

# A SEASON OF CHANGE

SEVA HOSPICE BEREAVEMENT NEWSLETTER

Winter Issue

Vol. 4



It is cold! I used to hate the cold. I felt like it was a huge waste of time. I grew up in a place that had hot humid summers, and unpredictable winters. Somedays, the winter weather would be OK. Other days, it would be brutally cold. When the cold lasted for more than a week, I got cranky, and frustrated. What was the point?! What good is cold? This is stupid!

Now, I have changed my tune a bit. I still don't love it. But, the cold marks change. Change is always hard. No matter how "good" a change might be, it seems that change is hard. However, we humans, are designed to grow and evolve, through change. If we avoid change, we get stuck. However, if we, with the help of trusted people around us, embrace change; we grow. We see new perspectives. Our paradigms expand. As nice as it is to stay put and not have to deal with change, we are beings that are created to grow. Change; especially the change that comes when we go through profound loss, can fuel that growth.

Winter; the bitter cold, forces us to decide. It's not fun. Sometimes it hurts deeply. Yet, we can't stop the season from coming. However, if we accept the change of winter: the gray, cold, uncomfortable, sometimes biting reality of it; we might see some beauty. Not beauty that is striking, or obvious at first. But, beauty that takes reflection and contemplation to see. Small miracles, if you will.

Grief is our winter. Moving through it can be excruciating. We absolutely want to avoid it at all costs. Yet, it stays. We must decide. We can stay put. There is no shame in that. But eventually, winter itself, starts to change. Our grief is always with us. But the bitterness of it will, if we move into it, also change. New life, eventually, blooms.

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*May the Winter Solstice bring you renewal  
of hope. May it remind us at the time of  
greatest darkness, light is reborn.*

—Jan Richardson



People tend to believe grief shrinks over time



What really happens is that we grow around our grief



## Spiritual Corner

### Message from our Bereavement Coordinators

#### The Dance of Grief.

I love sitting out in my backyard. It isn't super fancy. And it's a small yard. But It's a personal sanctuary for me. My wife and I "designed" it. Mostly we just cleaned it up, put in some plants, some chairs, a couple of umbrellas, and a hammock. There's nothing I like more than going out there in the morning, or before I go to bed, to connect with Spirit.

Last night, I realized, getting close to Autumn, that change is going to happen. The beautiful green on the trees now; the green that dances with the breeze when it blows, within several weeks, is going to be gone. I felt sadness. I grieved. I love the trees around my yard. I feel a connection with them. I love watching them dance. But there is nothing I can do about the change they are soon going to be going through.

We, human beings, are like the trees. It's somehow a bit easier to accept that getting older, and less able to dance, is happening in our own bodies. But when we see it happening to our loved ones, it is truly a source of grief and sadness.

Even as our kids get older, moving from being toddlers to children, to pre-teens, to teenagers, to young adults; we grieve. The former version of our kids is never going to come back. But, eventually, the new does come. New life, new purpose, new empathy, new joy.

I think that one of the most important things we can do when we grieve is to be still. In the winter, the trees have no choice, but to wait. To be still. There is no dancing.

There is no way to make grief move quicker. Most of us have tried. It doesn't work.

But we can wait. We can be still. We can feel. We can allow ourselves to be a part of the process. As our Seva Grief Staff says regularly; there is no timeline, or appropriate length, for grief to last. Grief is on its own schedule.

But if we can let it teach us, through the tears, pain, reflections, memories, connections, and wisdom it brings; grief brings new life. Moments of stillness are key to this. Fall will happen. Winter will come. Then, almost by surprise, Spring begins. New life. New hope. New purpose.

And then; the song of summer. The Trees dance in celebration with the breeze once again. In the stillness of winter, may you find the sacred space of connection. May your tears find a safe passage that leads you to the joy that is in the distance.

Derek Cheatham  
Bernice Hammond

## Tips to cope with grief

### Plan Ahead for Difficult Days

Certain days, like anniversaries or the holidays themselves, may be especially hard. Plan something comforting, whether it's a quiet day at home or spending time with supportive people.

### Honor Your Loved One's Memory

Create a special ritual or memory space during the holidays, such as lighting a candle, hanging a special ornament, or preparing their favorite dish.

### Adjust Your Holiday Traditions

It's okay to change or skip certain traditions this year. You might find comfort in creating new ones or modifying old ones to better suit your emotional needs.

## Understanding Grief

It's Okay to Find Joy: Grieving during the holidays doesn't mean you can't also experience moments of joy or peace. Allowing yourself to embrace these moments doesn't diminish your grief or the memory of your loved one.

### Children and Grief

Visit Jessica's House website or call Jessica's House at (209)250-5395

Scan the QR Code  
and visit our website for grief support  
and helpful resources  
[www.sevahospice.com](http://www.sevahospice.com)



### Grief Support Groups are Available across the Central Valley

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