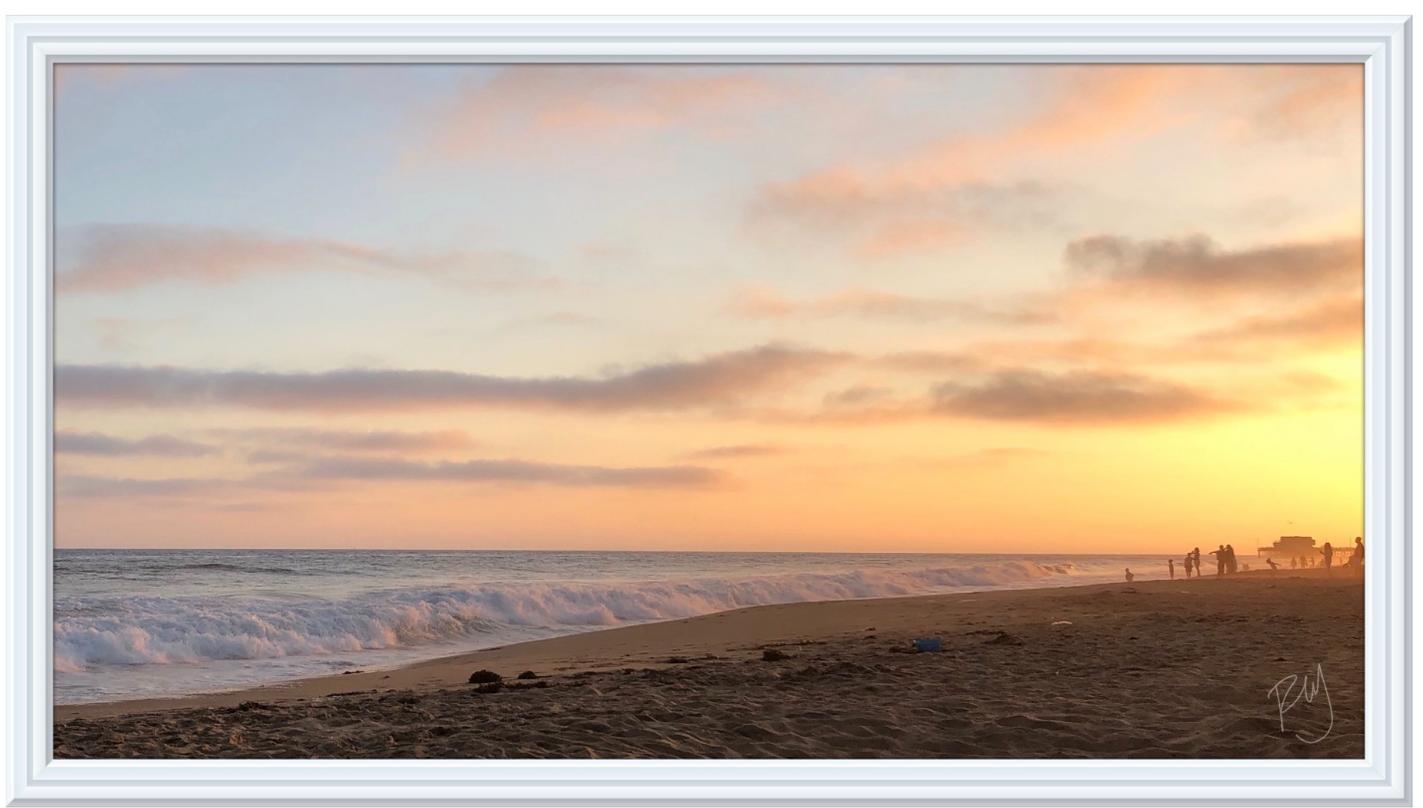
Seeking mental health services in the Latino community, is extremely difficult due to

the stigma associated with it. Seeking mental health service in the Latino community is seen as a form of weakness and betrayal to your own family. People refuse to seek mental health services of fear of being called “crazy”, or “weak”. Instead, most choose to keep their problems to themselves and lack coping skill, which can lead them to depression

There are several ways of overcoming mental health stigma in the Latino community. One of the ways that I recommend individuals wanting to seek mental health services, like grief counseling, is by becoming informed of the benefits of therapy. Seeking mental health services in the Latino community is so stigmatized because people are often misinformed which creates misconceptions and stereotypes.

