



Executive Director Greg LaGoy, N.D.

Executive Director's Corner

Since there seems to be a theme in this newsletter around grief, I thought it might be appropriate to say a few things about it here also. There are a million ways to group people. There are those who know or have done or seen or experienced something, and those who do not or have not. For example, there are people who can swim and those who cannot; there are clergy and lay people; there are those who have been to Antarctica and those who have not. And there are those who have experienced the death of someone very close to them — those who have experienced grief — and those who have not. But there is a fundamental difference with regard to grief. No book, no teacher, no words, no journey, and no other experience can bridge the invisible

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chasm that lies between those who have experienced it and those who have not. A grieving person experiences a magnitude of pain and a depth of change, spanning years, that is invisible and unimaginable, except to others who have been there.

One of the most important ways that we, as hospice workers, serve our community is that we acknowledge the magnitude of grief as a human experience. To someone in grief, the fact that we recognize it and are willing to listen and talk about it, can be a lifeline in an otherwise utterly isolating experience. From the depth of grief, just being heard or just being understood is a gift of gigantic proportion. It is from this fact that most of the appreciation for our services comes. It is

not the medicine that we provide, or the expertise that we bring that engenders gratitude. When a member of our staff or one of our volunteers stands quietly in the presence of the immensity of someone's grief, both are forever touched. For the listener, it is an act of true courage to be open to feel the pain that another feels. For the person in grief, such a listener is a gift, and typically an all-too-rare one.

Most listeners try to fix how the grieving person feels. Or they “pathologize” it, so they can dismiss it. Or they just stay away. They are too uncomfortable with their own feelings around loss to be able to offer what is really needed: an open presence and a willingness to feel the immensity of what the grieving person experiences. This compassionate presence is the essential ingredient. All of us can cultivate this in ourselves if we wish. There is a lot of pain everywhere in our community. This is how we start to address it.



News from Hospice Maui

FALL 2007

DEATH

DEATH — THE ULTIMATE LOSS
HOW TO HELP A FRIEND IN THEIR GRIEF

GRIEF

I remember returning to work after my mother died. Suddenly every door to my coworkers' offices was tightly shut. Hardly anyone mumbled a word to me. There was no card. There were no flowers. No hugs. There wasn't even a kind word from 95% of them. Interestingly these people were all in the human service field with years of counseling in their background. They were all women.

This group liked to talk. They lived to “process their feelings” at endless staff meetings. This was normally a very “touchy feely” group. But bring death into the mix. Wow. That sure shut them up.

Death is uncomfortable. We don't know what to say. So unfortunately we say nothing. This is the worst possible thing you can do.

In the following weeks after my Mom died the thing that surprised me the most was reaction from others. Friends didn't send cards. Phone conversations went dead silent the minute I told callers my Mom died. I never received a single flower from a personal friend. I was one of the lucky ones. I did have at least a couple of friends who called and were very kind and let me cry endlessly. Without that support I am not sure what I would have done.

The grieving person feels shocked, afraid, depressed, suicidal, hopeless, and angry. Don't let these feelings scare you. They are normal.

Ask your friend, “What can I do for you?” They may need you to just listen, they may need you to call and know that you care.



In thinking about people's lack of reaction I thought how interesting because death isn't a freak occurrence. Given that the one thing we are guaranteed in life is ... well ... death, it strikes me as odd that people don't know how to react to it.

I thought what if someone gave a primer on WHAT TO DO WHEN A FRIEND LOSES A LOVED ONE 101.

- Always send a card. It hurts so much worse to not be acknowledged.
- Send a single flower, a plant, or a bunch of daisies. It doesn't have to be costly. Your friend will appreciate the thoughtfulness of the gesture.

