

Coping With Grief

A BEREAVEMENT NEWSLETTER from INTEGRATED PALLIATIVE & HOSPICE

Issue #5 — Winter

Bereavement Support Services

Integrated Palliative & Hospice services are provided to the loved ones of our patients for 13 months after the patient's passing. It includes this newsletter, which are mailed to you. (If you wish to be removed from the mailing list, please call us.)

In addition, Integrated Palliative & Hospice has bereavement counselors to aid you as well as a library of books and brochures. Plus, we have a regular calendar of workshops, seminars, support groups and other events throughout the year.

Call our office at any time at 847-549-0588 to get more information. Plus, we can put you in touch with a bereavement counselor or provide other referrals.

You do not need to grieve alone.

.....

Contact Integrated Palliative & Hospice

900 Technology Way, Suite 280
Libertyville, Illinois 60048
847-549-0588; fax 866-341-2867

www.ihhscorp.com

IPH Integrated Palliative & Hospice

Taking Your Journey Past the 1st Year

ELSEWHERE IN THIS NEWSLETTER, we discuss "anniversary reactions."

You've experienced many anniversaries in the year since your loved one's death. But one can loom especially large: the anniversary itself of your loved one's passing.

Many people get to where you are – about a year after your loved one's passing – and think, "I should be over this." Life these days moves so fast that we think grief should, too. Moreover, in our self-help, there's-a-quick-program-for-everything world, you might be thinking, "I really should be over this!" The answer on both counts: "There are no *shoulds*. There are no set programs or prescriptions. There is no set length of time for bereavement that everyone follows. Nor is there a set, defined path. Only what is right for you."

For some people, the second year can be harder than the first year. If not as great, the challenges can be new and unexpected. A new sort of awareness can set in when the calendar comes full circle. You face a *second* Valentine's Day, a *second* Mother's Day or Father's Day, a *second* set of birthdays and anniversaries, a *second* holiday season. These milestones repeating can give you a sense that your loved one's passing is indeed permanent. Be ready for this possibility.

We hope that, if you haven't already, you will soon reach that fifth Stage

of Grief that Elisabeth Kübler-Ross describes: Acceptance. As she writes:

"Acceptance is often confused with the notion of being 'all right' or 'OK' with what has happened. This is not the case. . . . We will never like this reality or make it OK, but eventually we accept it. We learn to live with it. . . . Instead of denying our feelings, we listen to our needs; we move, we change, we grow,

we evolve. We may start to reach out to others and become involved in their lives."

Maybe you feel you've found acceptance and adjustment, even months ago. Or you feel you still have a way to go. Remember, the advice you've received to date doesn't expire. When you need perspective, look again at the issues of this newsletter and other materials you've received.

Moreover, in the past 40 years, bereavement has become a much more well-understood process. There are many resources — websites, articles, books, videos — that we've told you about over the past year, and many more we can lead you to.

Yes, the formal one-year bereavement program is concluding. But most important, the networks of help and information that you have developed with Integrated over the past year, plus the period of your loved one's care, are *not* disappearing.

Integrated Palliative & Hospice is still here to help you. ■

Through Your 1st Year

PART FIVE OF FIVE

