Welcome to this issue of our Caring Connections Newsletter. As I reflect on the challenges faced by grieving people I have supported through the years, I observe that one of the most distressing aspects of grief is the pressure to “get over it” and “move on.” A frequent aspect of this experience is that this pressure comes from well meaning, concerned friends and family who want the griever to “feel better.” A recent conversation with a dear friend gave me a new insight into this “hurry up” approach. He noted that the Greek language has two very distinct uses of the word “time.” The first, “chronos,” is familiar to all of us. It refers to the precise measurement of time—seconds, minutes, days, years—it is clock time and the creator of deadlines. Chronos is the source and expression of time pressure. Chronos is where “hurry up and get over it” is defined. The second term is “kairos.” Kairos is understood as “the opportune time,” “the fitting time.” It is measured by seasons and life milestones. When we think of “grief time,” I recommend we think of kairos. Each person grieves in their own way and in their own time. Certainly, we need to offer support and optimize the grieving person’s opportunity to come to terms, to accept and ultimately to find meaning in the life lived and lost. But we are most helpful if we respect the seasons and rhythms of grief and respect each griever’s ability to walk their grief journey in “the fullness of time.”

We are here to support you on this journey. Please accept our warm invitation to our grief support groups and our upcoming events.

Warm regards,

Kathie Supiano, PhD, LCSW
Director
SALT LAKE CITY
Wednesday, May 9th through Wednesday, June 27th
from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm
Weekly meetings on Wednesday evenings for 8 weeks
University of Utah College of Nursing
Annette Poulson Cumming Building
10 South 2000 East

MIDVALE
Thursday, May 10th through Thursday, June 28th
from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm
Weekly meetings on Thursday evenings for 8 weeks
University of Utah Health Greenwood Health Center
7495 South State Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84047

OREM
Wednesday, May 9th through Wednesday, June 27th
from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm
Weekly meetings on Wednesday evenings for 8 weeks
University of Utah Parkway Health Center
145 West University Parkway
Orem, UT 84058

WEBER COUNTY
Adult grief group for those adjusting to the suicide death of someone close.
Monday, February 26th, through Monday, April 16th
from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm
Pleasant Valley Branch Library Conference Room
5568 Adams Ave
South Ogden, Utah 84405
Notice of Release: A Daughter’s Journey to Forgive her Mother’s Killer
Stephanie Cassatly

This book was given to me by my avid reader daughter who met Ms. Cassatly in Florida. It is of particular interest to me, as Ms. Cassatly’s mother’s killer died in Louisiana State Penitentiary, better known as Angola, and I had the opportunity to study the inmate-led prison hospice program with colleagues several years ago. Ms. Cassatly’s story is compelling—she describes her relationship with her beloved mother, a relationship shaped by losses and secrets. Years after her mother’s death, burdened by grief and uncertainty, she travels to Angola to face the memories and fears that have frozen her grief. This is not a story of easy or casual forgiveness. Ms. Cassatly wrestles with the “whys” and “if onlys” that all griever know too well. In her long journey of grief toward forgiveness, she learns more about her mother, only deepening her love for her mother. Facing the circumstances of her mother’s death—first with trepidation, and then with courageous intention transformed her loss. This is an engaging, uplifting read for all—but of particular meaning to those who have lost someone dear in a senseless or violent way.
I am an RN specializing in Behavioral Health and have worked in this area for the past 5 years. I am currently halfway through completing my DNP in Psychiatric/Mental Health and am also concurrently studying for an Interdisciplinary Certificate in Gerontology. I plan on specializing in Geriatric Psychiatry and dementia care after graduation.