- Bring food. This is so helpful.
- Don't think if we “bring it up” that they are going to get upset. They are already upset. So “bring it up.” The alternative is ignoring the death and that is significantly worse.
- Call and “check in” on your friend. It is OK to say, “I am so sorry your Mom died.” Your friend will appreciate this. Then call them every week. If this is wildly outside your comfort level, then at least leave them a message on their home machine telling them that you are thinking of them.

GRIEF PRIMER
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A News Attitude

Warmest aloha to our newest staff members — **Social Worker Layla Lions McCann and Volunteer Coordinator Mike Crall.**

Born on Oahu, but raised and currently living in Kihei, **Layla** came on board October 1. She graduated with a degree in Theater from Seattle University, then moved to Los Angeles.



Layla Lions McCann

Though extremely talented and willing and able, Hollywood just didn't discover her! Fortunately for us, since Layla was teaching in order to support herself while in California, and seeing the disparities in opportunities available to youngsters in various areas of

LA, decided to become a social worker. Layla obtained her MSW at California State University, Long Beach, and is beginning her career as a social worker with Hospice Maui.

Leila and husband Russell, who works for Lyons Plumbing, have just learned they are pregnant and are eagerly looking forward to their first child in April 2008. Welcome Layla!

Prior to moving to Maui, **Mike Crall** spent several years in Southern California where he established a 25-year career in the consumer electronics industry; 18 of those years with Bose Corporation, the loudspeaker manufacturer.

While on Maui Mike has been an active volunteer for various organizations (Maui Humane Society, Center for Spiritual Studies, Maui Dharma Center and Ipuka "Doorway to Light"). He also spent 3+ years at Mana Foods as their Bulk Food Buyer, and led initiatives in support of their organizational development.

Mike was a member of the Hospice Maui Spring 2007 Volunteer Training Class and participates in providing patient respite support. He led the public relation efforts for Hospice Maui involving sponsored and support-

ed workshops led by Frank Ostaseski and Ram Dass during the past year. He's a natural to move into the Volunteer Coordinator's position. Welcome Mike!



Mike Crall

Hospice Maui Women's T-Shirts make wonderful holiday gifts. They are available at our office, 400 Mahalani Street, Wailuku, from 8am to 4pm weekdays. For just \$20 you'll have a wonderful, unique gift for someone you love, and you'll be supporting Hospice Maui at the same time — mahalo!

Sorry to say A Hui Hou to wonderful hospice nurse, **Mary Elkins.** We all hope to have her back in our ohana in the not too distant future...



GRIEF PRIMER

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- Understand that your friend may isolate. They probably do not want to be cheered up.
- Ask your friend, "What can I do for you?" They may need you to just listen, they may need you to call and know that you care.
- Make sure you are specific. Please don't say, "I'm sorry for your loss." Say, "I'm sorry Pat died." It is always better to use the person's name. It is more personal.
- If you are grieving for the deceased person ... say that. Say for example, "I will miss your Mom also. She sure was special." It helped me to know that other people miss her as much as I do.
- Know that grieving isn't something that ends in six months, or a year. People have the subliminal attitude such as "Aren't you over it; it has been a year already?"
- Send them a book on grief. That helps. Really.
- Don't overlook the child or teen that is grieving, they are just as hurt and confused as you would be. There are books written especially for them.
- Go to the funeral to support your friend. They will never forget that you showed up. You do not need to have known the deceased.



- It is ok to say: "I don't know what to say."
- Offer to pick up the children. Offer to finish that report. Offer to pick up the dry cleaning. Often they feel helpless to take care of the mundane tasks.
- Be extra sensitive for milestones. Acknowledge that it's been one year since the loved one died. Be aware that it's Mother's Day and the person is feeling especially alone; or Valentine's Day for the loss of a partner; or the deceased person's birthday; or the first Thanksgiving without their family member or friend.
- Your friend may be angry with God, the world, and the deceased. This is normal.
- Be aware they may feel guilt.
- Tell stories about the person who died, they are cherished.

