



Brattleboro Area Hospice

Newsletter January/February 2013

Brattleboro Area Hospice • 191 Canal Street • Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

If you live here long,
you learn that a daily walk into the winter
world will fortify the spirit by taking you boldly
to the very heart of the season you fear.
our outward winters take many forms
failure, betrayal, depression, death.
but every one of them, in my experience,
yields to the same advice:
"the winters will drive you crazy
until you learn to get out into them."
until we enter boldly into the fears we want to avoid,
those fears will dominate our lives.
but when we walk directly into them,
protected from frostbite by the warm garb
of friendship or inner discipline or spiritual
guidance,
we can learn what they have to teach us.
then, we discover once again
that the cycle of the seasons
is trustworthy and life-giving,
even in the most dismaying season of all.

Hal Borland



Letting Others Be Who They Are

by Brenda Shoshanna

- ♥ Make a list of all the demands you place on others, and on yourself, to be a certain way.
- ♥ Make a list of that which you cling to in relationships, what you feel you couldn't get along without.
- ♥ As you begin the practice of letting go, you may feel uneasy. But as you continue, these feelings will subside and will be replaced by the taste of a new kind of love.
- ♥ Day by day, let go of one thing that you cling to, including a person. Let go of your attachment to him or her. Stop trying to change, control, and cling to that person. Let everything be as it is between you. See what happens as you do.
- ♥ As this practice progresses, you will notice that you are experiencing more enjoyment and well-being in relationships and also making room for new people to be attracted to you as well.
- ♥ Expand the list of what you are attached to and what you can let go of now.
- ♥ Expand the list of individuals you are willing to offer the space to be who they are.
- ♥ Practice this on a daily basis.
- ♥ See your life burst into bloom.

Congratulations to New Volunteers

This fall eight new volunteers completed the 33 hour Hospice Care Training and most will be joining BAH as active volunteers. We are pleased to welcome them. They are: iishana Artra of Brattleboro, Bev Bowen of East Dover, Ananda Forest of Williamsville, Michael Jaro of Brattleboro, Bob Murray of Brattleboro, Krista Oarcea of Brattleboro, Galen Pinkham of Grafton, Eaddy Sutton of Westminster and Elizabeth Vigeon of Barre, MA. Thanks and congratulations to all.

Become a Monthly Sustainer

Brattleboro Area Hospice has recently started a monthly sustaining donor program that will help provide ongoing support to our organization through regular donations that can be transferred from your credit card or bank account.

When you join this new program, you will be part of a special group of dedicated supporters who are providing a steady and reliable stream of income that is vital to our ability to effectively plan our program work in the community.

You can now make recurring pledges and one-time credit card gifts online by visiting our newly updated website at www.brattleborohospice.org or by contacting our office. We hope you will consider this important way that you can now support Brattlebro Area Hospice!

It well may be,
That we will never meet again,
In this lifetime.
So let me say before we part,
So much of me,
Is made of what I learned from you.
You'll be with me,
Like a handprint on my heart.
And now whatever way our stories end,
I know you have re-written mine,
By being my friend...



~ Stephen Schwartz

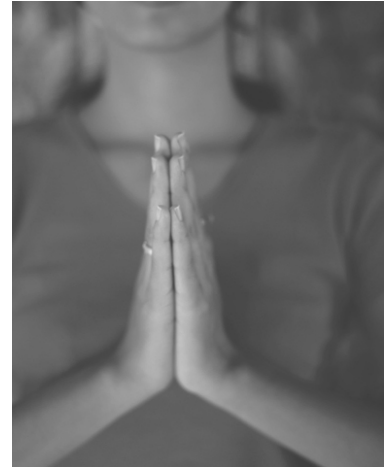
Taking a Spiritual Inventory

By Kathleen Dowling Singh

The fact of death is the great mystery and the great truth that illuminates our lives. To face our own imminent death is to examine our lives with an urgency and honesty we may never have felt before.

A spiritual assessment is a helpful practice as we move close to dying. Such an assessment seems to arise naturally in the course of the profound psychological and spiritual transformations of dying. Since we all share the same human condition, many terminally ill people report asking themselves the same questions. These are many of the questions that those who have had a near-death experience report that they have been asked. They are questions that pierce through the frivolousness at the surface of life and confront us with the value and significance this precious gift of a human life offers.

It is not too late to take stock of our lives, even in the last weeks and days of terminal illness. And for those of us in the midst of life, in the apparent safety and security of our health, it is not too early.



No matter how much time we have left to live, the answers to the following questions, voiced in the quiet honesty of our own hearts, provide direction to the rest of our living.

Who have I been all this time?

How have I used my gift of a human life?

What do I need to "clear up" or "let go of" in order to be more peaceful?

What gives my life meaning?

For what am I grateful?

What have I learned of truth and how truthfully have I learned to live?

What have I learned of love and how well have I learned to love?

What have I learned about tenderness, vulnerability, intimacy, and communion?

What have I learned about courage, strength, power, and faith?

What have I learned of the human condition and how great is my compassion?

How am I handling my suffering?

How can I best share what I've learned?

What helps me open my heart and empty my mind and experience the presence of Spirit?

What will give me strength as I die? What is my relationship with that which will give me strength as I die?

If I remembered that my breaths were numbered, what would be my relationship to this breath right now?

Who am I?

Kathleen Dowling Singh, Ph.D. is a former hospice worker, a transpersonal psychologist and the author of *"The Grace in Dying: How We Are Transformed Spiritually As We Die"*, available in our library.

Brattleboro Area Hospice

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Calendar

January 1 & January 21, Mondays, office closed for holiday.

January 7 & February 5, Volunteer report forms due.

January 9 & 23 and February 13 & 27; 5-6:30 pm; 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month. Spouse/Partner Loss Support Group, facilitated by Cheryl Richards. Call Cheryl or Joyce to register.

January 16, Wednesday, 4:00 pm. Hospice staff holiday party. Experienced Goods closes at 3pm; Hospice office closes at 3:30 pm.

January 28 & February 25, Monday. Board of Directors meeting.

Bereaved Parents Support Group & the Traumatic Loss Support Group are on hiatus until Spring. At that time we will reschedule. *Please call Cheryl Richards if you have interest in one of these groups or other special interest groups before they recommence.*

****NEW** Eight Week Grief Support Group** for 5-8 people mourning the death of a family member, friend or someone they loved. Simple expressive art activities (i.e. collage, writing, and memory boxes), introspective exercises and discussion may all be included based on interests of participants. Tuesdays, 5:00-6:30 pm, February 18 – April 8 if there is sufficient interest. Facilitated by Cheryl Richards.



Brattleboro Area Hospice is on Facebook—visit our page for news and events!

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