I first became involved in Caring Connections after hearing Dr. Supiano speak about complicated grief in one of our classes earlier in the year. This subject immediately appealed to me as many caregivers of those with dementia experience complicated grief both while their loved ones are living with the disease and also after they pass. Watching Dr. Supiano facilitate the group has been inspirational; she is able to connect with each and every member on a very meaningful level, her memory for detail is outstanding and being able to draw on these details when working with the individual participants is clearly hugely impactful for them. Dr. Supiano also taught me that it is not necessary to “tip-toe” around grieving people if asking for more details or challenging thoughts is necessary to help them heal.

I have to admit to having been quite nervous before attending the first group; not only was this my first experience of a group therapy environment but the thought of trying to help people who had been through devastating loss was quite terrifying. I was sure I would say the “wrong” thing or not know where to look when a participant was sharing their story. However, one thing I have learnt about grieving people is that they are just that, people, and that as long as you are genuinely compassionate and empathic, you really can’t say the “wrong” thing. I was overwhelmed several times by the resilience of the participants and also by their very deep love for the people they had lost.

The level of support given to each other by the participants themselves really struck me; despite enduring terrible losses, not one participant showed anything other than a huge amount of generosity of spirit to their peers. Whenever a particular participant needed lifting up more than the others, the whole group was there to do it. In terms of my professional practice, I will feel much more comfortable working with grief and believe I have acquired some valuable tools to help clients in this situation. I consider myself very lucky to have spent 12 weeks with this amazing group of women and having the opportunity to learn about them, their lives and the lives of the loved ones they have lost. I am very hopeful that all the participants have found this process helpful and wish them all the very best for their futures.

OUR MISSION

The mission of Caring Connections is to provide excellent evidence-based bereavement care to grieving persons in the intermountain west through clinician facilitated support groups, with particular attention to the care of families served by the University of Utah Hospitals and Clinics; and, in keeping with the academic mission of the University and the College of Nursing, to provide opportunity for clinical education in grief and loss to students in the health care professions, and to conduct research which promotes greater understanding of loss, grief and bereavement.

Visit us online at www.nursing.utah.edu/caring-connections/
MEET OUR FACILITATOR
MARY ANDOLSEK

I was fortunate to have a mother who walked the grief path with me as a seven year old child who lost a twin brother. Although my mother was grieving the loss of her only son, she held hands with me and guided me on my personal journey. I have been privileged over the years to hold hands with so many travelers. At times I was either led, leading or walking beside another person experiencing loss. I cherish each and every journey.

When I completed my first group as a facilitator at Caring Connections I felt a draw for more. There is nothing like being with others who appreciate and understand the range of emotions connected to loss. It feels like home. A place to experience pain, love, fear, growth and hope. As a Social Worker by profession and as a certified Thanatologist, I believe I am to hold hands and press forward together. When I am not working, I love to play and stay active. I ride my bike, travel, sew, paint, hang out with family and of course, laugh.

“Grief, I’ve learned, is really just love. It’s all the love you want to give, but cannot. All that unspent love gathers up in the corners of your eyes, the lump in your throat, and in that hollow part of your chest. Grief is just love with no place to go.”

—Jamie Anderson
Spring forced its way into Wisconsin in an unusual way in April, 1993. It strangely marked the day with headline news: “Blizzard.” It was Easter-time... a time when the sun typically began warming the earth and tulips emerged. Outside my window a cherry tree with long, thin branches swayed in the wind. The branches loaded with spring buds supported dozens of plastic Easter eggs in bright colors suspended from ribbons. The sudden freezing rain and blizzard coated the branches heavily with ice causing them to strain and bend against the frozen weight. This bizarre scene mocked the event that had just unfolded... the death of our twenty-one-year old son, as the result of suicide. The kind of news every parent fears. We tried to shake the icy chill that numbed our minds and bodies. How could this be happening to us? How would we ever forget that day?

The next morning we awoke to sunlight reflection off the crystallized branches creating prisms that otherwise might have seemed awesome. But to us, it was still a cold day, marked by death. We couldn’t see beyond this chilling tragedy to vision anything possible in the beauty of early spring. Instead it seemed like endless nothingness without a future, without a reason, and without hope.

