

# Touch Base Newsletter

April, 2021

## Thank You From Karen



### What A Journey!

10 years has flown by! And what an amazing 10 years!

When my Head Nurse asked me to sit on a committee to look into forming Hospice Palliative Care Services in the area, I had no idea what would transpire. Personally, for me, it has been a wonderful time of internal growth, confidence in working with a team and the very rewarding experience of helping patients and families. Volunteer training and the stories of volunteer experiences have been highlights for me.

We've laughed together; a male patient telling me the story of how Jim managed to give him a bed pan. How Carol assisting in our very first home patient assignment, climbed into a king size bed to help pull a lady who had slid down to the foot of the bed wiggle her way back up to the pillows. And watching the antics of our 4 legged friends bring life and joy into hospice.

We've cried together; seeing the tears of joy on a patients face as a volunteer sang and played a last quiet gentle song. Hearing Dorothy tell of the birds singing outside hospice as a life rose out of a body. And the stories many volunteers related as they held a hand during the last hours of life.

We've learned together; during volunteer training, the first home visits, and establishing teams and team leaders. We built a Hospice and learned to provide patient care and now we have taken on the challenge of providing volunteer assistance while physically distancing.

Throughout this whole journey the volunteers have been the best gift to our program and the community as a whole. There is nothing better than volunteering because it is a special gift of love given unconditionally from the heart. I am blown away by the wonderful people I have met and worked with through this journey. I am truly honored for the wonderful tribute Lisa wrote and submitted to the paper.

Now my journey takes another twist and this is to step back and have a younger mind rejig what we together have created and continue to shape it and grow it to new potential. Dylaina has taken on this challenge and I trust her because she too is a volunteer and gives from her heart. I look forward to the post COVID era of volunteering and will continue to be involved with MV Hospice, just sitting in a different seat along with you my treasured friends.



Karen



## Hello From Dylaina



What a great week!! I started an exciting new journey with Madawaska Valley Hospice Palliative Care and am so excited to be here! It has been a longstanding dream of mine to work here with all of you, and it has finally come to fruition. My passion for palliative care steams from a young age working with a wonderful human dying of the AIDS virus. Palliative care and AIDS were new then and the death was painful and not well managed, their goals were a challenge to meet and care was difficult to provide. That experience set me on a journey of lifelong learning and love for palliative care and a passion for empowering patients to have a successful death, however that success is defined by to them and their families. I feel blessed to be part of the team and look forward to continuing to learn and grow from all of you. You hold the secrets to our communities and help us create exceptional client centered care plans enabling the success our program currently experiences. Being here brightens my future and fills my heart with joy!!

Dylaina

## Personal Resilience for Hospice Palliative Care Team Members



How bouncy are you? Think of your bounciness quotient as a measure of how well equipped you are to move forward when life presents small or big losses.

How well do you react to change?

How do you feel when you don't get what you want?

What do you do when life gives you a heap of lemons?

Resilience is the ability to adapt to significant stress, threats, trauma, tragedy – such as illness, family, or work problems, financial concerns, dying or death of someone close to you.

Resilience allows you to face adversity and 'bounce back' to your previous state, or even 'bounce forward' by incorporating new experiences, growing and being better positioned for positive outcomes in the future.

### Strategies for Building Resilience include:

**Calm Breathing** – Do this for 30 seconds to 2 minutes restores our equilibrium and it grounds us in the present moment and it provides us with an opportunity to stop reacting to stimulus around us and builds a pause where we are able to hit the reset before we go on to the next task of the day.

**Recognizing the Warning Signs** – What are MY 'signs' when I am getting out of balance? This is a reminder to us to try something different. Visual reminders that it's time for paying more attention to supporting ourselves and being aware and promoting habits that are going to support your wellbeing.

**Self-Care** is important to be resilient. What self-care means to us? Years ago we would respond with physical self-care such as a bubble bath or a cup of hot tea. Our focus for more self-care should be around authenticity, connecting with our belief systems and being true to ourselves and finding meaning as a way to nurture who we are and to build our internal resources as we become more resilient.

