



Brattleboro Area Hospice *Newsletter*

January 2011

Brattleboro Area Hospice • 191 Canal Street • Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

When You Don't Choose Love, You Choose Fear

If we could literally reach into you and remove all your fears—every one of them—how different would your life be? Think about it. If nothing stopped you from following your dreams, your life would probably be very different. This is what the dying learn. Dying makes our worst fears come forward to be faced directly. It helps us see the different life that is possible, and in that vision, takes the rest of our fears away.

Unfortunately, by the time the fear is gone most of us are too sick or too old to do those things we would have done before, had we not been afraid. Thus, one lesson becomes clear: we must transcend our fears while we can still do those things we dream of.

To transcend fear though, we must move somewhere else emotionally; we must move into love. Happiness, anxiety, joy, resentment—we have many words for the many emotions we experience in our lifetimes. But deep down, at our cores, there are only two emotions: love and fear. All positive emotions come from love, all negative emotions from fear. From love flows happiness, contentment, peace, and joy. From fear comes anger, hate, anxiety and guilt.

We cannot feel these two emotions together, at exactly the same time. They're opposites. If we're in

fear, we are not in a place of love. When we're in a place of love, we cannot be in a place of fear. Can you think of a time when you've been in both love and fear? It's impossible.

We have to make a decision to be in one place or the other. There is no neutrality in this. If you don't actively choose love, you will find yourself in a place of either fear or one of its component feelings. Every moment offers the choice to choose one or the other. And we must continually make these choices, especially in difficult circumstances when our commitment to love, instead of fear, is challenged.

Having chosen love, it doesn't mean you will never fear again. In fact it means that many of your fears will come up to finally be healed. This is an ongoing process. Remember that you will become fearful after you've chosen love, just as we become hungry after we eat. We must continually choose love in order to nourish our souls and drive away fear, just as we eat to nourish our bodies and drive away hunger.

~Elisabeth Kubler-Ross & David Kessler
from *"Life Lessons: Two Experts on Death and Dying Teach Us About the Mysteries of Life and Living"*



Beautiful Hands

This is the kind of Friend
You are--
Without making me realize
My soul's anguished history,
You slip into my house at night,
And while I am sleeping,
You silently carry off
All my suffering and sordid past
In your beautiful
Hands.

~Hafiz

Celebrating Volunteerism...

by Sarah Rice, Shop Volunteer Coordinator

This year is the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV). The United Nations General Assembly named 2001 the first International Year of Volunteers. According to the world volunteer website (www.worldvolunteerweb.org) the idea behind IYV 2001 was that volunteer service is an important part of contributing to problem solving in social, economic, cultural, humanitarian and peacekeeping/making matters. For volunteerism to grow there was, and still is, a need for a greater recognition and support of volunteer work.

As a volunteer reliant organization we hold this idea dear to our hearts. Without volunteers our whole organization could collapse. Imagine Brattleboro without Hospice, without Experienced Goods—it just wouldn't be the same. So many people rely on us, whether through bereavement support, hospice care or for affordable clothing and housewares. And it's not just that—on a day to day basis here at the shops we experience people using us as a community hub. People come in for company, or meet their families here after school, or kill time while waiting for the bus home, or browse while warming up in the winter or cooling off in the summer. We have our regulars who keep us smiling and who we worry about if we don't see them on their usual day. It's the volunteers that create that sense of community

and keep the atmosphere welcoming. It's the volunteers that help us meet our mission by educating the customers and donors about who we are, what we do and how they can help.

As we go into this New Year of Volunteers we should hold our heads high with all the accomplishments that take place thanks to the altruism of our organization's team. It is important to recognize the heroes that make the mission of our organization possible. At the shops we'll continue to rally the spirit of volunteerism and keep searching for new ways to support its successes.

You may notice that the break room at the Thrift Shop has changed a bit in order to create a volunteer information center. This is where our main communications will reside, a place for announcements, introduction to new policies or procedures, and where we can have our own community news. Along with this I have created a blog or webpage for the volunteers at Experienced Goods. It is just a start in what could become a great tool for celebration and support of what you all do for us.

Thank you all for your continued support of our great organization and Happy New Year of the Volunteer!

Reiki Healing Arts Vermont is offering a training in January

All are welcome to the introduction of Reiki, the Usui System of Natural Healing, on Friday Evening, January 14, 2011—no sales pitch ever made. After this free introductory class, the course continues and will be held at Hilltop Montessori Middle School. The cost of the training is \$200.00. A discount is available for seniors and veterans. Call Reiki Healing Arts at (802) 254-6232 or e-mail Rebecca Reuter at reikivt@gmail.com for a more information about the course.

