



GRIEF SUPPORT AND CONNECTIONS FOR YOUR JOURNEY

## A new year, a new beginning

A new year is a new beginning. It is a time when people make plans and formulate resolutions to improve their lives.

But when we are grieving, our tendency is to stand at the threshold of a new year looking backward rather than forward. Our loss defines our life and obscures thoughts of the future. We fear that walking through the door into a new year means leaving our loved one behind.

Moving forward may seem to be an act of betrayal or abandonment. We may fear forgetting or letting go. And yet we stand on the precipice of 2018, and our life moves on.

Though we might not be ready to embrace it, one undeniable offering of a new year is hope. One writer stated, "Hope is hearing the music of the future. Faith is having the courage to dance to it." Each breath is an acknowledgement that the last chapter in our life story has yet to be written. Each day is another opportunity to grow and move toward healing. Each new moment is pregnant with hope.

The decisions we make in those moments shape us and our future. Ironically, the things that most often fill our resolutions are the very things that help us most in our grief: getting plenty of rest, eating healthy, exercising regularly, and connecting more closely with others.

Yet, change is not easy, especially change weighed down by our grief. How do we move forward? One word: courage.

Webster defines courage as "the mental or moral strength to



venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty."

The journey of grief is difficult. We hope that as you venture into 2018, you find the courage to embrace the new opportunities that are before you, persevere in spite of the challenges you face, and seek help from fellow travelers when you need it.

As the new year approaches, we look forward to offering activities and events that will aid your grief journey. As always, those activities are listed on the back page of this newsletter. We hope one resolution will be to take advantage of these offerings.

For many of us, the last thing we feel now is courageous. Yet, as Mary Ann Radmacher writes:

*Courage doesn't always roar.  
Sometimes courage is the quiet voice  
at the end of the day saying,  
"I will try again tomorrow."*



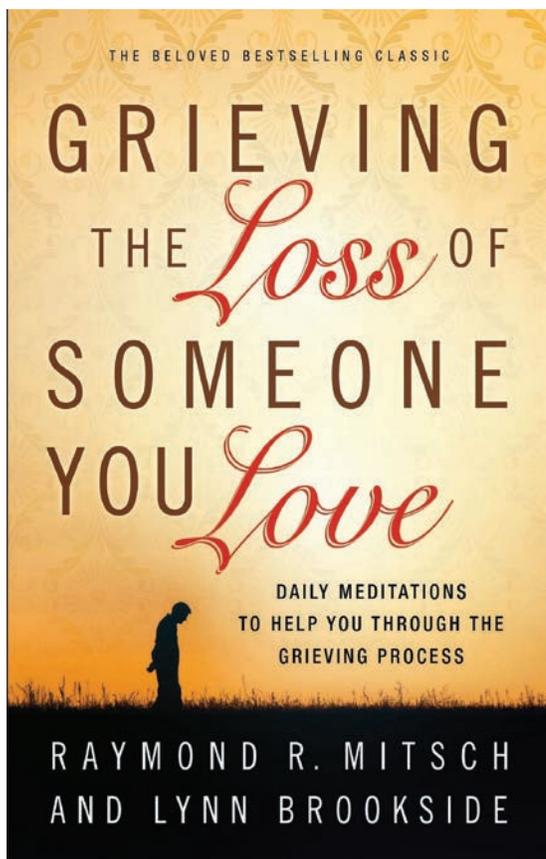
*Davette Askins and  
Howard Travers*

## Order of Eastern Star crochets for hospice

Davette Askins had a surprise for the December meeting of our Dorchester County Support Group. Davette, ODGM of the Order of Eastern Star, Oziel Chapter #23, Cambridge, crocheted the beautiful lap blankets pictured here and donated them to Howard Travers, our Bereavement Services Manager.

The blankets will be gifted to our hospice patients who become chilled in the cold of winter. Also attending the meeting were Patricia Sharp, Worthy Matron of the Order of the Eastern Star, and Sharon Warner, Committee Chairperson.

All three ladies told Howard they were enthusiastic about volunteering for Coastal Hospice in Dorchester County. And we really need volunteers there! If you're interested in helping Coastal Hospice in the Dorchester area — or anywhere on the Lower Shore — please contact Sally Rankin, our Volunteer Coordinator, at 410-742-8732 or [srankin@coastalhospice.org](mailto:srankin@coastalhospice.org).