If you do not feel comfortable seeking mental health services directly, you can start off by talking to your primary care doctor who can help you discuss treatment plans and refer you to a specialist. After seeking help from your doctor or mental health agency, it is important to encourage family members be part of the treatment plan to help remove the stigma behind therapy and have a positive outcome.

As a Latina social worker, I understand how uncomfortable seeking therapy services might feel. Therapy services will not only help alleviate your symptoms, but also erase the mental health stigma one day at a time. COVID-19 may have you feeling unable to grieve adequately and might make you feel uncertain about the future. I encourage everyone to approach your problems with compassion, and empathy. Create a routine where you follow precautionary measures to avoid the spread of infection, but most importantly be alert and informed of your symptoms and take action if experiencing any.



“Grief is like the ocean; it comes on waves ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim.”
- Vicki Harrison

Movie Recommendation

The Bucket List

(2007) PG-13 | 1h 37min

Comedy, Drama

Starring:

Jack Nicholson, Morgan Freeman

This is a buddy film with the unlikelyst buddies. After sharing a hospital room, Edward, a middle-class mechanic, and Tom, a wealthy business executive, come up with a list of things they want to do before they kicked the bucket—their Bucket List.

Together they go on a series of adventures, ticking off items on their lists: skydiving, getting a tattoo, driving a racecar, reconnecting with estranged family, and traveling the world, among others.

This movie explores disparities across race, wealth, bonds that can form despite differences, and in the face of tragedy. Even a dozen years later, this movie remains entertaining and relevant to current day America

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. All articles in Epilogue are written by Reid Jacobs, unless otherwise noted.

Unhealthy grief comes in many forms, but they are all destructive to the griever or those around them. The list here is by no means comprehensive, but it lists many of the most common or most destructive. I should also note, that many healthy ways to cope can become unhealthy if taken to an extreme.

We encourage you to call us if you are concerned about unhealthy ways you or a loved one are coping with grief: 818-559-1460

- Substance abuse
- Reckless behavior
- Overspending
- Self-harm (Cutting/Burning)
- Violence against self or others
- Avoiding grief completely
- Extreme Isolation
- Over/under eating
- Catastrophizing

Grief-tivity: Creative Grief Activity

Memory Mobile

Life sometimes feels like a balancing act. Grief can come along and throw everything askew. Create a Memory Mobile to take back some control.

Like grief, there is no one right way to make a mobile. Here I describe a beginner's design for adults and kids. Substitute materials that you prefer. Add glitter. Paint it black. Use large twigs instead of chopsticks. You can find a plethora of ideas online too!

If you're feeling less crafty, you can buy a photo mobile online and add your own pictures to customize.



Kikkerland Clip Photo Mobile
<https://amz.run/3LtD>



- 8 Paperclips
- 8 Photos
- 2 Chopsticks
- 4 Popsicle Sticks
- 1 Clothes Hanger
- 3 yards String or Yarn

1. Cut string into 7" pieces.
2. Attach paperclips to 8 strings
3. Tie the opposite end of the paper-clipped strings to the ends of 4 popsicle sticks
4. Add a string to the middle of each popsicle stick.
5. Tie the middle strings to the ends of both chopsticks.
6. Add a string to the middle of each chopstick and attach to each end of the coat hanger.
7. Add photos to the paperclips and hang.



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Faith & Hope Hospice and Palliative Care seeks to be the premier provider of hospice, palliative, and bereavement care in Los Angeles County and the surrounding areas.

Our goal is to improve the quality of life for people facing life-limiting and terminal illness, the people important to them, and our community at large by utilizing an interdisciplinary, holistic approach.



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