Spring! Isn’t the time of new beginnings? Doesn’t it sing to us of evolution, newness, freshness, and beauty in all that nature can reveal? Isn’t it the poetic symbol of hope? For Gary and me, it marked a time of hopelessness and sorrow that would create flashbacks to an unbelievable memory that created a super notch in the scrapbook of life.

Sometimes who we were meant to be is changed by a memory from our darkest moment. Memories triggered by traumatic events change the way we think, act, and respond to future event. Going forward, they can create either negative or positive reactions. What we become tomorrow is molded by how we process the event when the numbness subsided. Our son’s death, our darkest moment, become a turning point that changed who we are and created a life much different than we ever imagined.

We were naïve about the effects of death and grief of a significant loved one. The journey we were about to embark upon was incredibly strange. There were no rule books. The information highway lacked resources for the newly bereaved that weren’t clinical in nature.

Our paths lay before us in complete uncertainty. Looking back now, I am able to understand what helped us deal with the bad memories and create the positive mindset that transformed our lives.

ACKNOWLEDGE THE MEMORY

Memories that either haunt or infatuate us may always be with us. Some trigger, such as a date, will...
cause the memory to re-surface and demand that we remember. Even though the memory may be unpleasant, it’s very unlikely you can escape it.

Since we couldn’t escape, we knew we had to deal with it. This occurs by determining what story, what message or what lesson the event brought into your life. Every memorable event makes a statement. Label the story, message or lesson so you can measure its affect on you. The recurring memory may happen year after year, or until you’ve exhausted any possible reason to revisit that time in your life. Eventually, the negativity of the memory will become less demanding, and you will be able to release it.

Every spring, Gary and I acknowledge the harsh reality of our darkest moment. We accept that Chad’s suicide was a surprise and mystery to us, very much like the freak blizzard that occurred that April. We no longer need to dwell on what happened or why. Instead, we acknowledge that it taught us how fragile life is. We take less for granted and focus on where we are now, not where we have been.

**EMBRACE THE EXPERIENCE**

In grief, you are probably struggling with the aftermath of sorrow and many of its associated emotions. Real life creates pain; it’s inevitable. Accept that you cannot change what happened, and accept that it has now passed. You can’t change all that you went through, but you can control how it will affect new experiences, relationships and your future.

You are human; you hurt. Embrace your emotions momentarily, feel them and then release them. Our emotions speak to our love for the person who died, and grief is a price we pay for that love when it is snatched from us. Understanding what you can and can’t control paves the pathway to healing.

For many years, we struggled with the “what ifs,” and the “shouldda, wouldda, couldda” scenarios. Eventually, we recognized that it was out of our control to change the event. We had two choices. We could either accept it and move one, or allow it to destroy both of our lives as a result. We chose living a life that allowed us the freedom to gain strength, faith, and courage from our experience.

**MEASURE THE OUTCOMES**

When you “let go” of pain and hurt, you become capable of seeing how this experience has changed who you are and what you can become. Letting go is not about “forgetting.” It’s about releasing the control the negative experience has over your life. If you allow yourself to sulk in your pain, you position yourself for more failure and negative outcomes in other experiences.

Ask yourself what this experience has meant to you. Even though you couldn’t control it, it has a lesson, so what do you want that lesson to be? Or what has that lesson already taught you about yourself or life in general?

We vowed to create awareness about grief, because we didn’t want others to go through the torment we had initially experienced. As we ourselves learned what to expect, we shared our experiences. Our mission was to live a purposeful life, and that became a ministry that grew. We could best honor Chad’s life by helping others reposition themselves to again live whole lives with new meaning.

**MOVE ON**

When you accept that you cannot change the past, or predict the future, you give yourself the freedom to transform who you are, for the greater good. Your future can be written by you. It doesn’t mean you won’t have other hurts in your life, but it does mean that you will gain the confidence and power to give yourself control over your reactions to them.