Don't say:

- "They are in a better place."
- "You need to see a therapist." They already feel low; they don't need your implication that they are crazy too, or that their grief is inappropriate.
- "Aren't you over it?" The pain takes years to subside.
- "You are lucky you still have a husband" (or children, or whatever). They do not feel lucky.
- "You will get over it." You never get over it.
- "Thank God I still have my Mom, I don't know what I would do." This is extremely insensitive. The second year after a death is very hard because everyone thinks it is behind you, however you still need the support. Your silence tells your friend that their loved one's life was not important.

After a death we feel lonely. It is an aloneness that goes so deep. If you ever needed a friend it is now. To ignore your friend when they need you the most is the ultimate social shunning. One day, you too will experience a profound loss — consider how you would like to be treated.

Mahalo to Julie Ireland of Denver, Colorado, for submitting this article. Email her at FunnyBusnez@aol.com and/or reach her by phone at 303-894-0160.

People think that death is contagious. It is not.



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VOLUNTEERS CORNER



Happy Fall to YOU ALL! There are many changes taking place at Hospice Maui – some beginning just about the time you start to read this Newsletter.

First of all, I am retiring AGAIN! Almost four years ago I returned to work (after two years of retirement) as the Volunteer Coordinator at Hospice Maui, and I have always believed that I have the best job ever. Happily we now have a wonderful person by the name of Mike Crall to take over. Besides possessing an impressive resume, Mike has a gentle soul and a “Hospice Heart.” Depending on when you receive this newsletter, you may have already met Mike at our November 8 Volunteer Get Together held in order to share time and stories with all volunteers, to get to know Mike, and to celebrate my retirement and Carolyn Richard's "semi-retirement."

Also in the Volunteer News Front .. Hospice Maui recently hosted a two-day End of Life Seminar with about 50 attendees. We hope to provide a Bereavement Volunteer Training class in the near future, but will need over twenty patient care volunteers who wish to pursue this training.

In “retirement” I plan to do more traveling, become more involved with grandchildren and volunteer for other causes. However, I am sure I will be “in and out of” Hospice Maui. I love the agency, the staff, the volunteers and our work with patients and families.

So I bid you not “Good-Bye,” but “A hui hou!”

Aloha No, Anne Rowehl

A hui hou!

We're not saying good-bye to Volunteer Coordinator Anne Rowehl. She's way too much a part of Hospice Maui. Although we won't have her daily cheery presence, we'll have tons of great memories of her big, hospice heart and all the wonderful things she's done for Hospice Maui staff members, volunteers, patients and their families and other community members.



Anne Rowehl

Anne and husband Roger (who has volunteered for us in everything from patient care to cleaning equipment to helping with fundraising events), moved from the Mainland to Oahu in 1969. Anne graduated from the School of Nursing at the University of Hawaii at Manoa in 1977. She worked in Maternal/Childcare, primarily in Labor & Delivery, for over 20 years at Kapiolani, Queens and Castle Hospitals all on Oahu.

The Rowehls moved to Maui in late 1996 and Anne came to work at Hospice Maui in February 1997 as a Patient

Care Nurse. Anne feels there are many things about hospice nursing that are similar to helping women birth their babies. Anne first retired from hospice in November 2001 to spend more time with her grandchildren on Maui. She and Roger also began traveling more. In fact, by the end of this year, they will have visited about 16 countries during the past six years!

About four years ago Anne was asked to come back as Volunteer Coordinator for a few months while Eve-lynn Civerolo cared for her husband who was then in the final stages of his illness. When Eve-lynn

returned to work it was as Clinical Director and, happily for Anne and all of us, she remained as Volunteer Coordinator.

Anne stated that the new Volunteer Coordinator, Mike Crall, “Is ready and willing and perfectly suited to take over the duties of this position. I am happy for all of us as I know the volunteers will be well supported in his caring hands.”

