

LIFT

Grief is a process, not a state. –Anne Grant

December 2020
Bereavement Newsletter

Living Is For Today
West Texas Rehab's Hospice of San Angelo

Finding hope is crucial to healing grief; the LIFT editor, Louise Jones, has done a beautiful job in calling us to *hope* during this difficult pandemic and holiday season. In the spirit of hoping, the bereavement department has scheduled the following *in person* memorial services, as well as the virtual grief support group. Contact Karen Schmeltekopf for more information about any of these events, kschmeltekopf@wtrc.com, 325-658-6524.

LIGHT UP A LIFE TREE LIGHTING

Thursday, December 3, 6:00 pm
Cactus Hotel
36 E. Twohig, San Angelo

CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE

Thursday, December 17, 6:00 pm
Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Great Room
3 S. Randolph Street, San Angelo

VIRTUAL GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Thursday, December 17, 1:00 pm

HAVING HOPE IN 2020

LIFT editor

Will anyone be sad to see 2020 go? We have been challenged to our core by the events of 2020: a global pandemic, our country dealing with the highest COVID-19 death toll in the world (and rising), fires and hurricanes, racial and political unrest, job losses and business closures, churches and schools struggling, individuals and families struggling. It has been a tough year! And it is not over yet.

Instead of focusing on different aspects of living during a pandemic, as we have done in the last few months, we want to do something different in the next few issues of LIFT by focusing on ideas that encourage us to be resilient and to have hope – to think about things that give us optimism, to take stock of how we have grown during adversity, and to be grateful for lessons learned. That is quite a challenge. You may even have “assignments.”

Words matter. They have the power to convey everything that everyone who has ever lived has learned about living well – or not. Our hope is that you contemplate the words that follow and, as you think about them, let them lift you up. You may even want to add the quotations and thoughts that inspire you, the ones you turn to in times of need.

Your “assignment” is to grab a pen, find a quiet space, settle in, take some deep breaths, relax, and read. Think about each quotation, and underline the parts that speak to you.

“We must also remember that no one is free of suffering, and extend our hands to others who lack a home, resources or family to protect them. This crisis shows us that we are not separate from one another – even when we are living apart. Therefore, we all have a responsibility to exercise compassion and help.... I sincerely hope everyone can stay safe and stay calm. At this time of uncertainty, it is important that we do not lose hope and confidence in the constructive efforts so many are making.” -The Dalai Lama, *Time* (May 4, 2020)

“It’s very important that our mind is at peace when we are working. It’s very hard to be effective and efficient when you have a lot of worries or anxieties going through your mind. You can meditate in the morning or even before bed. I like to spray some incense or fragrance in the air, just to help me finish each day with positivity and gratitude. At the end of the day, try to focus on and appreciate what you did accomplish rather than what you failed to accomplish.” –Marie Kondo, *Time* (May 4, 2020)

“You may not always have a comfortable life. And you will not always be able to solve all the world’s problems all at once. But don’t ever underestimate the impact you can have, because history has shown us that courage can be contagious, and hope can take on a life of its own.” – Michelle Obama, *Address at Young African Women Leaders Forum*

**“If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself but to your own estimate of it, and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.”
- Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations***

“We spend precious hours, fearing the inevitable. It would be wise to use that time adoring our families, cherishing our friends and living our lives.” –Maya Angelou

“I also hope this moment has taught us about the connections we have to other people. The biggest change my family has made is that we are actually sitting down to the dinner table together, taking the moment to just sit together and evaluate the day. That’s joy. Even if we do a bad job all day – as we often do – we are gathering in a different way, and I do hope that carries forward. Sometimes it takes a wild outside force to make you understand what’s important.” – Samantha Bee, *Time* (May 4, 2020)

“The very least you can do in your life is figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance but live right in it, under its roof.” –Barbara Kingsolver, *Animal Dreams*

**This is the time to be slow,
Lie low to the wall
Until the bitter weather passes.
Try, as best you can, not to let
The wire brush of doubt
Scrape from your heart
All sense of yourself
And your hesitant light.
If you remain generous,
Time will come good;
And you will find your feet
Again on fresh pastures of promise,
Where the air will be kind
And blushed with beginning.”
-John O’Donohue, *Benedictus Book of Blessings***

These words of experience and wisdom have the power to open our thoughts and to help us consider surprising, unintended silver linings of the events of 2020 (for example, a renewed appreciation for teachers and front-line food service workers and health care workers whose work allows us to stay safe). Marcus Aurelius wrote centuries ago that we have the power to ease our distresses. May this holiday season be a time when we use our power for the good of all. Above all, we must not lose hope!

In December 2020, HOSA hopes you have a happy and fulfilling holiday season.

December 2020

