



March 2012 Bereavement Newsletter

Thoughts on Tears

There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love.

Washington Irving

If you'd like to talk about your experience of grief, would like more information or to schedule a consultation, please call GRMC Hospice bereavement program at (575) 574-4934. Chris McIntosh, Bereavement Counselor, welcomes your call at anytime.

IS IT GRIEF OR DEPRESSION?

The symptoms of grief are very similar to those of depression, but with some very important distinctions. Think of the depression check-lists you've seen... sadness, frequent crying, increased irritability, change in appetite, change in sleeping pattern, lack of energy, loss of motivation, loss of interest in things previously enjoyed... Sound familiar??? These are the same things you will see listed on the Common Grief Responses list found at Gila Regional Hospice!

When do you consider going to the doctor for a check up? When ever you want to. A visit with your physician is always recommended while grieving, since our immune system is depleted and we are susceptible to illness. But, as far as being clinically depressed, one should note the following: Are you feeling hopeless? As though you can't imagine ever feeling good again? Do you think about suicide? **OR** do you recognize that grief is a process that you are in and the depth of sadness will pass as time goes on? Do you realize moments of joy or fun, when life feels worth living? It is a matter of intensity and consistency. Depression doesn't lift, but grief does. Depression consistently feels oppressive, when grief has moments of relief. There is help for both depression and grief, so **PLEASE** call or consider scheduling a consultation to further discuss this important issue.

Individual and Group Support Available

Please remember that the Gila Hospice Bereavement staff is available to support you in your **grief**. With a phone call, a personal consultation, resources or support group, we are available to assist you in your own process. Please call for more information or to schedule a consultation (575) 574-4934. **Growing Through Grief** class will be offered this month and again in the fall. **Call now for details.**

We are also willing to speak to your group about grief, loss and coping. Please call.

Do you know someone who would like to receive our bereavement newsletter? Have them call and we will place them on our mailing list, free of charge, for one year.

Your questions answered....

“What about my appetite? Will I ever get it back? My friend died 3 months ago and I am still losing weight.”

Many of us equate food with pleasure, and few aspects of grief can be considered pleasurable. Sometimes, we don't FEEL like eating. Sometimes eating makes us feel queasy. Weight loss often comes with the loss of a loved one. It is important to remember to eat healthily. And moderate exercise can help with appetite as well. We can seek comfort through food, but the comfort doesn't last unless the food is nutritious. Don't force yourself to eat, but make wise choices about the food you do eat. Be gentle with yourself and nurture yourself with healthy foods as you heal in grief. Consider visiting with the hospice bereavement counselor if you have concerns.

“How is grief over loss through suicide different from grief from other losses? I have a lot of anger and I don't like it.”

Each individual's grief is unique, so generalizations can be difficult to accept. One aspect of suicide loss to reflect on is the reality that it is a sudden, often unexpected, traumatic event. Suicide can leave many unanswered questions and lots of unresolved differences. Anger is a natural, though uncomfortable, response to loss. For many, it is helpful to find a caring listener, who can acknowledge your anger and allow for feeling expression – then help you to explore alternative perspectives and approaches to dealing with your thoughts and feelings. Hospice can help. So can your pastor, chaplain or therapist. You don't have to go it alone. Support is available.



GRIEF ANALOGY FOR HEALING

Imagine your grief as a physical wound. What would you do to help it heal? You would protect it. You would clean it. You would rest it. You would understand that when it got bumped, it would hurt, possibly bleed, again. You would not scold yourself for crying at the pain, nor would you be embarrassed by the time it took to heal. You would accept that even after the scar has formed, it is still tender and will never look quite the same as it did before. You know that it will heal in its own time and in its own way.

It is the same way with grief. It demands the same gentle care that you would give to a healing wound. We just don't always approach grief with the same understanding we would a wounded leg. Remember... You can't rush the process. A wound will heal with attention and care just as you will heal in your grief with attention and care.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS **OF** **SOUTHWESTERN NEW MEXICO**

Offers friendship, understanding and hope to grieving parents, siblings and grandparents after the loss of a child, sibling or grandchild of any age. It does not matter how long it has been since your loss. Speaking is optional. You are welcome to come and just listen. Refreshments will be provided.

Meetings are held the fourth Tuesday, monthly, at 6:30 pm at the Episcopal Church, corner of 7th and Yankee Streets in Silver City.

CONTACT: Charlene Mitchell 313-7362 or www.compassionatefriends.org