Be patient; this takes time. The way you felt when grief was new is not the way you will feel forever. Accept that others can help you through the transition. Get support from a buddy, a group, an advisor or a friend. To understand grief, read, attend classes, learn all you can about it.

We moved on, but too fast. We took our time and allowed ourselves to grieve and learn along the way. For us, it was necessary to devote a lot of time to grief work to help us accept all the changes we would face. Moving on meant getting involved. That’s not for everyone. Moving on may mean just resuming

*The Memory of a Darkest Moment continued on page 9*
YOGA FOR GRIEVING

BY HALLIE YURICK, RYT-200, CMHC

The body speaks in metaphor. When we grieve, we feel brokenhearted and stuck. We have a hard time moving. Yoga for Grieving brings movement back into the body and uses that metaphor to move through grief. We cannot go over grief, we cannot go under it, if we choose the path of the Brave Warrior, we go through it. With courage, we face the fear of not knowing who we’ll be on the other side.

Yoga gives us the skills to be with our bodies with loving kindness, patience, and acceptance in this process. In Yoga, we breathe through discomfort, we breathe to bring life and heat into our bodies and to our altered lives. We practice living by moving the body. Yoga for grieving is gentle enough for those new to yoga and for those with challenges. It can also be tough enough to take your broken heart and see it as broken open, perhaps open enough to see ourselves in a new light. It may be a place to create a relationship with our beloved who is no longer in front of us. We will be in the study of grief together, breathing, moving, and learning to live again.

My name is Hallie Yurick. I have been a student of yoga for 16 years and my 200-hour vinyasa flow training came through Yoga Assets in Salt Lake City. I hold a Masters in Transpersonal Counseling Psychology from Naropa University in Boulder, CO and a Clinical Mental Health Counselor’s license. I’m also a ski instructor for kids, adults, and people with special needs at Alta Ski Area. My grief training comes from the losses of my daughters and finding my way through the sadness. My classes begin and end with breath and in the middle we’ll sprinkle poses (asanas) that wake up and stretch the spine, hips, and shoulders in a vinyasa or flow style. Each week, I’ll extend an invitation for us to explore an idea that can be heard, seen, and felt by the mind, body, and spirit. Please join me in practicing grief through movement and breath.

Hallie has graciously offered yoga for grief to those grieving infant loss as a collaboration between Caring Connections and SHARE. She is offering her class for our current grief group participants. Please let us know if you are interested in learning more.
UPCOMING EVENTS

SEEDS OF REMEMBRANCE: I CHOOSE LOVE—THE STORY OF STOCKTON POWERS

May 15, 2018 | 7pm | Annette Poulson Cummings College of Nursing Building

We are pleased to feature Stockton’s parents, Alyson and George Deussen, who were recently featured in the documentary “Believer” created by Dan Reynolds of Imagine Dragons, which was widely acclaimed at the Sundance Film Festival. Please see the back of this newsletter for more information.

ANNUAL HOSPICE FOUNDATION OF AMERICA EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR PROFESSIONALS

March 29 | 2–4pm | Annette Poulson Cummings College of Nursing Building

Transforming Loss: Finding Potential for Growth is an inspirational program about positive change and action by the bereaved in the aftermath of loss. The program is appropriate for all professionals working in hospice and palliative care, counselors, clergy, funeral professionals, and any professional whose practice involves the bereaved. The program will offer clinicians tools to support and encourage transformative growth in grieving clients and will supply self-help advice for the bereaved. Expert Panelists: Ken Doka, PhD, MDiv; Patti Anewalt, PhD, LPC, FT; and Richard Tedeschi, PhD. Moderated by Frank Sesno. Local Presenter: Sara Bybee, LCSW.

Free to Professionals, pre-registration REQUIRED, please call 801-585-9522. CEUs available.

Refreshments provided by CNS Hospice and Home Care.

