

Sound Waves



“ Courage doesn’t always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says I’ll try again tomorrow. ”
– Mary Anne Radmacher

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Little Acts of Courage

For those who are grieving, the challenges of simply living through each day can at times feel overwhelming. You may find that difficult choices or decisions and strong emotional responses combine to create a world that seems almost impossible to navigate. In those moments it might be worthwhile to remember the little acts of courage that you perform every day. And while the virtue of courage is more often associated with overcoming formidable obstacles or placing oneself in physical peril, those little acts of courage you perform are no less remarkable.

The Courage to Get Out of Bed — With the coming of each new day you are presented with the choice of being courageous. Moving from the bed and out into the world without your loved one might seem daunting. Placing one foot in front of the other may seem all but impossible to accomplish. To acknowledge and recognize the courage that is sometimes needed to begin the day is the first step in honoring all that you do for yourself at this challenging time.

The Courage to Live a New “Normal” — With the death of a loved one, the old sense of normal ceases to exist. That sense of safety that you may have felt in the “known,” can disappear as each day you are faced with discovering your new normal. It is a day-to-day discovery that requires patience with yourself and the many, many feelings you may be experiencing as well as the choices and decisions with which you may be faced.

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Little Acts of Courage

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The Courage to Reach Out and Teach — It takes courage to honestly look at yourself, identify what you need, and to let others know what those needs are. Because grief is so unique to the individual experiencing it, the specifics of what you need may not be apparent to those who most want to provide it. As you reach out and teach those who are able to provide support to you, you are creating an environment for yourself that provides a safe place for you to experience your grief.

The Courage to Create A New Future — As anniversaries and special days come throughout the year, you will be reminded of the dreams and goals that you may have shared with your loved one. It may be that you will need to release some of these dreams in the hopes of creating new dreams and goals for yourself in a world forever changed. It truly takes courage to not only relinquish a dream, but to create a new one that might stand in its place.

The Courage to Be in the Moment — When a wave of grief crashes around you, sometimes the greatest act of courage you can perform is to simply remain in the moment. As you do so, the intensity of the wave will slowly subside and you will have moved one step further down your pathway of grief. Life can only be lived in the moment, and grief reminds us of that truth many times each day.

Recommended Readings

"Healing Power of Grief: The Journey through Loss to Life and Laughter" by Marilyn Stolzman

"Life After Loss: A Practical Guide to Renewing your Life after Experiencing a Major Loss" by Bob Deits

These five acts of courage are only a few examples of the many courageous acts you may be quietly performing throughout each day. Tracing the roots of the word courage leads you to the Latin *cor* or heart. Each day as you perform the deep heart work that is grief, may you often be reminded that some of the smallest moments of day-to-day living require some of the greatest amounts of courage.

The Grief Support Services staff at Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice are here to support you in any way we can. Feel free to call us at 306-493-4667.

— Rex Allen, Grief Support Services Manager

Not to Make Loss Beautiful

Not to make loss beautiful,
But to make loss the place
Where beauty starts. Where
the heart understands
For the first time
The nature of its journey.

Love, yes. The body
of the beloved as the gift
Bestowed. But only
Temporarily. Given freely,
But now to be earned.

Given without thought,
And now loss
Has made us thoughtful.

– Gregory Orr

SoundCareKids

Grief support for children, teens, and the adults who care for them.

The SoundCareKids Grief Support Groups give children, teens and their parents an opportunity to connect with others who have also experienced a loved one's serious illness or death while sharing feelings in creative, experiential ways and learning coping skills for adjusting to difficult changes. Group nights begin with pizza and play. Then kids, teens and caregivers meet in small groups (Littles 3 – 5, Bigs 6 – 8, Middles 9 – 12, Teens, and Adults) for discussion and activities.

Our regular support-group session topics include:

- Learning about grief and getting to know each other
- Exploring feelings and learning how to cope with them
- Sharing our stories
- Dealing with regret, guilt, and other unfinished business
- Identifying and adjusting to changes
- Memories and Staying connected

The SoundCareKids program is provided at no cost to families in Thurston, Lewis, and Mason counties through funding from the Providence St. Peter Foundation.

Call SoundHomeCare and Hospice at 360-493-5928 for more information about individual or family counseling as well as group schedule.



