



grief MATTERS

November/December 2019

On The Journey

Holidays can be difficult for those who are grieving. Do we keep the same traditions and rituals from when our loved one was with us? Do we change everything so that nothing is the same? These are difficult decisions. Perhaps what we could do is prioritize the demands and activities of the holidays by taking inventory of the activities that we "always do." Being able to decide what is best for each of us during the holidays is essential. We may drop some activities and traditions to start new and simpler ones. One of the tasks of grieving involves making choices along the way.

It may be helpful to share your feelings with your family and friends to help them understand why you feel you need to make changes. Help them to understand that even though you are making some changes this year, it does not necessarily mean they will be set in stone. Allow yourself a holiday season to try something different. Then you can decide next year what you need to do at that time.

Hospice of Lansing, Ionia Area Hospice and Stoneleigh Residence offer free individual grief counseling to those who have used our hospice service and also to community members. Please feel free to call us if you would like to meet individually with a grief counselor.

Blessings on your journey,



Rev. Kris Abbey
Chaplain

Ceremony of Remembrance

Saturday, December 7 • 11:00am
Gorsline Runciman East Chapel
1730 E. Grand River Ave, East Lansing, MI
Questions please call [517.482.1692](tel:517.482.1692)

Drop-in Grief Support

HOSPICE OF LANSING/STONELEIGH RESIDENCE

3186 Pine Tree Road, Lansing • 1:30-3:00pm.
November 18, 2019, December 9, 2019 and
January 20, 2020

IONIA AREA HOSPICE

You are welcome to call [517.882.4500](tel:517.882.4500) or
[877.882.4500](tel:877.882.4500) to schedule an appointment at your
convenience.



Hospice of Lansing

Ionia Area Hospice

Stoneleigh Residence

***"Grief is not about relinquishing our relationships with the deceased,
but about finding ways to stay connected."***

Therese A. Rando, author of

How to Go On Living When Someone You Love Dies

How to Honor and Celebrate Your Loved One

- ♦♦ Imprint a favorite recipe onto a plate or items of your choice. A great local resource is Anne at Art Unlimited in Okemos, 517.349.8278
- ♦♦ Make an ornament or other art form with a special object of your loved ones. (Keys, Playing Cards, Bicycle Parts) A great local resource is: Kathy at Absolute Gallery in Old Town Lansing, 517.482.8845.
- ♦♦ Create a Shadow Boxes to hold various favorite items like clothing, objects, certificates etc. Most framing establishments like Michaels or Hobby Lobby are able to help with this.
- ♦♦ Favorite clothing and other items can be remade into quilts, teddy bears, pillows and table toppers. A great local resource is Custom Quilts in Haslett, 517.339.7581, OR check with a local quilting shops for classes or individual instruction on projects.
- ♦♦ Embroidery, stencil, or write a meaningful anecdote or statement from your loved onto a pillow case and frame it as a picture. Search online for helpful instructions on this or check with the Party Shoppe in Williamston, 517.325.3097.
- ♦♦ Turn a signature (for example "love mom" from a card) or a thumbprint into a necklace. Most jewelry stores can accommodate this like: Sweet Jewelry in Old Town, 517.267.7600.
- ♦♦ Create jewelry from favorite items that belonged to your loved one. A great resource is Kathy at Absolute Gallery in Old Town Lansing, 517.482.8845.
- ♦♦ Create a memory garden or a fairy garden to spend time in. Decorate rocks, stencil a poem on a rock and/or plant trees in their honor. Local nurseries and greenhouses can help with planting ideas. A few places are Van Atta's, Lansing Gardens, Cottage Gardens, or Christians Greenhouse.
- ♦♦ Have pictures or slides put onto to a DVD or CD. A great local resource is The Camera Shop in Lansing 517.272.0027.
- ♦♦ Duplicate photos to create a Memory Game to play with family and friends. Photos can be processed online, or at local photo centers at drugstores, office supply store or grocery store.
- ♦♦ Remember your loved one by listening to their/your favorite songs. Putting them all on a disc or playlist together can make for a memory and/or gift option for family.

