



FAITH & HOPE HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE

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Epilogue

Bereavement Newsletter

September/October 2020

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Grief vs. Depression

Feelings of sadness are nearly universal with grief. Common signs include sadness, guilt, anger, changes in appetite, crying, heaviness in the body, aches and pain, lost sense of meaning, and sleep problems, among others. Many grieving people say they feel depressed, which seems normal for grief. Yet, there is a difference between grief and clinical depression.

Grief is a normal, natural response to loss. Depression is not. It is a medical condition separate from grief that requires treatment. Treatments often include some form of talk therapy and sometimes medications. In fact, depression medications may be unable to address the profound feelings of grief because of how they work. Depression seems to be caused by chemicals in the brain becoming imbalanced

(continued on p. 6)

Book Recommendation

Grief is a Journey: Finding Your Path Through Loss

by Kenneth J. Doka, PhD

Grief is unique to each individual, to each type of relationship, and each type of loss. There are traditional expectations and rituals for death and other loss. Doka discusses the importance of these- the magic power they have. He goes on to show how to tailor these rituals to the individual, making them more meaningful and helpful. Grief is a process that can feel like a journey. Sometimes, the journey is smooth and straightforward, other times it's winding and complicated.

Grief varies by the type of loss (spouse, child, sibling, etc.). The grief that accompanies a friend's death caused by a heart attack will likely be different than if the same friend died by an intentional drug overdose. In this book, Doka explores the journeys that grief has in all its forms. He provides tools for self-help but discusses when to seek professional support in coping with grief.

Published 2016; ISBN: 978-1476771519

A Note From Your Bereavement Services Coordinator

And COVID continues. We all thought this would be a passing event, something that lasted a few weeks or months at most. It seems that it will be quite some time before we get through this all. It's almost certain that we will have some permanent effects, our "new normal" as they say. It's still too soon to tell what exactly that will look like.

We do know it's leaving a lasting mark across all aspects of life, from the ways we grieve and remember the dead to the way children attend school. Grief has a similar effect, changing our world, affecting all parts of our lives. We grieve not only for those who've died, but for our lives as they once were. Part of the grief process is adapting to the new reality of our world. This is an ongoing process. Yes, it can be difficult. It can also bring relief and the opportunity for growth. We may find resilience that we've never realized was there. We can find new friendships and connections. It may allow us to let go of old, unhealthy relationships and behaviors that have weighed us down for years.

Know that it's okay to feel grief for not only our loved ones, but the changes that result from their death. It's okay to grieve the world as it was before the pandemic. And it's okay to grow through grief as well.

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



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



Grief never ends... But it changes. It's a passage, not a place to stay. Grief is not a sign of weakness, nor a lack of faith... it is the price of love. -Author Unknown

Bereavement Services Available

Despite COVID-19, we continue to provide our full range bereavement services, although all in-person support has moved to an online format. In addition to this bereavement newsletter & our periodic mailings, Faith & Hope Hospice also provides:

- Resources via email
- Phone-based support
- Web-based counseling for individuals and families
- Referrals
- Annual Patient Memorial

Contact Reid at **818-559-1460** to request these services.

Grief Explored: Grief Work

Grief doesn't just happen to us. The ways we cope and adjust aren't things that just happen either. Grief can, in fact, be a lot of work. It includes the physical and emotional responses that come with a death or major loss. Those initial responses happen on their own. Other aspects of grief take effort and action from the bereaved person.

The work of grief includes the adaptations we make after a loss, changes to daily life, managing emotions and reaching out for help or support. The process of grief work allows the bereaved to progress through grief, its symptoms and impacts to life.

So, what happens if we don't do the work required by grief? For some, it's easier to push down the difficult feelings and try to trudge along. This may come from fear or even by society's expectation for us to be "strong" in the face of loss. Sometimes, it's necessary to "postpone" grief. (to get affairs in order, plan a funeral, support children, etc.) But grief can only be postponed for so long. Eventually, grief will come.

What is Grief Work?

Grief work has three main parts:

1. Release old attachments and change the nature of attachment to the deceased.
2. Readjust to a new environment where the deceased is missing.
3. Form new relationships.

Now, let's look at what these mean. We can retain a connection to the deceased, but the way we connect changes. A simple form of this is to refer to the deceased in the past tense. This often comes naturally, but it can be difficult or painful at first. The change may even take a conscious effort. Over time, we

become less reliant on them, learning to be more independent.