<http://on.fb.me/ikYfdd>

Supporting the Grieving Child in a School Setting

A child who has lost a loved one is learning to navigate a new world while walking through their established environments. The daily routine of most children's lives is spent away from home and in the school setting. The time spent in either the classroom or during afterschool activities often becomes a second "home" to many grieving youth. By building a bridge of communication between family and school a safety net is created, providing comfort and additional support for the grieving child. Below are some helpful tips in constructing a bridge to honor your grieving child's unique needs:

- Provide choice concerning communication with the school staff; make sure your child is "okay" with the school knowing about the loss.
- Ask your child who in the school setting is "okay" to have information – i.e.: teachers, peers, school counselor, coaches, etc.
- Clarify with your child what information is "okay" with them to discuss with teachers, etc.
- Assure that your child has been provided a choice concerning words used.
- Give the child a sense of control and offer choices whenever possible and appropriate.

Communication is the building block of support for your grieving child. Once the previous points have been clarified, a helpful next step is to prepare a support structure, if needed. Below are a few examples of simple structures:

- Discuss establishing a special "code" with teachers if and when breaks are needed during classroom time.
- Understanding exhaustion and loss of concentration are common grief responses that require special consideration regarding assignment deadlines or omission of certain assignments for a specified period of time.
- Ask teachers to inform the child ahead of time if preparing to share or present material of a sensitive nature.
- Provide the child with choices and options if sensitive material is being discussed in the classroom.

It is nearly impossible to detail the depth of a child's grief experience. The essential ingredients of validation, empowerment, a respect for privacy along with compassionate awareness all help weave together a foundation of support. By building a bridge between family and school both worlds can become a refuge. This helps provide permission for your child to pursue the hard work of grief within the safety of both environments.

– Jill Meyers, MA CCLS and Valorie Johnson, MSW
Providence Hospice of Seattle
Safe Crossings Children's Grief Program

Recommended Readings

"The Invisible String" by Patrice Karst

"Common Threads of Teenage Grief" by Janet Tyson and Teens Who Know (www.centering.org)



Adult Support Groups

Every individual has the capacity to heal and grow after the life-altering experience of a major loss. Our goal is to help people understand and cope with their grief while offering support and opportunities to learn and grow. We help people identify needs and strengths and work with them to develop a plan to address these. We work with individuals, families and groups in the community.

For information about individual counseling or to make an appointment call: 360-493-4667.



Adult Support Groups (Ongoing)

Daytime

- 1st and 3rd Monday of each month
10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
Lacey Presbyterian Church
3045 Carpenter Rd. SE, Lacey
Information: 360-493-4667
- 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month
1:30 to 3:00 p.m.
Shelton Health and Rehabilitation Center
153 Johns Court, Shelton
Information: 360-493-4667

Evening

- 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month
6:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice
3432 South Bay Rd. NE, Olympia
Information: 360-493-4667
- Loss of Child Support Group
(The Compassionate Friends)
1st Monday of each month
7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Providence St. Peter Hospital (Executive Mtg. Room)
413 Lilly Rd NE, Olympia
Information: Allen Roth at 360-402-6711

Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice

3432 South Bay Road NE

Olympia, WA 98506

www.providence.org/pshch

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Grief Support for All Ages

Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice provides a full range of grief support and bereavement services for adults and children. We can help you better understand and cope with your grief, while offering support and opportunities to learn and grow.

See **INSIDE** for more information!

Crocus Minded

*It takes courage to be crocus-minded.
...I'd rather wait until June,
like wild roses,
when the hazards of winter are
safely behind and I'm expected
and everything's ready for roses.*

*But crocuses?
Highly irregular.
Knifing up through hard-frozen ground and snow,
sticking their necks out
because they believe in spring
and have something personal and emphatic
to say about it.*

*...I'm not by nature crocus-minded.
Even when I have studied the
Situation, and know there
are wrongs that need righting,
affirmations that need stating,
and know that my speaking out may offend,
for it rocks the boat -
Well, I'd rather wait until June.
Maybe later things will work themselves out,
and we won't have to make an issue of it.*

*Forgive me.
Wrongs won't work themselves out.
Injustices and inequities and hurt
don't just dissolve.
Somebody has to stick their neck out;
somebody who
cares enough to think through
and work through
hard ground,
because they believe they have something personal
and emphatic to say about it.*

*Me - crocus-minded?
Could it be that there are
things that need to be said
and I need to say them?
I pray for courage. Amen.*

- Jo Sorley