



# *for* Every Season

## A Farmer's Last Wish

The Rodney Caulk that our staff knows has always been a man of the Earth, finding his utmost happiness in the simplest things in life.

A livestock farmer, Rodney spent all of his 54 years focused on his farm, his family and his faith in God.

He was the primary breadwinner and took much pride in his work, knowing what a blessing it was to be able to support his family that he loved so much. His sons, 16 and 13 years old, were already following in his footsteps, knowing that they, too, would someday take over their father's farm.

When Rodney was diagnosed with metastatic esophageal cancer, it knocked him to his knees. Hardworking, humble, silently strong in the midst of chaos. His family told us those admirable qualities that Rodney learned in years of working the land always provided reassurance to them, even when they were facing the biggest hurdles. No problem was too big for the Caulk family, not with a leader like Rodney at the helm.

But not this time.

Rodney and his family knew the prognosis was not good. Instead of opting for aggressive treatments with little chance of success, Rodney made a decision for his family. He decided to sign onto care with Seasons Hospice, knowing that with help from our staff, he'd be able to live out the rest of his days at home, pain-free, and with his family.

He did that hoping we would be able to help him fulfill his dying wish: to visit the Delaware State Fair one last time.

You see, going to the fair was tradition for the Caulk family; every year Rodney and his wife and sons would pack up and

(continued on pg. 2)



*small things  
that matter most*

(continued from pg. 1)

camp on the fairgrounds, bringing their prized chickens, cows and goats to show.

This year was a big year. Rodney's 16-year-old son was showing their prized beef cow. Rodney told our staff he couldn't imagine not being there for his son.

Of course, our Delaware staff knew: some way, somehow, we were going to make this happen – and quickly. Rodney was so proud of his son; we couldn't let him miss out on this opportunity.

It took nearly our entire team to make this happen but it came together beautifully. Our team was so touched, two staff members even volunteered their time to make the trip with the Caulk family. From prepping Rodney the night before to driving with him across the state, Rodney was surrounded not only by his family, but his Seasons family as well.

Making it even more special, our Team Director Donna worked tirelessly to get the Delaware State police to coordinate an unmarked police car to pick Rodney up and



drive him to and from the fair. The State Police went above and beyond the call of duty, even coordinating to drive Rodney right up to the arena and allowed multiple officers to stay with him during the event. They even provided free tickets into the fair for Rodney, his family, and all of our staff members.

Rodney enjoyed the "best day of his life," snacking on hot dogs, cotton candy and soda. He watched his son proudly from the stands, as their cow took second place and advanced to the finals! He visited with all of his extended



**For more information on how to make a donation** to the Seasons Hospice Foundation to help make wishes come true, please visit **[SeasonsFoundation.org/donate](https://SeasonsFoundation.org/donate)**, email **[Foundation@Seasons.org](mailto:Foundation@Seasons.org)** or call **847-692-1000**.

*"The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others."*

– Mahatma Gandhi





family, laughing, joking and reminiscing about all the amazing memories they had shared together. Exhausted from the day, our staff tucked Rodney into his recliner and made sure that he was completely comfortable.

Rodney became extremely emotional when arriving back home. He was so thankful for all we had done, and just kept saying, "I can die now. I know my family will be okay." Mr. Caulk passed away peacefully at home, with his whole family at his side, on July 29.

Rodney, like so many of our patients, has certainly touched our lives forever. His story inspires us all to live every moment as if it was our last. We are truly thankful to have been in his presence. A massive thank you to all of our Seasons staff members who participated in this case! A special acknowledgement of the Delaware State Police Troop 2, particularly Corporal Nash. Without them, this would have never been possible.



With all of today's advertising of medications and publicity about celebrities with illnesses, people often self-diagnose. Self-diagnosing depression is ill-advised. But the positive development is that more people who would never have visited a doctor before do visit and ask, "Can you write me a prescription for an anti-depressant?" More people in need get assessed by a physician, who can assure the majority of people but also diagnose those who need significant intervention.

In early-stage bereavement, it's vital to distinguish among normal grief, severe grief and outright clinical depression. Most symptoms of significant depression can be seen less severely in grief – loss of appetite, difficulty sleeping or excessive sleep, being unable to find pleasure (anhedonia), being easily distracted, difficulty focusing, exaggerated mood swings.

Indeed, the doctor can almost always "give them something," but it needn't be medication unless the symptoms persists over weeks or months. More often than not, that "something" is reassurance, compassion,



## "Doctor, I'm Depressed. Give Me Something."

by Gary Applebaum, MD, FACP



empathy and the position credibility to say, "Based on my experience and knowledge, you're normal. You're not weak. You're not sick. These are common traits of grieving. You're undergoing the same ordeal as millions before and after you."

We can add, "It will probably go away. You're okay, though yes, it hurts a lot. Let's get you some support. Yes, medications are out there as an option in case, in a few weeks, you're not making progress."