This change takes on a new form when there was an abusive relationship. Death can cause a sense of burden or oppression to lift. The deceased can no longer cause physical harm but recognizing this and emotional recovery may require help from a therapist.

Readjusting to the world also comes in many forms. This can mean taking on new chores (balancing the checkbook, mowing the lawn, etc.) or asking someone else for assistance with these. The adjustment can be something as minor as changing the thermostat to the survivor's comfort level. Adjusting to the new world may require survivors to find a new confidant or trusted advisor.

This brings us to the new relationships. First, existing relationships will change. An adult child may find themselves becoming the primary caregiver for a surviving parent. Some friendships will grow stronger as they provide support during the grieving process, while other relationships fade away. The bereaved person may find they have a new relationship with themselves. They can find a new level of independence and resilience. Relationships with new people will form too, from friendships to new romance.

Clearly, there's a lot that goes on with grief and much may feel like work. Grief is a process, a journey and it takes time. That's okay. Ignoring grief or trying to deny these changes is, in the end, counterproductive and possibly harmful. Allow yourself to ask for help when you need it. Allow yourself to feel your emotions, and allow yourself to grow.

Grief doesn't just happen to you. You can take some control by doing the work of grief.



Light the Night: Annual Patient Memorial

It's the time of the year again when we ask you to join our "Light the Night" ceremony, as we "honor, celebrate, and remember" the patients who have died in the past year. Candles will light up in memory of Faith & Hope Hospice's patients, and we hope you will join us in this beautiful evening.

The celebration will be held on **Sunday, November 8, 2020 @ 6:00pm**

A recording of the ceremony will be available online after the live event for those who cannot join us. Due to social-distancing restrictions, this year's memorial will be hosted virtually using Zoom.

To RSVP: Call us at **818-559-1460** or email at: info@faithandhopehospice.com
Please confirm your attendance before Friday, October 16.

As part of this celebration of life, we ask that you provide us with a photo of your loved one via email: info@faithandhopehospice.com or you may send it by mail to our office: 1575 N. Lake Ave, Suite 208, Pasadena, CA 91104. Photos will appear in a slide show during the ceremony as we honor their memory. We are also happy to include loved ones who have died in the past year who were not on our service. You can call to let us know that you would like to add their name or send a picture to be included as well.

Epilogue: Online

Did you know that you can download every issue of *Epilogue* online? Visit www.faithandhopehospice.com/epilogue There you can access all the great content from our previous editions and forward digital copies to your friends and family!

Faith and Hope Hospice is expanding our volunteer opportunities. As COVID-19 is changing everything in our world, our volunteer program needed to adapt as well. Unfortunately, we no longer offer face-to-face visits with our patients, but we have some great ways to support our patients and staff!

The new opportunities include:

Pen Pals: Skilled nursing and assisted living facilities are severely restricting who can enter their buildings. This has limited almost all visitors, even family can't visit. We can address this by sending letters or postcards to these patients. It's an easy and friendly way to engage with patients from a distance.

Memory Bears: These are teddy bears made of a patient's clothing and given to their loved ones. These bears help the family (children and adults) keep a connection after the person dies. We provide the materials; the volunteer will need a sewing machine and some experience sewing.

Filing / Packets: We always have paperwork that needs to be filed and appreciate any help we can get with this. We also have packets of information (Hospice Admission, Advance Care Planning, etc.). These are truly helpful for the patients and families that we serve.

Receptionist Support: As you can imagine, we get a lot of calls. Currently, we all answer calls; whomever is available answers. This keeps the wait time down for callers. It can be really distracting though. Having a volunteer to answer calls would be a great relief for all the staff in the office. This role will require a larger time commitment than most of the other opportunities as it requires at least 4 hours in the office.

Bereavement Phone Calls: The bereavement program provides one year of grief support to the families of deceased patients. This includes mailings and check-in phone calls. Each call typically last under 5 minutes. Volunteers will be given extra training before making calls and the Bereavement Services Coordinator will be available to support the volunteer while making these calls.

Legacy Projects: It is important for many people to leave something lasting after they die, something for their family to connect with even after the death. For many people this means writing their life story or important events from their life. Some make a picture collage or other artistic projects.

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These are the new opportunities that we have identified, but we're open to new ideas too!

Let us know if there are other ways that you would like to be involved.