## RECOMMENDED READING

*“Grieving the Loss of Someone You Love ~ Daily Meditations to Help You through the Grieving Process”*

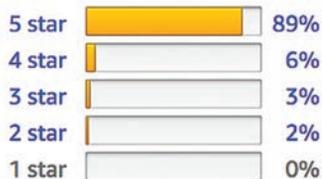
Few losses are as painful as the death of someone you love. No valley is as vast as grief, no journey as personal and life-changing.

Compassionate and wise guides, Raymond Mitsch and Lynn Brookside, shine a light on the journey through grief. They can help you endure the anguish; understand the stages of grief; and sort through the emotions of anger, guilt, fear and depression.

This series of thoughtfully prescribed meditations for each new day of the upcoming year shares wisdom, insight and comfort that will help you through and beyond your grief.

★★★★★ 203

4.8 out of 5 stars



## A local idea to channel grief by feeding the hungry

A local bereaved family literally took their mother’s wish to help others and made it their mission to help feed the hungry.

The family — who prefers to remain anonymous since that is what their mother wanted — purchases \$100 worth of groceries for one hungry family each month — and honors their mother.

The family has fed hungry families from Pocomoke City to Salisbury to Selbyville, and as far away as Baltimore County. The son said helping feed the hungry helps his family with their own grief. And the returns are priceless, he added.

“We heard that the families were actually in tears,” he said. “Everybody has responded so gratefully. Today people are so grateful for food that we take for granted.”

Their mother was one of 14 children, so she knew firsthand what it was like to miss a meal. Feeding a hungry family was her idea. She wanted that in lieu of flowers, and her family decided to do it for as long as they could, her son said.

Area churches help to find those in need. The family buys the food, then brings it to a church representative who then delivers the groceries. Enclosed with the groceries is a note explaining that the family is honoring their mother’s memory.

In order to continue for as long as possible, the family does receive some help. Children at a local daycare center collect canned goods and raise grocery money by holding bake sales.

His mother has passed, but her son said her legacy of giving lives on. “She was a giving person all her life, and she always worried about other people. We will continue to give in my mom’s memory as long as we can.”





## PARABLE

# The journey of the water droplet

A New Year represents change, and change requires courage, faith, and determination. Consider a drop of water on its journey to the ocean and how it undergoes significant changes.

One day the water drop is mist. The next day it becomes part of a passing cloud. On the third day, the drop falls to the ground as a raindrop. Eventually the raindrop seeps into the earth and joins other rain drops as part of a stream. Gradually this stream winds its way into a river, and the river empties, along with the raindrop, into a mighty ocean or another large body of water.

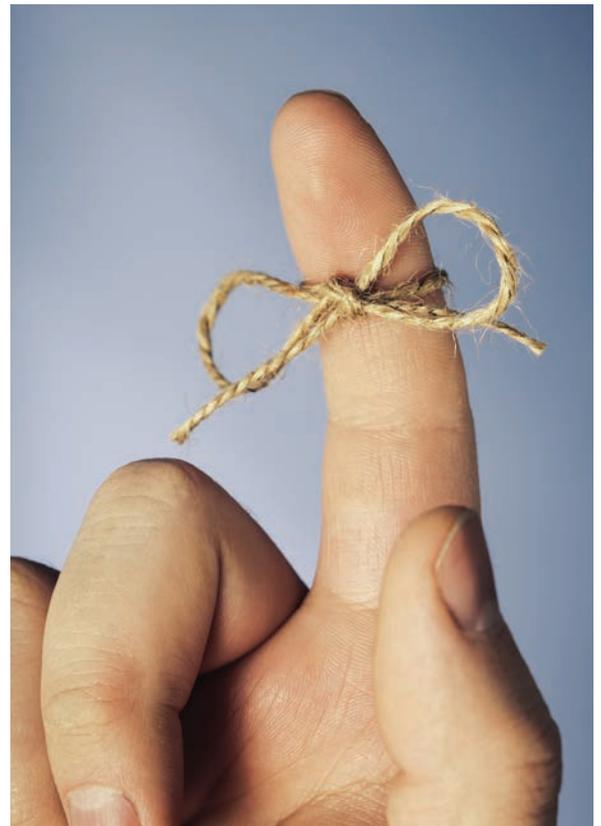
The drop of water may also remain in the ground — frozen throughout the winter. In the spring, the drop of water thaws and becomes part of a beautiful flower. In time, the moisture in the flower evaporates back into the air, and the drop again becomes part of a passing cloud. However, this time it falls to the earth as part of a winter snow. Eventually, the drop melts and seeps into the ground, gradually resuming the journey of finding its way to the stream, river, or ocean.

