

GRACE HOME NEWS

APRIL 2021



GRIEF VS TRAUMA

American Psychological Association tells us "trauma is an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, "assault" or natural disaster. Immediately after the event, shock and denial are typical. Longer term reactions include unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships and even physical symptoms like headaches or nausea." The Austin Center for Grief and Loss states: "trauma overrides grief and prevents any real movement in the grief process."

Then, there is traumatic grief which happens when a loved one is lost in a traumatic way. One must deal with the trauma to be able to deal with the grief.

We have recently dealt with all of the above here at Grace Home. The residents are not simply residents, but they become our moms and dads, our grandpas and grandmas but most of all our friends. Sometimes our confidants and prayer warriors. The loss of any is not welcome but so many within short period of time, along with the many changing regulations, the fact that not only must they stay in their rooms, but we must do what was needed to keep them there as well, the fact that there was simply no way to keep everyone occupied in their rooms all day, and some would sit there with nothing to do despite our best efforts, needing to go home at the end of the day knowing you are leaving hurting and lonely hearts... This all tore at our hearts and minds leaving many of us feeling quite broken with terrible nightmares and a sense of dread and anxiety to go to work. It not only affected employees but residents as well. How many more times would they be moved? Would they die like everyone else was doing? Would their roommates die? Would all their friends die? I spoke with a minister about how to get past it all, especially the trauma. His words of wisdom were, "You have to realize that you are a survivor, not a victim" He went on to explain that trauma and grief have the same stages and while some stages are skipped and everyone goes through the stages differently, they are still part of the same process.

Those five stages are: shock and denial, anger, bargaining, depression and loneliness, acceptance and hope. One cannot be told how to grieve or get over trauma. There is not really any "getting over" either of them. It is more about feeding them the proper thoughts and lulling them into a state of semi consciousness so they do not become living, breathing monsters that ruin your life.

As always, the foundation of it all is trusting in an unfailing God.

-Laura Koehn

COVID SCREAMS

The day that dawned so beautifully
has changed to an overcast sky.
Dark clouds gather quickly, the winds change
and all of the birds try to fly.
Debris is coming towards me.
I hear the sound of a train.
I wonder if all my possessions
will be scattered and drenched by the rain.

I hear the cracks of the timber, the sound of exploding glass panes,
I know that when this storm is over, the rest might be ruined by flames.
I will not have a home or a nice cozy place to rest.
All that I had will be shambles, all scattered in one hopeless mess.

Oh! where will I go when the storm's o'er? Where will I flee from the night?
What will I wear on the morrow? Who'll help me out of this plight?
Is there someone around who will help me? Some comfort that I might seek?
Or must I stay here so weary, so cold from the rain that has beat?

This storm did not happen in real life. My heart and my mind was the place.
So dark and so heavy the burden, my job seemed to take up the space.
Coronavirus was coming! We heard it all over the news!
We must keep it out of our country! Stop airplanes! Don't go on a cruise!

Quarantine for two weeks from exposure. And don't even dream of fun.
All those who live in a nursing home must not see their loved ones. Not one!
Die from depression? Not hardly! Whose problem would it be if they did?
Well! We must not let that happen, or that answer will not long be hid!

They must stay in rooms with the doors closed! Who is to blame for the falls
Of the ones who are demented and do better when out in the halls?
Again, we must find prevention, for there is surely no reg for that!
"That is your problem! You fix it. We're here to just write you up"

And month after month it continues. Corona creeps in through the walls.
It kills our grandmas and grandpas as it leaps and bounds through the halls.
What is the sense of this business? Why bury our elders alive?
To have them die from the virus, alone without even their wife?

But now, they may have visits as long as one follows the rules!
A million or two? Who is counting? It seems we have all been fools!
Each day more rules come pouring on down from the people so high.
Take care of our people or read rules? The struggle goes on, and we sigh.

Our people no longer are the reason we come to work each day.
We come to read regulations and wonder what state thinks they say.
The days become very dreary, The tension is thick and it's hot!
Each person still needs understanding, love, and patience, a lot!

The burden is simply too heavy. The day I cannot get through.
So many dear ones have left me and the ones who are here are all blue.
Then Jesus reminds me so sweetly, "My child, this is not your load.
If you try to carry this burden, you will miss the joy of the road."

(continued)

I want you to think of their problems, but then, release them to me.
I know you would like to fix them, but that is the problem, you see?
You were never meant to fix them. Only to do what you can.
I am the Master Fixer, and fixing must happen by my plan.”

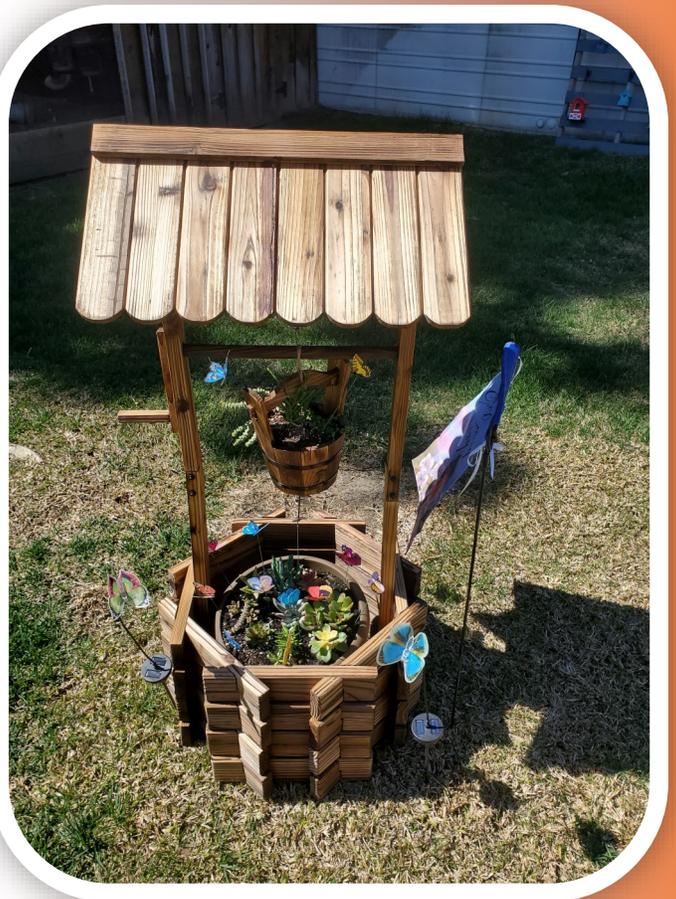
So I went to my corner and knelt there. I rested it all in his care.
I leaned my head on His shoulder, and He worked as only He'd dare.
He started fixing pieces of my tattered overworked mind,
And He worked on my heart for awhile so that I could be more kind.

I found it was me who needed fixing. Maybe others did too,
But I was the one He could work with to make the other dreams true.
For I was the one who was hindering the plans that He had all in store
Of how He could use this virus to help me and others some more.

So each morning is faced with no courage, but as we leave it to Him,
He gives enough for each moment although grace does seem to run slim.
I believe He is trying to teach us to trust Him with each little care,
To go to Him not only at morning but that our whole day we would share.

-Laura Koehn

On February 19 at 1:00, employees and residents gathered outside for a memorial for the twelve residents we had lost since the beginning of the outbreak of coronavirus. We started with a few songs– favorites of those who had passed on. Next, Minister Doug Koehn, pastor of Grace Home, gave a little talk on how it takes a certain amount of foggy days to make the almond trees blossom and how it is the same for us. After he finished, it was open for anyone to share memories. That was a touching time for everyone with quite a few tears shed. Lindsey had purchased a wishing well, succulents and butterflies (in honor of our butterfly program which we could scarcely carry out because of all the restrictions). Employees could plant a succulent or place a butterfly in the well in memory of the residents whom death had claimed. There was a cake decorated by one of the employees with all the residents names on it and mini sodas – favorite kinds of those who had passed away especially as that was quite a daily activity for some of them. It was an afternoon well spent.