Call Jessica at 818-559-1460 or email her at jvillafranco@faithandhopehospice.com if you would like to help out with any of these projects or to share ideas.

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.

Recipes from the Heart

This is my grandma's recipe and usually made on family occasions. It is a sweet dessert and loved by many especially with someone who has a sweet tooth.

I learned this recipe from my grandma, not everyone in the family knows the recipe. She only passed it on to close family members that cooked with her. Trick: Love and patience :). It is simple and easy to make.

-Ixinnia Gutierrez, LVN
Care Coordinator

Leche Flan

Ingredients

10 egg yolks	1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 can sweetened condensed milk	1-2 tsp. lemon zest
1 can evaporated milk	2 tbsp. brown sugar

Directions

1. In a large container, mix egg yolks, milks (sweetened condensed and evaporated) thoroughly. Add lemon zest and vanilla extract to taste.
2. Add thin layer of brown sugar on a tin oval mold, heat it on oven stove to caramelize the sugar to golden brown color. Keep cool for few minutes. Might use 2-3 tin mold per mixed ingredients.
3. Add mixture to tin can mold halfway through, cover with foil.
4. To cook: Steamer is needed. Place tin can mold on steamer. Steam it for about 15-20 minutes in a low heat fire.
5. To check if flan is cooked: use toothpick and poke the flan. To determine if ready, no mixture should stick on the toothpick. Once cooked, remove from steamer, keep it cool, then refrigerate.
6. To serve the flan: turn the tin can mold upside down on a serving plate so caramelized sugar will be on top.

Grief vs. Depression *(continued from cover)*

in specific parts of the brain. Medications work to balance these chemicals. Grief, however, does not work like that. In fact, recent research suggests that grief is processed in a different part of the brain than depression.

Does that mean that depression is worse than grief or vice versa? No. They are just different with different causes. The trajectory of grief and depression are different. The intense feelings of grief tend to naturally decrease over time. Although we never "get over" grief, it does change with time and a grieving person adapts to the world after the loss. Depression, however, rarely goes away on its own and often gets

worse if not properly treated. It impacts daily life and requires treatment to improve. While grief tends to come in waves, depression is ever-present.

You don't have to know if you are experiencing depression or grief to get help. A grief counselor or therapist can talk with you and may make a referral to a physician if they suspect depression. You can also talk to your doctor first. Let them know your situation and they will guide you from there.

If you ever have thoughts of hurting or killing yourself, please call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255

Movie Recommendation

Coco

(2017) PG | 1h 45min

Animation, Adventure, Family

Starring: Anthony Gonzalez,
Gael García Bernal, Benjamin Bratt

This movie is set in Mexico during the holiday Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), a time when souls can visit the living world. The holiday celebrates death and life, focusing on ancestors and loved ones who have died. The holiday is sometimes compared to Halloween, but the two are quite different. Where Halloween focuses on fear, death, ghosts and other monsters, Día de los Muertos focus on joy, family, and connection with ancestors.

Coco explores many aspects of the holiday and Mexican culture. We see ofrendas, alters to the ancestors decorated with photos, food, family photos & candles. We also see marigold petals used to decorate the alters and to make paths of petals that guide souls to the land of the living.

This fun adventure takes Miguel, a young, aspiring musician, to the Land of the Dead where he finds his family that he has only seen in pictures and heard about in stories. While there he also discovers this identity of his great-great-grandfather.

This is fun and beautiful movie. It celebrates Mexican culture and highlights the sacred bonds of family.

Grief-tivity: Creative Grief Activity

Luminaries

This project lets you make something pretty, useful, and full of memories. Decorate a simple jar to make a stunning decorative light. Use your imagination to come up with ideas to decorate your jar. You can try colorful paper, glitter, paint, lace, photos, quotes, or magazine clippings. Be sure to include items that remind you of a loved one who has died to make this extra special. The luminary comes to life when you add a flickering light.

Supplies

- Mason Jar
- Mod Podge
- Sponge Brush
- Decorations
- Flameless/LED Candle
- Glue

Directions

1. Wash and dry jar thoroughly. |
2. Dab Mod Podge onto a small section of the



3. Apply decorations to the wet Mod Podge.
4. Once dry, paint or write on the jar.
5. When everything is dry, another layer of Mod Podge to seal.
6. Glue on rhinestones, pebbles, or other items that do not need to be sealed.
7. Drop in a flameless candle & enjoy.



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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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