Anne and Roger stay busy with volunteer duties for a variety of causes, and we fully expect them to lend hospice a hand from time to time! They will continue to travel and spend time with children and grandchildren who live not just on Maui, but all across the Mainland and on to France. They're also looking forward to some plain old hanging out time together!

So we'll say “A Hui Hou” for now. Mahalo Anne for your wonderful enthusiasm, thoughtfulness, many kindnesses, your caring, support and generosity of spirit. We'll miss you!



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How to Help a Grieving Friend During the Holidays

The Holiday Season can be particularly difficult for a person who is grieving and friends and family members may be unsure what to say or do to support the person at this time. Generally the best way to help is just to let them know you care. They need to be remembered, and they need to know their loved ones are remembered too. Hospice grief counselors emphasize that one should not be afraid of saying or doing the wrong thing, because making an effort and showing concern will be appreciated. Following are some tips that grieving people have shared:

- Be supportive of the way your friend chooses to celebrate the holidays. Some may wish to follow traditions; others may choose to change their rituals.
- Offer to help with tangible tasks such as baking, cleaning or decorating. Seemingly simple tasks can be overwhelming while dealing with grief.
- Invite the person to attend a religious service with you and your family.

- Offer to help with holiday shopping or share your favorite catalogs or on-line shopping sites.
- Inquire if your friend is interested in volunteering with you during the holiday season. Doing something for someone else may help them feel better about the holidays.
- Make a donation in memory of your friend's loved one as a reminder that their special person is not forgotten.
- Remember to avoid telling your friend that he or she should be “over it.” Grief is an individual process and there are no right or wrong ways to grieve.
- If your friend wants to talk about the deceased loved one, or feelings associated with the loss, LISTEN. Don't worry about being conversational, just listen.
- Remind the person you are thinking of them and the loved one who died. Cards, phone calls and visits are great ways to stay in touch.

Excerpts from the National Hospice Palliative Care Organization



Leave a Legacy

“Gift Planning” is the most powerful way to ensure we can provide services well into the future. This Leave a Legacy column is the first of four devoted to specific means by which a person can leave a charitable gift to Hospice Maui.

Giving Through Your Will

How it Works

A will is a formal legal document in which you specify how you wish your property to be disposed of after death. If you should die without a will, your lifetime accumulation of wealth will be distributed according to State and Federal laws – regardless of family wishes. Fortunately, making a will is not complicated when done with legal assistance.

Providing for a charitable gift in your will can easily be accomplished by including a bequest to the charity of your choice such as Hospice Maui. “Bequest” is simply a term used to describe a gift in your will specifying that a certain percentage of your estate, a particular asset, or a specific dollar amount is to be directed to a named beneficiary.

A bequest can be for an unrestricted or designated gift in the form of cash, property or securities. It can also take the form of a “residual legacy” whereby a charity receives all or a portion of whatever remains of your estate after all debts, taxes, expenses and other bequests have been dispensed. There are tax advantages to

providing bequests, and your financial planners, attorneys and/or CPA's can assist you with appropriate legal wording and information on tax benefits.

Benefits to You

- You have the use of your assets during your lifetime.
- There are many options to ensure that your bequest is personally meaningful.
- Your estate receives a tax benefit.
- A bequest is a revocable gift and can be altered at any time should your circumstances change.
- You create a legacy of compassion, caring and lasting value that will provide for future generations of our families and friends.



LEAVE A LEGACY™

– LEAVE A LEGACY™ MAUI –

a promise made by one generation to succeeding generations that valued institutions will be there for them.

From All of Us at Hospice Maui,
Warmest Wishes for a Safe, Peaceful
& Happy Holiday Season.

Holidays, Grief, & The Art of Coping

A workshop designed to give grieving persons and their family and friends comfort, support, and practical suggestions for dealing with grief during the holidays will be held at Hospice Maui, 400 Mahalani Street on Saturday, December 8, 2007, from 8:30am to 12:30pm.



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