Rearranging, From The Outside In

By Susan Hamme, LSW

This season is traditionally marked as the season of new beginnings, fresh starts and commitment to our resolutions and goals. For those who are grieving, the relief of having survived the holidays may have worn off. They are looking at spring and questioning “now what?” During the first year of grief try to avoid big life-changing decisions. You may not have the energy to look beyond the end of today. Consider embracing the potential hope of this season in a manageable way. Start small and look around outside yourself to see if it initiates a little bit of change and healing inside.

In Psychology Today (April 2015) there is an article about how rearranging external surroundings creates a pleasant change in perspective, mood and creativity. When I read this, I called my mother, who was famous for rearranging multiple times a year. Her response to me was, “Sometimes you just need for things to look different.” For her it was a tool for coping that allowed her to feel in control of something. “The furniture stays where you put it.” It also made her feel that she had accomplished something and it always changed her perspective. The article in Psychology Today says that when you place things where you want them, it can help you achieve inner and outer harmony.

What about when you are grieving? What if the things in the house are a combination of yours and your loved one who died? As mentioned before, start small! There can be guilty feelings associated with removing or moving things that belonged to the deceased. Start by simply moving things around. Many people still have medical supplies lying around. Do those remind you of the life or the illness of your loved one? Perhaps they could be moved out of sight for now.

For many, it is the chair in the living room where their loved one always sat. How hard it is to come into that room every day and want or expect to see him or her sitting there. Perhaps moving the chair to area or another room is the place to start. If it can’t be moved, a new pillow, cover or blanket may help. For many who are bereaved, being able to sleep again in the bedroom is prompted by a little rearranging or a new comforter. Some may choose to remove the pictures, flowers, and cards gathered from the months surrounding the funeral and replace those with pictures of your loved one that remind you of great times spent together. A fresh coat of paint, cleaned carpets, a new tablecloth, or a few different pictures on the wall may make an enormous difference. What begins to happen is that you become more connected to the things that you like and that make you happy. Give it a try. Pick a room or even a corner and get started. You may find a part of yourself that has been too busy, too tired, or too overwhelmed to show up.
FROM THE EDITOR

Grieving the Death of a Parent

Spring is right around the corner complete with fresh air, warm breezes and budding plants. Spring is also the time of year when Mother’s Day and Father’s Day are celebrated. For those grieving the death of a parent or guardian, these holidays can stir mixed emotion.

On Mother’s Day and Father’s Day we take time to honor our parents for their many sacrifices and selfless acts. Our parents may have been our heroes, our confidants, our friends or disciplinarians. We may or may not have had a healthy relationship with them. Nevertheless, the absence of their physical presence is tangible. Gone are the daily phone calls, the welcoming smiles and simple acts of kindness.

Knowing that parents will one day die does not diminish the pain and soul-searching that is experienced when they do. The death may have occurred during the busiest time of your life and career. Perhaps you are beginning to confront your own aging process. You may find that you are not only grieving the death of your parent, but also for the passing of your childhood and youth.

Grief is not an event but an ongoing process. Be kind to yourself this spring. Find a way to carry the love for your parent in your heart as you move forward in life.

At left, we have included some books which we have found useful. There are also support groups and individual counseling that you may find helpful. You may want to join us for the Mother’s Day Tea at the Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center on April 30.

RESOURCES:
The Orphaned Adult: Understanding and Coping with Grief and Change after the Death of our Parents – Alexander Levy
Grieving the Death of a Mother – Harold Ivan Smith
Grieving the Death of a Father – Harold Ivan Smith
When Parents Die: A Guide for Adults – Edward Myers
Motherless Daughters (and workbook) – Hope Edelman

With comfort and support,

Diane Snyder Cowan, MA, MT-BC, CHPCA
216.486.6312
dscowan@hospicewr.org

With comfort and support,

THE ELISABETH SEVERANCE PRENTISS BEREAVEMENT CENTER
300 East 185th Street
Cleveland, OH 44119-1330
216.486.6838

THE ROBERTSON BEREAVEMENT CENTER
5075 Windfall Road
Medina, OH 44256
330.725.1900

Walk to Remember 2016
Cleveland Metroparks Zoo
3900 Wildlife Way, Cleveland, OH 44109
Sunday, June 12, 2016
Bridget Murphy 216.383.3715
This landscape painting of the view overlooking Lake Erie was painted by a woman on the first anniversary of her husband’s death. As she sat on the rocks, lake water sprayed on her watercolor, becoming a part of the painting. This she viewed as her husband’s playfulness, and as a sign that he is still with her in spirit.

