

# Sound Waves



“When tears come, I breathe deeply and rest. I know I am swimming in a hallowed stream where many have gone before. I am not alone, crazy, or having a nervous breakdown... My heart is at work. My soul is awake.”

– Mary Margaret Funk

## In this issue

- 1 The imprints we carry
- 2 Honoring the significance of the relationship between a child and a loved one who has died
- 3 SoundCareKids
- 5 Adult support groups and special events



On a recent visit to Texas to spend time with my 87-year-old mother, I sat with her, sifting through photos and memorabilia that charted my growth from childhood to adult. At one point, in response to something I said, she remarked that I sounded just like my father. Her comment took me a bit by surprise and prompted me to reflect on my father's life and my relationship to it.

My father died in 1980, when I was 30 years old. Now, as a man of 64, I am more aware than ever of the aspects of my personality and behavior that can be attributed to the man I knew as my father. Through his modeling and teaching, I learned to see certain aspects of the world as my father saw them. I was "imprinted" by who he was and carry much of that with me daily.

Continued on page 4

# Honoring the significance of the relationship between a child and a loved one who has died

By Beverly Goldsmith, children's grief counselor



When a child is grieving, one of the ways an adult caregiver can offer support is to affirm the significance of the relationship with the loved one who has died, and to offer opportunities for capturing memories. As a children's grief counselor, I am consistently reminded by the children and families I serve of the importance of the imprints their loved ones have left on their lives. Sometimes these are described through physical attributes: "Every time I look in the mirror, I will think of him because I have his eyes," or "I'm always going to wear glasses because I inherited his eyes." Children often speak of activities they have learned from their loved one, or mannerisms they mimic: "I am almost as good a snow skier as my mom, and it's my favorite thing to do," and "I love to make up nicknames for everyone I know, just like my sister did."

Imprints are often discussed with a grief counselor through the "hopes and dreams" that a dying family member (especially a parent or guardian, but also a brother or sister) has for a surviving child. These hopes and dreams may either ring true and provide guidance, or alternately, create the burden of trying to live up to an expectation that feels daunting. For example, a father who was an amaz-

ing football star wants the same for his son, who would much prefer to excel in his musical abilities.

Families might participate in legacy activities—those unique to their departed loved one, such as reciting lines from movies that have become part of the "lore" of the family; going to a certain restaurant to eat foods loved by the person who died, that have since become the favorite of a surviving child; or cooking a special recipe in order to recreate smells or tastes associated with foods prepared by or eaten with a loved one.

Children have the strength and resilience to choose a path of health and happiness as they move forward with their lives. Recognizing the gifts (as well as the impact of the hardships) shared with a loved one can help them keep perspective of the things that become most important in their own lives and future relationships.

Grief counselors often use simple activities to assist children in identifying the imprints left by loved ones that will always be with them. These activities can easily be done independently and can provide a starting point for you and your child to explore memories.

One example of an activity is to create an anagram. This activity can help children four and older identify some characteristics of their loved ones, find similarities or differences with themselves, and honor the imprints that will forever link together their lives.

## ANAGRAMS ACTIVITY

### What you will need:

Paper, pencil or pen

- Choose a word, name or several words (such as Mom, Sarah, Family, "I remember...").
- Write the word or words vertically on a piece of paper.
- Next to each letter, write a descriptive word or phrase that starts with that letter. (See examples below.)

**D**ependable

**A**thletic

**D**id fun things with me

**M**arvelously

**O**utstanding

**M**aker of cookies

# *The Journey by David Whyte*

*Above the mountains, the geese  
turn into the light again painting  
their black silhouettes on an open sky.  
Sometimes everything has to be inscribed  
across the heavens so you can find  
the one line written inside you.  
Sometimes it takes a great sky  
to find that small, bright and indescribable  
wedge of freedom in your own heart.  
Sometimes with the bones of the black sticks  
left when the fire has gone out,  
someone has written something new  
in the ashes of your life.  
You are not leaving, you are arriving.*



## SoundCare Kids

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

Group nights begin with pizza and play. The kids, teens and caregivers then meet in small groups for discussion and activities designed to explore different aspects of grief. Each week builds on the concepts, discussions and activities of the previous week, so attending all six weeks is recommended.

Our regular session topics include:

**Week 1:** Learning about grief and getting to know each other

**Week 2:** Exploring feelings and learning how to cope with them

**Week 3:** Sharing our stories

**Week 4:** Dealing with regret, guilt and unfinished business

**Week 5:** Identifying and adjusting to changes

**Week 6:** Keeping memories and staying connected

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

For more information about counseling or to reserve your place in an upcoming session, call Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice at 360-493-5928. Pre-registration is required.

### Fall 2015 Grief Support Group Schedule

This group will meet  
Oct. 29 - Dec. 10  
(No meeting on Nov. 26  
due to Thanksgiving).



