



Sound Waves



“ Speak memory, that I may not forget the taste of roses. ”
– Vladimir Nabokov

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Creating Meaning Through Ritual

As we move through the seasons of our life, each day we are given the opportunity to acknowledge and remember those people and events that have brought meaning and significance to us. When we are grieving, those moments of everyday opportunity are the place where ritual can have its roots. In giving ourselves the gift of ritual we are able to honor life's passages and to better understand the meanings they hold for us.

Let me give you an example of a personal ritual that I developed after the death of my father. Dad was a relatively young man when he died at the age of 53. As a 30-year-old dealing with a parent's death I was bewildered, angry and confused. The rituals of the funeral service did little to help my understanding and I returned to my home feeling isolated and alone.

On my father's next birthday, I decided to create a ritual that would allow me to better understand this significant passage in my life. On that July day in 1981, I decided to simply spend the day talking with him. I greeted him when I awoke that morning and thanked him for being my father. I then began to speak of the things that were left unsaid because of his death, of unresolved issues of anger, and the pain of unanswered questions. It was a full day of laughter and tears. When I moved to my bed that night I concluded my conversation with my father, thanked him for the interchange, and noted in my journal many of the observations that I had been able to make during the day.

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Creating Meaning Through Ritual

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In looking at my ritual, you can see that the elements are really very simple. First we enter into an act that has *intention*. In the case of my ritual my intention was to better understand the role that my father played and continues to play in my life. From intention we move through *sequence*. The sequence of my ritual began when I entered into conversation with my father on the morning of his birthday, continued throughout the day in moments of observation and questions, and ended when I concluded our conversation. The final key element of ritual is *personal meaning*. Before I turned out the light that night, I recorded the meaning and insight the ritual had given me. This important element concludes the ritual and helps us to better understand where we have been, the passage we are honoring and the new path that we are now walking.

Rituals can be as varied and as unique as the person who is creating them. Whether it's the creation of a memory book; the making of your loved one's favorite meal; writing a letter; or simply lighting a candle, the possibilities of creating ritual are endless. Look for opportunities to create ritual in the everyday experiences of life, and in doing so you will be finding ways to grow in hope, healing and understanding.

– Rex Allen, Grief Support Services Manager

Recommended Readings

"Surviving Holidays, Birthdays, and Anniversaries: A Guide for Grieving During Special Occasions" by Brook Noel

"Healing Your Holiday Grief: 100 Practical Ideas for Blending Mourning and Celebration During the Holiday Season" by Alan D. Wolfelt



Each fall our grief support services program offers Coping with Holidays workshops to give people the opportunity to share their ideas and develop new traditions and ways to cope and to honor their loved ones during this time. See page 3 for specific workshops dates and times. For more information, call 360-493-4667.

Special Events

Coping With the Holidays: A workshop offering information and support for coping with grief during the holidays.

Lacey

- Mon., Nov. 4
10 a.m. to noon
Lacey Presbyterian Church
3045 Carpenter Rd. SE, Lacey

Shelton

- Tues., Nov. 5
1 to 3 p.m.
Shelton Health & Rehabilitation
153 Johns Court, Shelton

Olympia

- Tues., Nov. 12
6 to 8 p.m.
Providence SoundHomeCare & Hospice
3432 South Bay Rd. NE, Olympia

To register for Coping with the Holidays, call 360-493-4667.

Light Up a Life: A Winter Time of Remembrance

A candle lighting ceremony and service to honor our loved ones.

- Sunday, December 15 | 2:00 p.m.
The Priory, 500 College St. NE, Lacey

Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice's annual memorial service, *Light Up a Life*, is an opportunity for families and staff to grieve together while honoring the memory of loved ones who have died.

Like winter, grief is a time during which the light of our own hope can seem dim in the face of an oppressive and seemingly endless darkness. *Light Up a Life* provides an opportunity for sharing memories and rekindling hope to help sustain us—a time of light and love during this dark season.

For more information, please call 360-493-4656.

SoundCare Kids

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

Children, teens and their caregivers have found understanding and support at SoundCareKids for almost 20 years. Group nights begin with pizza and play. Then kids, teens and caregivers meet in small groups (Littles 5-8, Middles 9-12, Teens, and Caregivers) 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 other unfinished business
- Week 5** Identifying and adjusting to changes
- Week 6** 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 Providence SoundHomeCare and Hospice at 360-493-5928 for more information about individual or family counseling or to reserve your spots in the upcoming session. Pre-registration is required.

2013 Fall Grief Support Session

Thursdays, 6:15 to 7:45 p.m.
October 10 – November 14

2014 Winter Grief Support Session

Thursdays, 6:15 to 7:45 p.m.
January 23 – February 27



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

Supporting Your Child: “How can my child and I create meaning through ritual?”



Ritual, simply defined, implies the smallest intentional act that adds meaning to our lives. Ritual can sometimes be misunderstood, seem complicated or feel overwhelming, yet creating ritual can be a meaningful activity that reflects one’s own life experience.

Children often have a limited understanding of the thoughts and feelings they experience after the death of a loved one, and this can cause difficulty in the verbal expression of their emotions. Simple ritual activities offer a conduit for these thoughts and feelings and allow a child to find a tangible way to honor a loved one who has died, as well as identify ways that they can care for themselves in the midst of their loss. Examples of rituals may be joining your child in lighting a candle to honor a loved one or cooking a special recipe together.

A simple Thanksgiving ritual that can easily be accomplished involves placing a small bowl, basket or special vessel in the center of the table with small strips of paper and writing instruments. Invite each person present to write or draw a memory they are thankful for which the deceased shared with them. If desired, these sentiments can be shared with one another and remain as a centerpiece on the table. A ritual activity of this nature can be utilized in a variety of gatherings for special occasions such as birthdays, anniversaries or any time.

In addition to offering one-on-one support, the SoundCare Kids program provides opportunities for children to gather with others who have lost a loved one. Children consistently acknowledge how helpful it is to be with others who have had a similar experience of loss. SoundCare Kids groups offer simple ritual activities for children and their families. Please see the list of available groups elsewhere in the newsletter.

– Beverly Goldsmith, Providence Hospice
Safe Crossings Children’s Grief Counselor

Recommended Readings

For Children: “*The Fall of Freddie the Leaf*”
by Leo Buscaglia

For Teens: “*Help for the Hard Times: Getting Through Loss*” by Earl Hipp

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!



The Season of Grief

– from "Safe Passage" by Molly Fumia

The season of grief is our shutting down time.

We prepare the cottage of our hearts for the winter.

Securing our windows to the world, stocking the

Cupboards with what will sustain us during the cold and dark.

Carefully we rebuild our inner fire, and huddle in its warmth.

While the storms of winter pass, awaiting a spring that will

Come as surely as the steady passage of the days.