MEMORIAL DAY RACE FOR GRIEF

Sponsored by Lora Erickson (aka the Blonde Runner). Proceeds support Caring Connections. Please go to http://blonderunner.com/events/raceforgrief/ for information and to register.

The Memory of a Darkest Moment continued from page 7

life in the best possible ‘new normal’ way. It’s not important how you take the steps to move on; what is important is that you are willing to move on.

You will still always remember your darkest moments. Some trigger may bring the moment freshly back to you and may even cause renewed sadness and tears. It still happens to us, but we handle it better now. Our experiences with loss have jogged our spiritual and mental awareness in surprising ways.

We can better understand some of pain others are feeling, because of our own past pain. Our world is altered; our dreams have changed. But in some ways, we see life clearer now.

The budding cherry tree with the crystallized branches from the freezing spring rain sparkles again. We recognize that the prisms reflecting from the sunshine are a message that there will always be a miracle in spring. The ice will melt and thaw. The buds will burst forth with blossom. The sunshine will warm the chill, and nothing can stop the transformation, the inevitable awakening, the birth of hope. The birth of spring!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO CARE FOR CARING CONNECTIONS? HERE ARE WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT US:

If you wish to donate to Caring Connections directly, please contact us at 801-585-9522.

Order a Memory tile for the Caring Connections Memory Wall. Tiles are $35 and inscribed with the name of the person being memorialized. The Memory Wall is displayed in the Caring Connections office area at the University of Utah College of Nursing Annette Poulson Cumming Building.

May is a wonderful month to remember someone you love with a memory tile.

REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONES—CARING CONNECTIONS MEMORY WALL ORDER FORM

Memory Wall (Located in entry hallway to Caring Connections) 4" by 4" Tiles: $35.00

Male:
First Name _____________________ Middle Initial _______ Last Name _____________________
Birth Year __________ Death Year __________

Female:
First Name _____________________ Middle Initial _______ Last Name _____________________
Birth Year __________ Death Year __________

Ordered by ___________________________ Phone ___________________________
Address ________________________________

Send checks and information to: Caring Connections: A Hope and Comfort in Grief Program
University of Utah College of Nursing
10 South 2000 East
Salt Lake City, UT 84112-5880
WORKING WITH OUR UTAH CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR SUICIDE SURVIVORS

In November, we joined survivors of suicide around the world to remember those who died by suicide and support those in grief. Kathie Supiano gave the remembrance presentation. Later this spring, Caring Connections will host the AFSP Healing Workshop for Survivors, featuring Dr. Jack Jordan [this event is full and no longer accepting registration]. We are especially pleased to let you know that our AFSP chapter was named chapter of the year—and we are grateful for their exceptional leadership in suicide prevention.

GRIEF AND THE HOLIDAYS

Renowned pianist and member of the Piano Guys, Jon Schmidt, shared the of the loss of his daughter Annie, and a message of appreciation for the support he received and his return to hope. If you missed this event, here is the video link (also available on our website):

http://nursing.utah.edu//blog/caring-connections/2017/grief_and_the_holidays.php

HOMELESS PERSONS’ MEMORIAL CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

We participated in the 4th Street Memorial Event for the Homeless who died in Salt Lake City in January. 4th Street Clinic is a prior recipient of the Caring Connections Kind Remembrance Award for their efforts to bring those who die homeless to our awareness.
Seeds of Remembrance
I Choose Love—The Story of Stockton Powers

Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at 7pm
We are pleased to feature Stockton's parents, Alyson and George Deussen, who were recently featured in the widely acclaimed documentary "Believer" also with Dan Reynolds of Imagine Dragons, and shown at the Sundance Film Festival.

Sponsored by:
Clark L. Tanner Foundation in memory of Sarah Hogle

University of Utah
Annette Poulson Cumming College of Nursing Building
10 South 2000 East, Salt Lake City, UT 84112

THIS EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC