

Volunteer Voice

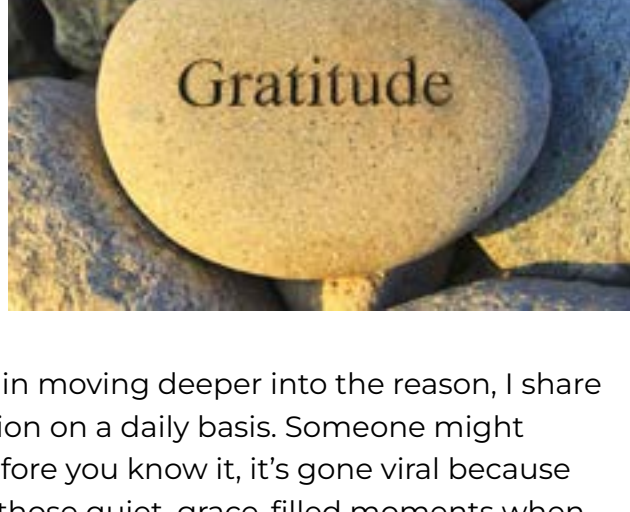
Breaking News

This time of year beckons us to slow down and sit in the stillness of gratitude, if just for a moment. A tradition in our family, which I am sure is common for many families, is to bring to mind what we're most grateful for, not just in that moment (it's too easy to say family and friends), but to dig deeper and look back throughout the past year to what has been most meaningful. I always list our volunteers, but in moving deeper into the reason, I share that I feel so incredibly blessed to witness grace in motion on a daily basis. Someone might share a random act of kindness on social media and before you know it, it's gone viral because we're hungry to find the good. Here, we get to witness those quiet, grace-filled moments when a volunteer passes someone in the hall, sharing a smile, we get to watch the tenderness and patience of a volunteer helping someone with their meal, we catch the slight tilt of the head as a volunteer listens to a family member unburdening herself. This is how you dear volunteers fill us with gratitude each and every day!

And not only us, but those we serve as well. Every caregiver receives a survey from Angela Hospice after a certain period of time has passed since their loved one was on service with us. Here's one of those responses: "This facility was amazing! They treated my dying father with kindness and respect. Not only were the staff great with dad but extremely kind to our family. They had so many amenities for the family. The volunteers do a fantastic job!" We couldn't agree more!

To show your Angela Hospice pride, we will soon be offering a variety of Angela Hospice t-shirts for sale (at the cost Angela Hospice pays). A display of the different designs will be showcased in the Volunteer Office. The next time you're in, please stop by to check them out. Lora will be able to take your order for you.

Finally, a last minute reminder that the flu vaccine deadline is November 30th. If you do not have your proof of vaccine to us by December 1st, we will change your status to temporarily inactive until we receive your copy. As always, please reach out to us with any questions.



Bereavement News

By Jasmine I. Kendrick, LLMSW, CGP
Grief Care Counselor

Children's Grief Awareness Day is November 16, 2023

Renowned grief expert David Kessler provided thought provoking insight on grief as it relates to children as he stated, children are often the forgotten grievers. As adults grieve, this can be true even though unintentional. Often, grieving adults are either working to process their own grief or might believe that a child cannot fully understand what grief and loss is. They may believe that children cannot handle the severity of the pain so they try to shield them from it at all costs.

Protection is a beautiful idea, but one that isn't practical. Children do grieve. The best thing a grown-up can do is acknowledge where the child is, taking notice of what behaviors or emotions are presented, and support them.

This year the Children's Grief Awareness Month campaign centers on "Flipping the Script" on



grief. Think of things you might have been told during a time of loss: you'll get over it, they are in a better place. Think of all the feelings that might have come from those statements. Although meant to help, how did they make you feel? Now, think of a little one who could be grieving and hears those exact words from a trusted adult. It can diminish their grief, silence their pain and potentially cause them not to open up to others, out of fear of judgment.

How can we help grieving children? Provide grieving children with the space and permission to express whatever they are feeling. Be sure not to minimize their pain with positivity. This is meant to help them feel better, but ignores the very reality in which they are living in. Try some of these conversation statements instead: tell me more about what you're feeling...would you like to share some of your favorite memories or look at photos? I'm so sorry you're hurting, but you are safe and I will do whatever I can to support you.

The best thing you can do for a grieving child is to simply be present, providing them with all the love they can take. You might not can spare them from the hurt, but you can soothe it with the right tools. Visit <https://nacg.org/> for more great resources on how to help a child who is grieving.

OUR FREE GRIEF CARE PROGRAMS:

While feelings of grief are normal, handling them can be difficult and painful. Talking about what you are going through can help. Call 734.779.6690 to schedule an appointment. Or visit www.askforangela.com to check out our grief support calendar with a detailed listing of upcoming support groups.

Care Center News

What's in a Name

When recording a visit on the Documentation Sheets in the binders, please fill in the patients' names on the top of the sheet if it is blank. When someone else records a visit after yours, they have no way of knowing who you visited if the patient's name is not filled in. And please review the Volunteer Plan of Care in the thinner white binders where there is detailed personal information on the patients and be sure to check the box "Plan of Care Reviewed". We do appreciate your help with the documentation.

Community Outreach & Philanthropy

Thank You!

The annual Tree of Life is in full swing – taking place on the Angela Hospice grounds now through Jan. 1 – and we wanted to say thank you to all of you who have spent countless hours stringing angels, those who came to our opening ceremony on Nov. 18, and all you've done!

We know this time of year can be the busiest, so we're incredibly grateful that you've taken the time to be a part of this year's Tree of Life. Thank you!

Compassionate Corner

By Denise Welsh
Integrative Therapies Vol Coordinator

The gift of our presence is almost always the best gift we can give to ourselves and others. So as we are approaching this special season that focuses on giving, why not take a look at a different way to give? Look for special events to attend with family and friends, host a baking or craft session, go caroling together, ride in the car to look at all the beautiful lights in your neighborhood and others, have an evening of playing games/cards and try some new ones! One of my favorite holiday memories is from 1992 when I contacted a barbershop quartet to come to my parents' home as a Christmas gift for my dad. He would always guess what his wrapped gifts were so I was determined to finally surprise him. The whole family was able to enjoy their gift of singing and the best part was seeing my dad's eyes well up in appreciation. Do you have any touching memories of holiday moments that remain in your heart? We would love to hear about them so please email Denise Welsh at dwelsh@angelahospice.us.



Home Care News

Homecare is Back!!

We are excited to share that we will be bring volunteers back to homecare, starting in October. All homecare volunteers, for respite, companionship or spiritual care visits will have to go through MVI training first, before volunteering in homecare. If you are interested in getting back to homecare or would like to volunteer in homecare, please reach out to Lora @ ltroiiani@angelahospice.us or 734-953-6024

Mission Moment

Rev. Diane Smith, MDiv, BCC
Director, Ministry Engagement

Joy for Mission

One day Rumi asked one of his young, snotty disciples to give him an enormous amount of rich and delicious food. This young disciple was quite arrogant and somewhat alarmed because he thought Rumi was living an ascetic lifestyle. Rumi used to pray all night and eat hardly anything. The disciple thought, "Aha, now I've really got the master. What he really wants is to go off somewhere secretly and eat all this food." So he decided to follow Rumi. He followed him through the streets of Konya, out through the fields, out into yet further fields. Then he saw Rumi go into a ruined tomb-like cave. "I'm finally going to unmask all of his pretensions," the young disciple thought. But what he found when he himself entered the cave was a totally exhausted dog with six puppies. Rumi was feeding the dog with his own hands so that she could survive to feed her puppy children. Rumi knew all along that the disciple was following him, of course, and turned to him smiling and said, "See?" The disciple, extremely moved, said, "But how on earth did you know that she was here? This is miles away from where we are!" Rumi laughed and laughed, "When you have become awake your ears are so acute that they can hear the cries of a sparrow ten thousand miles away."

"The Lord hears the cry of the poor." Do you? It's so easy to judge "the poor." "Why don't they get a job?" "They should be taking better care of their kids, their house." We've heard it all, maybe even had some other disturbing thoughts on the subject!

But, let's get real. Aren't we all poor? On any given day, we, each of us, can be poor of body, poor of mind, or poor of spirit. It does no good to criticize or judge the actions or motives of others. WE'RE ALL IN THE SAME BOAT... frail, broken members of the great human family.

That being said, I believe that as human beings we are called to be "wounded healers," to go beyond our own personal borders and comfort zones to attend to those who, in need, come to our ministries. My suggestion? Set the alarm. Wake up! Because what Rumi said is true: "When you have become awake your ears are so acute that they can hear the cries of sparrows ten thousand miles away." Hear the cry of the poor. And then offer solace in good measure.

As we think of our sisters and brothers around the world suffering unimaginable hardships, as we consider the suffering of those around us in conflict and distress, as we remember the blessings we are grateful for in the midst of so much suffering, let us remember to give thanks, petitioning the heavens to bring peace and safety to all of creation. Amen.

Music Matters

By Heather Dean, MT-BC

Remember Me

In honor of children's grief awareness month we turn our attention to children who are often overlooked within a family who have experienced the death of a loved one. Children often do not exhibit grief the way that adults might. Because of this adults often believe that grieving children seem fine or attribute their actions to other factors such as misbehaving or issues with attention. Children express their thoughts and feelings more often through play and behavior that can perplex adults. Often children who are grieving may be "acting out" at school or at home. Sometimes children have difficulty sleeping or have separation anxiety.

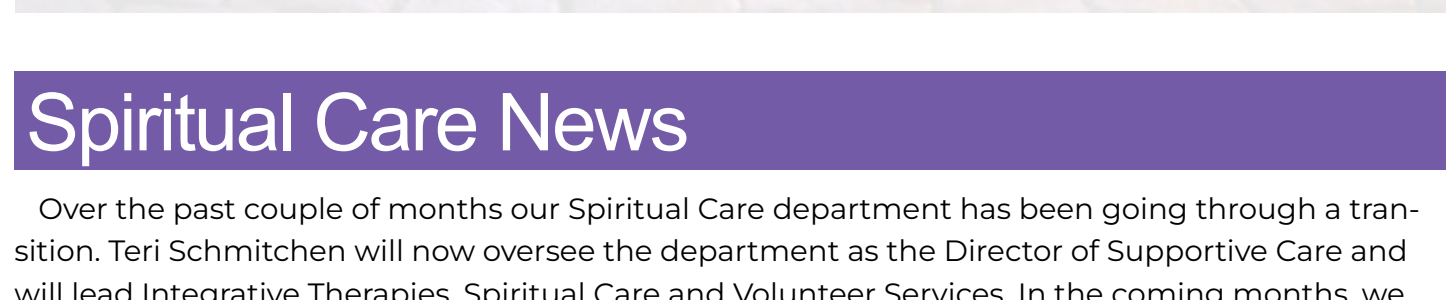
Children often do not have the verbal skills yet to articulate or the emotional language that matches this new feeling of loss. Our job as clinicians and as caregivers is to help children normalize their feelings and show support and help them feel secure.

Research indicates that music therapy is an effective intervention to reduce grief symptoms in the home. Music therapy goals often include encouraging remembrance, encouraging healthy expressions of grief, normalizing emotions and encourage coping skills.

One popular intervention that our children engage in is lyric substitution. In the animation movie Coco, a family is frequently shunning a boy from expressing emotions of grief or asking about his grandfather who has died. This boy happens to be interested in his grandfather's guitar and learns his grandfather's favorite song "Remember Me" to the surprise of his entire family. I have used this song many times in sessions with our younger children and sometimes our older children love this song as well. We replace some of the lyrics with special memories of loved ones. Of course it is important too that we "remember" our children in their grief as we can be lost in our own grief as well.

*Remember me
Though I have to say goodbye
Remember me
Don't let it make you cry (replace-it's ok to cry)
For even if I'm far away I hold you in my heart
I sing a secret song to you each night we are apart*

*Remember me
Though I have to travel far
Remember me
Each time you hear a sad guitar (each time ..fill in special memory)
Know that I'm with you the only way that I can be (know that I remember...fill in special memory)
Until you're in my arms again (can replace with memory or I love you always)
Remember me (can repeat song with more special memories)*



Spiritual Care News

Over the past couple of months our Spiritual Care department has been going through a transition. Teri Schmitchen will now oversee the department as the Director of Supportive Care and will lead Integrative Therapies, Spiritual Care and Volunteer Services. In the coming months, we will introduce you to each of our Spiritual Care team members via this column. Our Spiritual Care volunteers are integral members of the department. Your support enables our spiritual care coordinators to focus on counseling needs while ensuring those who are comforted by prayer, presence and Eucharistic Ministry are supported by our volunteers. We are in need of additional spiritual care volunteers to support our Home Care patients. If this is an area of interest, please email tschmitchen@angelahospice.us for more information. If there is anything that we can do to support you, please reach out to Teri. We're grateful for your support and service.

We Honor Veterans

As the temperature drops, we think of those without adequate shelter, including our homeless veterans. Please read the information below on how to connect veterans in need with shelter resources.

Source: va.gov

No Veteran should be without a place to call home. The VA is committed to ending homelessness among Veterans. Our focus is threefold:

- Conducting coordinated outreach to proactively seek out Veterans in need of assistance.
- Connecting homeless and at-risk Veterans with housing solutions, health care, community employment services and other required supports.
- Collaborating with federal, state and local agencies; employers; housing providers, faith-based and community nonprofits; and others to expand employment and affordable housing options for Veterans exiting homelessness.

If you are a Veteran who is homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness or know of a veteran who is, we strongly encourage you to contact the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at (877) 4AID-VET (877-424-3838) for assistance.

KEY VOLUNTEER CONTACTS

Bereavement
Margaret Levine: 734.779.6690 • mlevine@angelahospice.us

Community Outreach & Philanthropy
Helen Balmforth: 734.953.6045 • hbalmforth@angelahospice.us
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