**Meaning** – one of the resilient strategies that comes up often in research that people use to increase our sense of resilience is meaning and purpose. The quest for meaning is the key to mental health and human flourishing. How would you define the word meaning? "To make the world a better place – one human interaction at a time." What happens when you are lacking meaning? "Lack of ambition, feeling sad and notice insecurities come up." What brings meaning to your life? "Connections with people, being loved and appreciated, a peaceful existence."

THE PERSONAL RESILIENCE SLIDE PRESENTATION IS AVAILABLE IN OUR OFFICE.

Some of the topics covered included:

- 1) **Noticing and naming your emotions**
- 2) **Acceptance** – parts of ourselves that we may want to bury and acceptance of situations that we may not want to see as part of our life story.
- 3) **Being on your own** – COVID make us feel isolated from people we care about. How are we able to remain resilient in these times?
- 4) **Practicing self-compassion** – human beings are meant for connections. Times when we are not able to engage with others the way that is meaningful to us requires self-compassion.
- 5) **Acceptance** – How do we respond to a rainy day? If we respond negatively with "I wish it wasn't raining". How would it feel or be different if we respond with "Yup". Even if it's raining and dreary, that we decide how we want to be and the day we want to have and making the effort to feel that way.
- 6) **Mindfulness** – paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally. Mindfulness practices help caregivers cope with stress, connect with themselves and others.

## April 16th is Advance Care Planning (ACP) Day

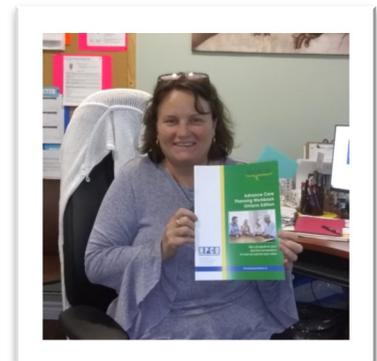
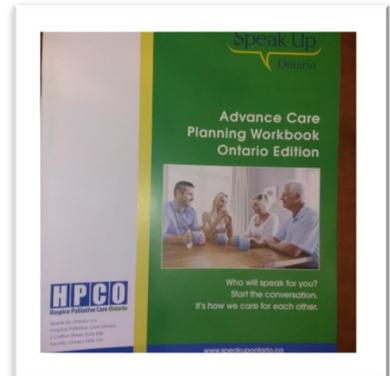
### An Essential Conversation for Everyone

#### Advance Care Planning Workbook – Ontario Edition

MVHPC has been given 140 workbooks to distribute to our volunteers and community as an important guide to help you figure out;

- who will speak for you if you can't about your healthcare
- how to start essential conversations with your loved ones about your wishes
- to lead by example and show this is an important part of how we care for each other by being prepared

Please feel free to stop by our office and pick up these very helpful booklets for you and others that you think would appreciate the resource.



### Additional Resources and On-Line Education

April is Advance Care Planning Month and Hospice Palliative Care Ontario is offering free access to great resources for our volunteers and seniors in our community. I encourage you to consider this if you are comfortable participating in an online event. You can participate on April 15<sup>th</sup>. If you do participate, please report your hours to us at Hospice and we track that for our annual statistics.

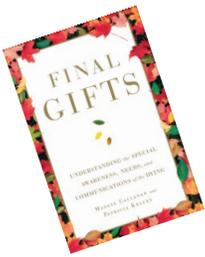
#### **Intended Audience Seniors and Hospice Volunteers**

**Description:** It is important to acknowledge that our health can change without warning. You never know when someone will have to speak for you. In Ontario, there are specific laws about when and who can make health care decisions on your behalf, should you become mentally incapable of doing so. We encourage you to participate in the appropriate Advance Care Planning conversations. It can be difficult to have these conversations with your family or friends, but they prove to be helpful in the time need. Please note that these sessions will be a 2-part series that repeats 5 times over the course of 10 weeks and each Session 1 – Education is a prerequisite to Session 2 – Conversation. To access the link to register [Advance-Care-Planning-Program.pdf \(hpcoco.ca\)](#)