Ultimately, the best medication for grief is tincture of time. With time, good memories overwhelm the feelings of emptiness and less pleasant memories of the illness of a loved one. We might consider a saying in the Jewish faith, "May her memory be for a blessing."



## Helping Others Through SEASONS HOSPICE FOUNDATION

*A gift to Seasons Hospice Foundation marks the love and joy that someone brought to our lives, while also helping other patients and their families.*

You can be confident that your generous gift is used to enrich lives. Your gift stays close to home and makes a difference to the patients and families in the communities where your honoree was cared for by Seasons Hospice & Palliative Care.



To honor your loved one by making a gift or to learn more about the Seasons Hospice Foundation, please visit **SeasonsFoundation.org** or call **847-692-1000**.



# Finding the Right Way to Grieve

By Luisa Kcomt, LMSW

Bereaved individuals frequently encounter expectations about how to process their loss and are often left wondering, “Am I grieving the right way?” Because grief is such a taboo subject in our society, there are unspoken rules about how much emotion can be expressed in public without making others feel uncomfortable. At some point after the death, others expect the bereaved to “move on” from the grief. These expectations can contribute to feelings of isolation and self-doubt among survivors.

In truth, everyone grieves differently. There is no “one right way” to grieve. Each grief experience is unique and is based on many factors, including the quality of the relationship between the bereaved and their deceased loved one and the coping style of the bereaved person. Some relationships are complicated. With the death comes symbolic losses, such as the loss of opportunity to repair an estranged relationship. Grief emotions can be layered and complex.

There are also cultural expectations about how people should grieve based on their gender. In the U.S., males are often expected to be “strong” and stoic about their emotions while females are given greater permission to verbalize or show their feelings. When bereaved men and women do not follow these expectations, they are regarded as psychologically abnormal. The gendered expectations about grief reactions are misleading. Instead, it is more accurate to consider different *styles of grieving*.

Some people are *instrumental grievers* who tend to describe their grief in physical or cognitive ways and process their emotions by engaging in activity. While they may not be verbally expressive about their emotions,

it does not mean that they do not feel the pain of their loss.

Others may be *intuitive grievers* who reach out to others for support and express their feelings more openly. Their grief is often experienced as waves of emotions. Both styles of grieving are legitimate and healthy.

Over time, grief teaches us important lessons about life, even though the experience of loss is painful and bittersweet. Be patient and compassionate with yourself and with those around you who may also be grieving. These life lessons may take time to surface and reveal

themselves. Rabbi Kenneth Cohen described his own grief journey which may serve as a source of inspiration:



Rabbi Kenneth  
Cohen

*When my mother died, I inherited her needlepoint tapestries. When I was a little boy, I used to sit at her feet as she worked on them. Have you seen needlepoint from underneath? All I could see was chaos, strands of thread all over, with no seeming purpose. As I grew, I was able to see her work from above. I came to appreciate the patterns, and the need for dark threads as well as bright and gaily colored ones. Life is like that. From our human perspective, we cannot see the whole picture. But we should not feel despair or feel there is no purpose. There is meaning and purpose, even for the dark threads, but we cannot see that right away.*

– Rabbi Kenneth Cohen  
in *Embracing Life and Facing Death: A Jewish Guide to Palliative Care*  
(by Brenner, Blanchard, Hirschfield, & Fins, 2005)



## Making A Difference



Seasons Hospice Foundation brings comfort to patients and their families and makes a positive impact in the communities that we serve. Through your continued support and generosity, we have achieved the following outcomes through Q3 of 2017:

- Fulfilled 279 final patient wishes, at an average of 31 wishes per month
- Healed the grieving hearts of 296 children through our bereavement camp programs in 8 locations around the country
- Provided internship experiences for 103 students throughout our clinical sites

Thank you for helping us to fulfill our mission!

Gisèle D. Crowe

*Executive Director, Seasons Hospice Foundation*



6400 Shafer Ct., Suite 700  
Rosemont, IL 60018

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

SeasonsFoundation.org

*for* EverySeason



If our mailing records need to be updated, or if you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please contact Seasons Hospice Foundation at 847-692-1000, ext. 4.

## Helping Others Through SEASONS HOSPICE FOUNDATION



### SEASONS HOSPICE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

Bereavement support for loved ones is an essential component of Seasons' mission. Thus far in 2017, we have provided outreach and grief support services to more than 20,000 family

members. Seasons offers several opportunities for families to find support. Trained counselors provide:

- Support groups
- Individual counseling
- Check-in phone calls
- Supportive mailings
- Services of remembrance
- Educational workshops
- Online resources

These services are offered free of charge for families, friends and caregivers of Seasons Hospice patients.

To learn more about support groups available in your area, please visit

<https://www.seasons.org/our-services/berereavement-support/>. If you are in need of support, please reach out to your local hospice care team.