Getting Through the Holidays after the Loss of a Loved One —

The first Thanksgiving, the first Christmas, the first birthday and all other firsts without your loved one may be very difficult. There is no way to avoid the memories and the accompanying grief that these times call up.

For most of us holidays are full of traditions: "We always went to Mom's on Thanksgiving." "Harry always decorated the tree and lit it on Christmas Eve." "We always went to Coral Gables on our anniversary because she loved their bread pudding." These memories will forever be sacred AND painful. They are signs that our relationship with our deceased loved one was meaningful and real. They are signs that our love does not end when a life ends.

Holidays, like losses, cannot be avoided. Sometimes our grief feels unbearable and we may try to escape the pain. The key is to try to find a balance.

What is helpful for one may not be so for another. You may want to experiment with different ways to cope with the holidays; different ways to face the empty chair, allowing your grief to be a part of the occasion. Some people want to be alone. Some want to be with someone they feel close to. You may want to start a new ritual to acknowledge your loss and celebrate your love that lives on. Something as simple as lighting a candle and saying: "on this day I remember—— and give thanks for the time we had together."

Whatever choices you make; remember to be kind to yourself. Respect your needs. You may want to be with others or you may want to be alone. Take note of what feels right for you even if others make suggestions that they think you should follow.

Honor where you are. This may be the year that you don't celebrate the holidays even though it seems everyone else is in a joyful mood. This may be the year you help serve Christmas dinner at a homeless shelter, or just stay home and write a letter to your loved one who is no longer with you.

Wherever you are on your grief journey, know that there are others who are also dealing with losses. You will find them in Grief Support Groups offered by your

local hospice or funeral home. One of the best tools for dealing with your grief is sharing with a fellow griever. Grief partners honor each other's right to mourn and offer a quality of support that those inexperienced in the death of a loved one cannot.

~Ann
Hospice Social Worker

THE
LEGEND OF THE *Lotus*
*Out of the depths
and shadows from
the bottom of a pond, the lotus
emerges, untouched and unstained.*

*Representing the purity of the mind and soul,
the lotus flower is a powerful symbol of
peace, hope, transcendence and rebirth.
The lotus reminds us to strive through
difficulties and that beauty and light
can rise from the murky darkness.*





Hospice of Lansing
Ionia Area Hospice
Stoneleigh Residence

3186 Pine Tree Road
Lansing, MI 48911

PO Box 124
Ionia, MI 48846

3411 Stoneleigh Drive
Lansing, MI 48910

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HOSPICE OF LANSING

3186 Pine Tree Road
Lansing, MI 48911
Phone: (517) 882-4500
Fax: (517) 882-3010
www.hospiceoflansing.org

IONIA AREA HOSPICE

PO Box 124
Ionia, MI 48846
Phone: (616) 527-0681
Fax: (517) 882-3010
www.ioniaareahospice.org

STONELEIGH RESIDENCE

3411 Stoneleigh Drive
Lansing, MI 48910
Phone: (517) 882-4500
www.hospiceoflansing.org

Grief Services Online

For information on upcoming grief support meetings and events, visit us online at www.hospiceoflansing.org or www.ioniaareahospice.org.

Mailing List

Please call 877.882.4500 or e-mail kabbey@hospiceoflansing.org if you wish to be removed from this mailing list or if you want to receive this newsletter electronically. Please be assured we do not sell or share our list with other organizations or businesses.

Online Donations

We have made donating to Hospice of Lansing, Stoneleigh Residence and Ionia Area Hospice even easier!

Save yourself the time it takes to write a check and attach a stamp by visiting us at www.hospiceoflansing.org or www.ioniaareahospice.org to make a donation. Please visit our website and make a secured donation today!