THE STARFISH STORY

One day a man was walking along the beach when he noticed a boy picking something up and gently throwing it into the ocean. Approaching the boy, he asked, "What are you doing?" The youth replied, "Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die."

"Son," the man said, "don't you realize there are mile and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You cannot make a difference!" After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it back into the surf. Then, smiling at the man, he said...

"I MADE A
DIFFERENCE
FOR THAT ONE."

-AUTHOR UNKNOWN

PATRICIA "PAT" ELLIOT- 1/8

BARBARA THOMAS- 1/20

HIRAM "ACE" HIGHTOWER- 1/24

JOANNE O'DEA- 1/25 WANDA FLORES- 1/28

DELORES "DEE" HEALY- 1/29 LINDA KOETSIER- 2/1

LILY HAMAGUCHI- 2/3 DEWEY KOEHN- 2/6

BONNY MEAD- 2/6 MARY FIORINI- 2/7 FRANCISCO LUCAS- 2/7

JOE ROSAS- 2/14

IN LOVING MEMORY

Activity highlights!

February 24, we were allowed to go back to modified group activities and communal dining. Seven residents were allowed in group activities and one resident per table for meals. March 12, Grace Home left outbreak status (hopefully forever). On March 17, we increased group activities to 10 residents. Masks must still be worn and physical distancing must be adhered to but we can once again enjoy being with each other in a group. A few highlights since then have been:

- ◇ New York– pizza party and virtual tour of New York City (Walk Around the World)
- ◇ Birthday party– residents went hunting with nerf guns for some **crazy** employees turned deer
- ◇ S'mores around the fire pit that isn't a pit
- ◇ Spring Fling– one game consisted of getting your ducks (Peeps) in a row (baskets lined up at a distance)
- ◇ Plant a garden
- ◇ Wheelchair Races
- ◇ Kite flying
- ◇ Bible study– while few attend, the ones that do definitely enjoy it



OUT OF OUTBREAK!!!

The Grace Home board brought a special meal in to employees the day that we were declared out of outbreak. Mexican food was made by one of the CNAs family and butter chicken was brought from Punjab Sweets. The best part was the desserts: Oreo ice cream desserts made by two of the board members, not their wives or so I am told.

NEW HIRES

Connie Strode– Activity Assistant

Andrea Toews– Dietary

Aja Verniga– Housekeeping

South Hall Refurbishing

Because our census was so low after the outbreak was over, it was decided that this would be a good time to refurbish the south hall. All rooms and the hallway were emptied and the work began. New paint, flooring and wainscoting is taking a long time to complete. As of now, the finish date is some time during the second week of April.

visitors

All residents are free to have visitors. However, most visits must still happen in the board room. All visits need to be scheduled. Seven of our current residents are fully vaccinated and may receive visitors in their rooms if their roommates are absent. Visitors to these residents must have a negative Covid test within the last two days if they wish to visit in the resident's room.

EASTER

Z O W A R J D D G E Z G I C N J S V O L R R L N
T X M B T E P V R Y V T H O R N S O D D H E Z L
Q T J Z K E V R V O W M U W S R E D Z R E N H A
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S F J K Z K Z H R T A E Y U C L I O S F S V C G
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V Z F E I H T D D P V N F A M Y W V L U P I H P
H K K N C L G S Y C G T R N X U G N H S V L S Q

Centurion

Thorns

Gethsemane

Pilate

Barabas

Garden

John

Thief

Spices

Peter

Resurrection

Mary

Judas

Soldier

Angels

Hammer

Sword

Tomb

Spikes

Thirty pieces of silver

Cross

Spear

Drops of blood

Jesus

Veil rent in twain

Passover

Earthquake

Calvary