Throughout its adventures, the raindrop changes many times, assumes different roles and learns about itself in a variety of ways. When it joins the ocean, the drop is that much more complete and conscious of its potential.

In part, this is the nature of our journey through the seasons and changes of life. In many ways, it also represents the long and sometimes difficult journey of grief. But please know that there is always an ocean of others who, though their journey may be different from our own, have arrived at the same point. Surrounding ourselves with those who understand where we are, part of where we've been, and who care about us and support us, makes our journey much more bearable.

## *12 things to remember when you have suffered a loss*

1. The best way to handle your feelings is not to “handle” them but to feel them.
2. Only by giving your losses expression will you begin to heal.
3. Seldom is this loss only “this loss” for you.
4. There is one person who can take care of you better than anyone, and that’s you.
5. In allowing others to help you, you help everyone: them and you.
6. Try to show grace with those who try to give you care.
7. Sometimes it makes perfect sense to act a little crazy.
8. Your grieving, your timing, and your progress in healing are all uniquely yours, and that’s as it should be.
9. You have a choice in how you respond to your loss.
10. Your time of loss can be a time of soul-making unlike any other.
11. Not all your questions will have answers, but they’re worth asking anyway.
12. Your time of loss can become a time of discovery.





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**TO OPT OUT:** You are likely receiving this publication following the death of a family member, friend or loved one who received care from Coastal Hospice. Grief support is a vital part of the hospice philosophy of care. This publication serves to share information you can use during this time and highlight upcoming events. If you do not wish to continue receiving this publication or have a change of address, please contact Melissa Dasher at 410-742-8732, ext. 621 or [mdasher@coastalhospice.org](mailto:mdasher@coastalhospice.org).

## UPCOMING GRIEF SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

These groups provide a time of respite and a safe place to express feelings in the grieving process. Support groups are free to any adult who has experienced the death of a loved one, even if they were not a patient of Coastal Hospice. Lunch socials are Dutch treat. For information, call **410-742-8732**.

### Dorchester County

**Support Group** – Dorchester County Library,  
303 Gay St., Cambridge  
Mondays at 3 p.m.  
Jan. 22, Jan. 29, Feb. 12, Feb. 26  
Information ~ Elmer Davis 410-726-2583

### Wicomico County

**Lunch Social Group** – All at 1 p.m.  
Jan. 10 – Adam's Taphouse Grille, 219 N Fruitland Blvd.,  
Fruitland  
Jan. 24 – Denny's, 100 East Cedar Lane, Fruitland  
Feb. 14 – Red Lobster, The Centre at Salisbury, Salisbury  
Feb. 28 – Outback, 8245 Dickerson Lane, Salisbury  
RSVP ~ Lynette Chase 410-901-2292

**Support Group** – The MAC Center,  
900 Progress Circle, Salisbury  
Every Friday at 1 p.m.  
Information ~ Nicole Long 443-614-6142

### Somerset County

**Support Group** – Somerset County Library,  
100 Collins St., Crisfield  
Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 11 a.m.  
Information ~ Nicole Long 443-614-6142

### Worcester County

**Lunch Social Group** – All at 1 p.m.  
Jan. 18 – Fager's Island, 201 60th St., Ocean City  
Feb. 15 – Dunes Victorian Room, 2800 Baltimore Ave.,  
Ocean City  
RSVP ~ Diana Pikulsky 410-641-6566

**Support Group** – Ocean Pines Library,  
11107 Cathell Rd., Ocean Pines,  
Every Thursday at 11 am.  
Information ~ Nicole Long 443-614-6142

**NOTE: Lunch socials are all Dutch treat.**