Bereaved people are left with a hole in their hearts and an empty space in their lives. Their whole identity may be up for question: Who am I now that my loved one has died? What do I do now? What is my purpose or role now? How do I go on without my loved one? These are all questions that grieving people have to find the answers to. One person’s answers may not be the same as another’s. Answering these questions is one of the central tasks of grief. Bereaved people have to reinvent and rebuild their lives, trying to make meaning now that their loved one is not present to share it with them.

Part of the grieving person has died along with their beloved spouse, partner, child, sibling, friend, parent or other relationship. However, the bereaved also carries with them part of their loved one in their memories and their lived experience.

The time that you shared has changed you and will forever be a part of you. Your life is a reflection of the life you experienced together. As a grieving person, you will discover the old and new activities, values, and traditions which bring meaning to your life.

TRIBUTE GARDENS AND WALKWAYS

Remembering Your Loved One

THE GARDENS AT DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE AND AMES FAMILY HOSPICE HOUSE offer beautiful outdoor spaces for meditation and reflection. We invite you to add your own memory to the Vista Walk on the eastside or to the Tribute Walk in Westlake by purchasing a paving brick and writing your own personal dedication. For more information, please call the Development Team at 855.475.0245 or visit our tribute page online at tributes.hospicewr.org.

Art therapy at The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center can help facilitate this process. The action of creating art in memory of your loved one aids you in discovering new meaning. As you make decisions about which colors and media to use, what images to include, and which items to add to your art piece, you discover symbolism in your art which translates into meaning in your life.

Meaning Making and Art Therapy

By Molly Postotnik, ATR-BC, PC-CR

This shadowbox was created in memory of one woman’s parents. It includes some personal items, such as writing samples and photos, and other added symbols that tell a story of her family heritage and religious background.

This spoon was painted and decorated in memory of one woman’s mother. She used colors that they both loved and it helped her pay tribute to her mother’s nurturing presence in her life.
Bereavement Support Groups

Unless otherwise noted, our support groups are open to anyone who has had a loved one die. Groups are subject to change. Call to verify time and location.

Adult Support Groups

**Circle of Hope Series**
A four or six-week educational support group for adults who have had a loved one die. Registration is required. Please call the facilitator listed below for more information or to register.

- **Ashtabula**
  - St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
  - 89 E. Satin Street, Jefferson, Ohio
  - Thursdays, March 24 – May 5, 1:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
  - Susan Hamme 440.997.6619

- **The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**
  - Wednesdays, March 23 – April 27, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
  - Diana Battles 216.486.6364

- **Lakeshore Campus**
  - Mondays, April 18 – May 23, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
  - Tensie Holland 216.383.3741

- **Lakewood Office**
  - The Robertson Bereavement Center
  - Thursdays, March 24 – April 28, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
  - JoDee Coubter 216.383.2222 ext. 1301

**Hope & Healing**
An ongoing monthly support group for grieving adults. Registration is not required. Please call facilitator for more information.

- **Lakeshore Campus**
  - Third Monday of the month, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
  - April Ratcliffe 216.383.3782

- **Mentor Office**
  - First Tuesday of the month, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.
  - Lisa Florjancic 216.383.2222 ext. 1052

- **Warrensville Office**
  - Second Wednesday of the month, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
  - Mary Murphy 216.454.0399

**Hopeful Hearts**
A monthly grief support group for anyone age 60 and over who has experienced the death of someone special in the past two years.

- **Holy Spirit Family Center**
  - Fourth Tuesday of the month, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
  - Chemar Bryant 216.383.2222 ext. 1905

**Parent Loss – Monthly**
A monthly support group for adults adjusting to life after the death of one or both parents.

- **Lakewood Office**
  - Second Tuesday of the month, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
  - Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114

**Parent Loss – Series**
A four-week support group for adults adjusting to life after the death of one or both parents. Registration required.

- **Ashtabula Office**
  - Wednesday, April 27 – May 18, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
  - Susan Hamme 440.997.6619

**Community Support Groups & Activities**

**Massage Therapy**
Providing Comfort Through Touch
Stress is a normal part of life. As you move along grief’s journey, you may face many challenges. Massage therapy is a tool useful in helping to cope with stress, anxiety and fatigue.

- **The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center**
  - To schedule an appointment, call Felicia Dunlop at 216.486.6335
  - $25 for 30 minutes, $50 for 60 minutes

**Yoga Matters**
Ongoing Yoga Class designed for caregivers and bereaved.
Give yourself the gift of time and attention. The practice of Yoga helps you tune into yourself and take care of your physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

- **Lakeshore Campus**
  - Wednesdays, 5:30 to 6:45 p.m.
  - $40/month or $12 Drop-in (sliding scale fee available)
  - 216.486.6838

**Community of Hope**
A six-week group for members of the LGBTQ community who have experienced the death of a loved one. Whether a new loss or an old loss, come for education, support and discussion in a safe to be you environment.

- **Lakewood Office**
  - Monday, May 2 – June 6, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
  - Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114
Parents Together – Monthly
A monthly support group for parents who have experienced the death of an adult child.

Warrensville Heights Office
Second Thursday of the month, 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.
Vicki Jackson 216.383.2222 ext. 1197

Parents Together – Series
A five-week group for parents who have experienced the death of an adult child. Registration required.

Lakewood Office
Wednesday, April 13 – May 11, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114

Women’s Workshop
For women who have experienced the death of a partner, significant other, or spouse. Come for discussion, support and education. Registration required.

Lakewood Office
Tuesday, March 22, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
Judy Beckman 216.383.2222 ext. 1114

Suicide Loss
This group is for those individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide. Grief following loss by suicide is complex and emotions can be intense. As a result, survivors of suicide share a common bond. Although each individual’s situation is unique, the feelings, emotions and questions asked are often similar. Registration required.

Medina Office
The Robertson Bereavement Center
Third Tuesday of the month, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Theresa Suing 330.725.1900

Partners/Spousal Loss Groups
Monthly support groups for adults who have experienced the death of a spouse, partner, or significant other. Groups are open-ended and ongoing.

New Beginnings
Adults age 55 and younger.

Medina Office
The Robertson Bereavement Center
Second Tuesday of the month, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
JoDee Coulter 216.383.2222 ext. 1301

Westlake
St John Medical Center,
Westshore Professional Building
29160 Center Ridge Road, Suite R
Second Wednesday of the month, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Chemarr Bryant 216.383.2222 ext. 1905

New Journey
Adults of any age.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Fourth Thursday of the month, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Diana Battles 216.486.6364

“Special Event”
Dinner and a Movie
Come join us for a light dinner and a film examining concepts of grief and loss. We will view the movie and then have a short discussion. Movie – The Way. Registration required.

Warrensville Office
Tuesday, March 22, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Vicki Jackson 216.383.2222 ext. 1197

Helping Hands/Healing Hearts
A monthly support group for children ages 5 to 12 and their caregivers, who have experienced the death of a loved one. Groups are expressive in nature. While the children are meeting, there is a co-existing support group for the adults. Call to register by March 30.

Mother’s Day Tea
For those who have experienced the death of their mother or mother figure, please join us for a Mother’s Day tea where we will honor the memory of those relationships. Call to register by April 22.

THE ELISABETH SEVERANCE PRENTISS BEREAVEMENT CENTER
300 East 185th Street
Cleveland, OH 44119-1330
216.486.6838

THE ROBERTSON BEREAVEMENT CENTER
5075 Windfall Road
Medina, OH 44256
330.725.1900

AMES FAMILY HOSPICE HOUSE
30080 Hospice Way
Westlake, OH 44145-1077
440.414.7349 or 835.281.5727

ASHTABULA OFFICE
1166 Lake Avenue
Ashtabula, OH 44004-2930
440.997.6619

DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE AND LAKESHORE CAMPUS
300 East 185th Street
Cleveland, OH 44119-1330
216.383.2222 or 800.707.8922

HEADQUARTERS
17876 St. Clair Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44110
216.383.2222 or 800.707.8922

LAKEWOOD OFFICE
14601 Detroit Avenue, Suite 100
Lakewood, OH 44107-4212
216.227.9048

LORAIN COUNTY OFFICE
2173 N. Ridge Road E., Suite H
Lorain, OH 44055-3400
440.787.2080

MENTOR OFFICE
5786 Heisley Road
Mentor, OH 44060-1830
440.951.8692

MEDINA OFFICE
5075 Windfall Road
Medina, OH 44256
330.722.4771

WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS OFFICE
4670 Richmond Road, Suite 200
Warrensville Hts, OH 44128-5978
216.454.0399

WESTLAKE OFFICE
29101 Health Campus Drive
Building 2, Suite 400
Westlake, OH 44145-5268
440.892.6680

Hospice of the Western Reserve Office Locations
Healing Arts Workshops 2016

Healing Arts Workshops provide grieving people with a creative outlet for their grief and are open to the community. No art experience is necessary. Call Mollie Postotnik at 216.486.6544 or email her at mpostotnik@hospicewr.org to register no later than four days in advance of workshop date. Suggested $5.00 donation for supplies.

Fabric and Feelings
A group where participants use fabric techniques such as quilting (sometimes involving clothing from loved ones) or photo transfer to create quilts, pillows, dolls and other types of lasting memories. Sewing expertise is not necessary.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Weekly – Thursdays, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
Mollie Postotnik 216.486.6544

Ames Family Hospice House – Art Studio
Monthly – Fourth Wednesday of the month, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Mollie Postotnik 216.486.6544

Art For Relaxation:
Relax-O-Doodles
Doodling is usually done while your mind is concentrating on something else like talking on the phone or daydreaming. In this workshop, you will create a “conscious” doodle as a meditative practice to give your mind a rest from your grief.

Westlake Office
Tuesday, March 8, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Warrensville Heights Office
Wednesday, March 9, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Thursday, March 17, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Stepping Stones
Make a cement stepping stone to commemorate a loved one. Small stones, tiles, glass beads and personal mementos may be embedded. Names and dates can be stamped. May be used in your garden (if you polyurethane it after it dries) or can be displayed indoors.

Westlake Office
Tuesday, April 12, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Thursday, April 14, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Warrensville Heights Office
Wednesday, April 20, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

LGBTQ Art Therapy Event: My Rock
This event is for members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer community who have experienced the death of a loved one.

Was your loved one the rock in your life? Decorate with paint, images, embellishments, or words to remember the strengths of your loved one. You may bring a large flat unpolished rock (about the size of your hand or smaller), or pick one at the workshop.

Westlake Office
Tuesday, April 26, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Thursday, April 28, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Mindfulness Garden
You’ve seen those desktop Zen sand gardens that help with meditation. This is your opportunity to create one for yourself that helps you remember your loved one. It can serve as a mindful comfort to help calm and soothe.

Westlake Office
Tuesday, May 10, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Warrensville Heights Office
Wednesday, May 11, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Thursday, May 26, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Monthly Scrapbook Night
Remember that scrapbook of your loved one(s) that you never got around to finishing? No matter where you are in the process or if you haven’t yet begun, come join us! Bring your photos (copies of originals are recommended), handwritten notes, poetry, etc. Scrapbooks and some embellishments provided.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
First Thursday of the month, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Kidz Art: Their Chair
Your loved one probably had a favorite chair. It can be difficult to see that chair empty. In this workshop, you can paint and decorate a chair in memory of your loved one. If you wish, a small photo and small mementos can be incorporated into the piece. Kids (ages 6 and up), bring your family members along for this workshop. Light refreshments provided.