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

# The imprints we carry

Continued from page 1

When we are grieving the death of someone who has played an important role in our life, it can often prove helpful to return to that relationship and examine how we have been imprinted by it. Robert Neimeyer, a professor of psychology in the field of loss and grief, examines the phenomenon of imprinting in his book, *Lessons of Loss: A Guide to Coping*\*.

*"In a sense, then, we become living memorials to these persons, even after they themselves have died. Noting the imprint that such people have made on our own lives can be a powerful way of honoring their contribution, forming a living web of connection that we, through our lives, extend to others."*

However, he also reminds us that not all relationships imprint us the same way:

*"Not all imprints are positive, precisely because some relationships are troubled. As a result, we may sometimes trace our sense of self-doubt or proneness to anger to a model provided by a critical parent, or find our distrust of others in the opinions held by an influential friend. In such cases it is often helpful to recognize that these negative imprints arose outside us, and perhaps can be resisted and transformed through personal effort."*

To better understand how a relationship may have imprinted you, take some time to explore the following questions:

*This person has had the following impact on:*

*my mannerisms and gestures.....*

*my way of speaking and communicating.....*

*my work and pastime activities.....*

*my basic personality.....*

*my values and beliefs.....*

*The imprints I would most like to affirm are:*

*The imprints I would most like to relinquish are:*

The completion of this simple activity can go a long way in helping you to better understand how you continue to carry what has shaped or imprinted you.

As you move forward in the coming days, please remember that we are there for you in whatever way might be most meaningful to you. Also, remember that this journey is uniquely yours and is accomplished one breath and day at a time.

\*Neimeyer, R. (2006). *Lessons of loss: A guide to coping*. Memphis, TN: Center for the Study of Loss and Transition.

## Recommended reading:

*Second Firsts: Live, Laugh and Love Again*  
by Christina Rasmussen

*Safe Passage: Words to Help the Grieving*  
by Molly Fumia



# Adult support groups

Everyone 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 groups

- 10-11:30 a.m.  
First and third Monday of each month  
Lacey Presbyterian Church  
3045 Carpenter Road SE, Lacey  
Information: 360-493-4667
- 1:30-3 p.m.  
First and third Tuesday of each month  
Shelton Fire Department building  
122 W. Franklin St., Shelton  
Information: 360-493-4667

### Evening groups

- A Mindful Approach to Grief (six-week series)  
This grief support group will meet for six consecutive weeks to explore how the concept of mindfulness can be an important tool in coping with grief.  
6-7:30 p.m.  
Tuesdays, Oct. 20 – Nov. 24  
Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice  
3432 South Bay Road NE, Olympia  
Free. Pre-registration is required.  
For more information or to register, call 360-493-4667.
- Loss of Child Support Group (The Compassionate Friends)  
7-8:30 p.m.  
First Monday of each month  
Providence St. Peter Hospital (Executive Meeting Room)  
413 Lilly Road NE, Olympia  
For more information or to register, call Allen Roth at 360-402-6711.

# Special Events

**Grief and the Holidays:** Managing loss and grief during a time of seasonal celebration can seem overwhelming. Our *Coping with the Holidays* workshops offer mutual support and suggestions to help you gain insight and strength.

There is no charge to attend.

Please let us know if you plan to attend so we have sufficient materials for the workshop. For more information or to register, please call 360-493-4667.

Lacey	Shelton	Olympia
■ Monday, Nov. 16 10 a.m. - noon Lacey Presbyterian Church 3045 Carpenter Road SE, Lacey	■ Tuesday, Nov. 17 1 - 3 p.m. Shelton Fire Department building 122 W. Franklin St., Shelton	■ Thursday, Nov. 12 6 - 8 p.m. Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice 3432 South Bay Road. NE, Olympia

For more information, please call Barb Digman at 360-493-4667.

**Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice**

3432 South Bay Road NE

Olympia, WA 98506

[www.providence.org/pshch](http://www.providence.org/pshch)

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
OLYMPIA, WA  
PERMIT NO. 494

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## *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!



# *Prayer for the Dead*

*by Stuart Kestenbaum*

The light snow started late last night and continued all night long while I slept and could hear it occasionally enter my sleep, where I dreamed my brother was alive again and possessing the beauty of youth, aware that he would be leaving again shortly and that is the lesson of the snow falling and the seeds of death that are in everything that is born: we are here for a moment of a story that is longer than all of us and few of us remember, the wind is blowing out of someplace we don't know, and each moment contains rhythms within rhythms, and if you discover some old piece of your own writing, or an old photograph, you may not remember that it was you and even if it was once you, it's not you now, not this moment that the synapses fire and your hands move to cover your face if a gesture of grief and remembrance.