Congratulations to New Bereavement Volunteers

This fall nine people completed the seven week Bereavement Training and most will be joining BAH as active volunteers. We are pleased to welcome them. They are: Robyn Flatley, Joan Geneseo, Carolyn Kasper, Stacey Kors, Jane Noyes, Joanna Rueter, Jim Stasunas, Ellenka Wasung-Lott and Phillip Wilson. Congratulations to all.

2011 In-service Offerings

It is our hope that as volunteers you will also continue to learn as you do the work of hospice. That may happen by reading a poem in the newsletter, sharing time with a client, or gathering with others to talk and to listen. Over the next year, we will offer many opportunities for you to learn as well as to strengthen your bonds with the people involved in carrying out the mission of BAH. We ask that you look over the list of offerings and then commit to attending at least one of the sessions, hopefully more! Generally they will run for ninety minutes to two hours. Watch the newsletter for specific days and times as well as for additional listings. If you have questions, please call Bettina at 257-0775 x102.

February: *Whose Death is it Anyway?* This two hour in-service will include watching an hour-long program that examines end of life issues such as advance directives, palliative care and family conflicts around end of life decisions. The viewing will be followed by discussion and a chance to look at Vermont's forms.

March: *Workshop with Artist and Volunteer Helen Hawes.* This special three hour workshop will be an opportunity to work with Helen who finds corresponding processes between creativity and dying. Art experience is not necessary, but a willingness to consider that in both death and creativity there is no right or wrong, that conscious intent and unconscious intent are of equal value, and that both are about process and not product is. More information will be available in the March newsletter.

April 13: *HFA Teleconference: Spirituality and End-of-Life Care.* During the Hospice Care Training, the session on spirituality is often a real highlight and one that people feel should be longer than the hour provided. This teleconference and local panel discussion is an opportunity to more fully explore the topic of spirituality at end of life.

Marlboro College Graduate Center 1–5 PM. This free event is open to the public. The live broadcast runs from 1:30–4 and is followed by a local panel discussion until 5. CEU's are available.

May: *Boundaries and the Volunteer's Role.* There may have been times when you've wondered if what you want to say or offer to a client is appropriate. You may also have experienced requests or remarks from clients or their family members that feel intrusive or off-base. Maintaining healthy boundaries, in giving and receiving, is the rich area that we will explore together.

June 5: *Memorial Planting Service.* Held at the Memorial Garden at Living Memorial Park, this planting service is open to anyone who would like to commemorate the loss of a loved one. Plant something in the earth, decorate a stone to place in the garden and listen to the Hallowell Singers.

June 9: *The Hospice and Palliative Care Council of Vermont Annual Conference at Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee.* This daylong conference offers a number of interesting workshops to choose from. Carpooling from BAH is generally an option.

July: Brown Bag Lunch video and discussion. Topic to be announced.

August: To be announced

September: Volunteer Appreciation Party. Details to be announced.

October: *Personal Care* with Kris McDermet. This 2 hour session will provide a chance to review and expand on aspects of personal care that are covered in the training such as hand washing, glove use, equipment, simple toileting, transfers and bed positioning. Many volunteers have indicated that they would like more training with this aspect of volunteering. Are you one of them? Probably!

November: *Funerals.* We will take time to watch the documentary entitled *A Family Undertaking* which is about home funerals. Additionally, there will be some people present who can speak about their experiences with caring for a loved one at the time of death and beyond.

December: *Endings and Rememberings.* This gathering will be a time to remember with stories or mementos, clients who have died during the year. All are welcome, even if you did not have a client in the last year.

After the Fact

The people of my time are passing away: my
Wife is baking for a funeral, a 60-year old who

Died suddenly, when the phone rings, and it's
Ruth we care so much about in intensive care:

It was once weddings that came so thick and
Fast, and then, first babies, such a hullabaloo:

Now, it's this and that and the other and somebody
Else gone or on the brink: well, we never

Thought we would live forever (although we did)
And now it looks like we won't: some of us

Are losing a leg to diabetes, some don't know
What they went downstairs for, some know that

A hired watchful person is around, some like
To touch the cane tip into something steady,

So nice: we have already lost so many,
Brushed the loss of ourselves ourselves: our

Address books for so long a slow scramble now
Are palimpsests, scribbles and scratches: our

Index cards for Christmases, birthdays,
Halloweens drop clean away into sympathies:

At the same time we are getting used to so
Many leaving, we are hanging on with a grip

To the ones left: we are not giving up on the
Congestive heart failures or brain tumors, on

The nice old men left in empty houses or on
The widows who decided to travel a lot: we

Think the sun may shine someday when we'll
Drink wine together and think of what used to

Be: until we die we will remember every
Single thing, recall every word, love every

Loss: then we will, as we must, leave it to
Others to love, love that can grow brighter

And deeper till the very end, gaining strength
And getting more precious all the way...