Westlake Office
Tuesday, June 7, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Tuesday, June 21, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Grief Camps 2016

We offer a variety of camps to meet the grieving needs of children and adolescents. Camps provide the opportunity to be with others who are also grieving the death of a loved one. Camps are expressive in nature and led by experienced facilitators in art, music, play and nature activities.

For more information or a registration packet, please contact us at 216.486.6838.

Teen Retreat
Bridges of Courage is a retreat for teens ages 13-17 that have experienced the death of a loved one.

The Elisabeth Severance Prentiss Bereavement Center
Saturday, April 16, 3:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Bridges of Hope Grief Camp
A camp for children 8–12 years old which provides a safe place to talk about grief-related questions and feelings.

Thousand Trails Campground
2021 Mill Creek Road, Jefferson
Friday, May 6, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

SAVE THE DATES

Riding Through Grief Camp
This camp is offered in collaboration with Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center for children ages 8–12 who have experienced the death of a loved one. Through riding and working with horses, campers explore grief issues supported by trained counselors.

Fieldstone Farm
June 20 – June 24

Together We Can Family Day
at the Beach (all ages)
Join us for fun and festivities as we honor the life of your special person.

Mentor Headlands Mentor, Ohio
June 11, 3:00 to 7:00 pm

Together We Can Medina
(ages 6-13)
A week long day camp for children ages 6-13 who have experienced the death of a loved one.

Krabil Shelter Medina, Ohio
June 20 – 24, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Together We Can Overnight
(ages 8-14)
Red Oak Camp Kirtland, Ohio
October 15 – 16
Pick up and drop off times to be determined.

Talking About Death
By Dominique Butler, MSSA, LISW

Talking to your child about the death of a loved one can be intimidating. Many parents fear saying the wrong thing and scarring their child for life. Those who have toddlers or preschool age children often worry about their child’s ability to understand “death” and its finality. The concept of death is limited for toddlers and preschool age children. They do not understand that death is irreversible and may not have the words to express their feelings. Therefore it is best to use simple, honest and direct language when speaking with your child. Use good judgment when telling them about the death, but do not worry about protecting them from the truth.

Many children in this age group will exhibit more behavioral symptoms when grieving. They begin to wet the bed, experience nightmares, have temper tantrums, feel separation anxiety, and ask repeated questions. If you find yourself searching for the right words, below are 8 suggestions to help you talk to your toddler or preschool age child about the death of their loved one and about their grief reactions.

1. Give yourself time to talk to your child and time for your child to ask questions.
2. Explain that when people die, they don’t eat, sleep or breathe.
3. Reassure your child that you will be there for them. Ask: What can I do to help?
4. Find ways to help your child stay connected to the deceased. Look at pictures, talk about the deceased, etc.
5. Draw or paint pictures, play games with them to help them share and express their feelings.
6. Keep their life as normal as possible. Following their normal routine is helpful.
7. Reassure them that they won’t forget about their loved one.
8. Explain that it’s okay to be happy.

If you find that your child is in need of more support, please contact us. We are here to assist individuals of all ages adjust to the “new” normal without the deceased and support them through their grief process.
Chicken Soup for the Soul - Grieving and Recovery

By Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, and Amy Newmark

In Chicken Soup for the Soul there are 101 stories about surviving the loss of a loved one. They cover all types of loss—a spouse, sibling, parent, loved one and friend. The narrators, who come from all ages and all walks of life, describe how they found hope and strength through the grief process. Each account is comforting and inspirational. The book is divided into 10 sections: Making the Most of Memories, Finding Comfort, Helping Hands, Attitude Adjustments, At the End, Moving Forward, Across the Generations, New Beginnings, Healing in Time and Signs from Beyond.

Chicken Soup for the Soul is easy to read and very reflective. It reminds us that grief is a shared human experience. One reviewer stated that “it is like having your own portable support group.” By reading this book, I hope you can find some words of encouragement from the stories that are written from the heart.