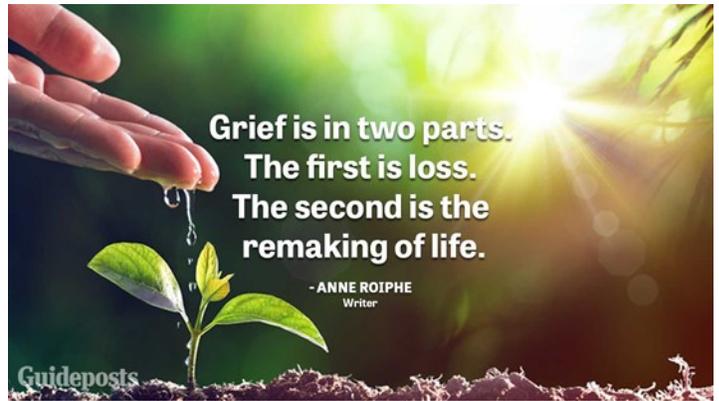
For more information about Health Care Consent & Advance care Planning in Ontario, please visit: [www.speakupontario.ca](http://www.speakupontario.ca)



### Book Pick in the MVHPC Library



**Final Gifts: Understanding the Special Awareness, Needs and Communications of the Dying** is a work on the psychology of death by hospice nurses Maggie Callanan and **Patricia Kelley**. Drawing on their decades of intimate experience caring for the dying, the authors set out to provide a comprehensive survey of the physical, psychological, and metaphysical aspects of the end-of-life process.

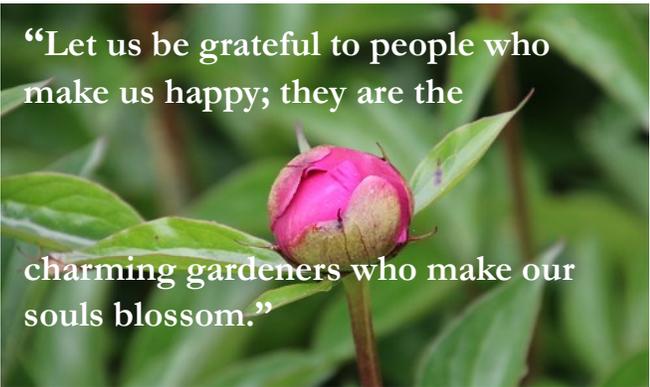


## CHPCP Education Day 2020—Wisdom & Innovation in HPC

On March 10th, two staff members (Dylaina W. and Michele M.) and six volunteers (Peggy O., Heather P., Debbie M., Julie L., Bob & Mary Lois P.) participated in the 30th Annual Education Day—Wisdom & Innovation in Hospice Palliative Care—Virtual via Zoom. All of our volunteers were awarded bursaries from the OutCare Foundation.

MVHPC participated in the following workshops: HELP Project hosted by Pam Grassau; Religion & Spirituality at the End of Life by Roshene Lawson, Bruyere and Team Grief Resilience hosted by Tara Cohen, CHPCP.

The recordings for these presentations can be assessed at <https://champlainpalliative.ca/chpcp-education-day/>. Staff has the slide presentations filed in the office.



“Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.”

### *In Praise of MV Hospice Volunteers*

Thank you for the excellent care our mother/mother-in-law received at Hospice. May this be a reminder to you of the positive difference you make in the lives of the people you care for here, as well as their families.

Our community is so fortunate to have such a wonderful facility as MV Hospice. We are so blessed to have such committed, caring, compassionate people like all you with families during such difficult times.

Sincere thanks from all of Elsie McLean's Family

### MV Hospice Palliative Care

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## COVID Vaccine

If you are waiting for 2nd dose of the vaccine, you will be contacted when you can register.

If you want your 1st dose and do not meet the age requirement, MV Hospice will provide you with a letter that allows you to register.

For more details, call the office.