~ A. R. Ammons

Something has spoken to me in the night, burning the tapers of the waning year; something has
spoken in the night, and told me I shall die, I know not where. Saying:

"To lose the earth you know, for greater knowing;
to lose the life you have, for greater life;
to leave the friends you loved, for greater loving;
to find a land more kind than home, more large than earth—
Whereon the pillars of this earth are founded,
toward which the conscience of the world is tending—
a wind is rising, and the rivers flow."

~Thomas Wolfe

Words of wisdom on aging, from Maya Angelou on her 70th birthday

- “I’ve learned that no matter what happens, or how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow.
- I’ve learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way he/she handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights.
- I’ve learned that regardless of your relationship with your parents, you’ll miss them when they’re gone from your life.
- I’ve learned that making a “living” is not the same thing as “making a life”.
- I’ve learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance. I’ve learned that you shouldn’t go through life with a catcher’s mitt on both hands; you need to be able to throw some things back.
- I’ve learned that whenever I decide something with an open heart, I usually make the right decision.
- I’ve learned that even when I have pains, I don’t have to be one.
- I’ve learned that every day you should reach out and touch someone. People love a warm hug, or just a friendly pat on the back.
- I’ve learned that I still have a lot to learn.
- I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

Art Helps the Heart: Create a commemorative valentine

Saturday, January 29, 10:30 am to 12 noon (Snow date: February 5, 10:30am to noon)

Create a commemorative valentine to hang on the Remembrance Tree at our 51 Elliot Street Experienced Goods Home Furnishings shop or to take home. Materials will be provided but you may want to bring copies of your loved one’s picture. The Art Helps the Heart program provides an opportunity for you to socialize over an art activity with other individuals and families who are coping with the death of a loved one. Materials are provided. We appreciate RSVPs to Shirley at 257-0775, but drop-ins are welcome. Refreshments will be served. Elizabeth Ungerleider and Elizabeth Pittman will facilitate.

Brattleboro Area Hospice

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Shop Volunteer Coordinator
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Jen Reichman
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Store Assistants

Experienced Goods

Home Furnishings

Karen Zamojski, *Store Manager*
Karen Abel
Sharon Dunn
Tom Harris
Store Assistants

Calendar

January 3, Monday. Hospice Office closed for holiday.

January 5. Volunteer Report Forms due.

January 10 & 24, Monday, 6:30–8:00 pm. Bereaved Parents Support Group.

This group meets the second and fourth Mondays of each month facilitated by Lynn Martin. Call Winnie or Elizabeth to register.

January 12 & 26, Wednesday, 5:00–6:30 pm. Spouse/Partner Loss Support

Group meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month facilitated by Cheryl Richards. Call Winnie or Elizabeth to register.

January 17, Monday, Hospice Office closed for holiday.

January 19, Wednesday, 5:00–6:30 pm. Suicide Loss Support Group. Note:

meetings resume on the third Wednesday, January 19, and will continue to meet the first and third Wednesdays of each month facilitated by Andrea Edwards. This group is co-sponsored by The Samaritans, Inc. Visit them at <http://www.samaritansnh.org/> Call Winnie or Elizabeth to register.

January 21, Friday, 6:00pm. Social Gathering, for current and former Spouse/Partner Loss members. Potluck at Mary Lou Buchanan's House, 70 Terrace Street, weather permitting. "Please RSVP as to what you plan on bringing, I will supply beverages, eating utensils and dinnerware. Call 254-4253 or e-mail manciab@comcast.net. Thanks, Mary Lou".

January 27 to February 17 and March 10–31, Thursdays at 5:30–7:00pm [taking February 24 & March 3 off.] A Grief Support Group for Adults, if there is sufficient interest. This 8-week series will meet (in two 4-week blocks).

A writing and discussion group for adults whose parent, sibling, friend or other cared-for person has died, facilitated by Elizabeth Pittman and Winnie Ganshaw.

January 29, Saturday, 10:30 am to 12 noon. (Snow date: February 5, 10:30am to noon), Art Helps the Heart, at Experienced Goods Home Furnishings, 51 Elliot Street. MAKE-A-VALENTINE! More information in this newsletter.

January 31, Monday, 5:30pm. Board of Directors meeting.

All of our services are free because of you!

We rely on donations from the community to keep our services free of charge. Help support our work by sending a donation to: Brattleboro Area Hospice, 191 Canal Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301. Thank you!

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