Simple Home Maintenance

For survivors, the journey through grief is not simply about coping with the death of their loved one, but also adapting to new roles and responsibilities which they may or may not have had before. Whether it is learning how to do the laundry on their own or using the lawn mower for the first time, grief survivors discover that they now must assume responsibility for the household tasks that were once maintained by their deceased loved one. Learning these new skills can be emotionally challenging because it makes them confront the reality of their loss. Survivors may feel somewhat overwhelmed in having to learn these skills. However, what one doesn’t know can always be learned from family, friends, and neighbors, and the internet. Below is a checklist of basic home maintenance procedures that grief survivors may find helpful, especially as we embark on the summer season.

• As the weather gradually becomes warmer during spring and the grass comes out of its dormancy, it is time to fertilize the lawn. Hardware stores will have these products readily on display. Grass grows best when it is fertilized at least twice a year. Help your indoor living displays to brighten up your outdoor living space and gain a clearer view of your outdoor surroundings. Tall weeds which may be difficult to reach can be cleaned using a telescopic pole, which easily feeds into many hardware stores. Furnace filters should be changed on a quarterly basis.

For homeowners with questions about home maintenance, the internet can be a wonderful resource for information. There are a plethora of blogs and videos available online. Personally, I have learned to install new toilet seats, replace sprinkler heads, and maintain my lawnmower. To call on a neighbor or consulting the salespeople at the hardware store may also be an incredible growth experience. Completing the physical tasks of home maintenance can provide one with a sense of accomplishment – especially if a new skill is learned in the process. Although fear of necessity and sadness, these learning experiences can also become fulfilling and a source of strength.

• Adding fuel stabilizer to the gasoline will help extend the shelf life of your gasoline and maintain the efficiency of your gas-powered lawn equipment.

• If you have an automated sprinkler system in your lawn, check each sprinkler head to make sure the water is flowing freely. If not, the sprinkler head will need to be adjusted.

• If you have central air conditioning in your home, the outdoor condenser unit should be cleaned of debris and dirt which could compromise its efficiency. Any luggage around the unit should be trimmed back at least 2 feet (0.6 meters) to allow for adequate airflow around the condenser.

• 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.

• If you find the journey through grief can be emotionally, spiritually, and physically challenging. However, it can also be an incredibly growth experience. Completing the physical tasks of home maintenance can provide one with a sense of accomplishment – especially if a new skill is learned in the process. Although fear of necessity and sadness, these learning experiences can also become fulfilling and a source of strength.

27 Medicare-certified sites in 19 states,
• Licensed hospice employer of choice for four consecutive years in the United States,
• Largest hospice employer in the country,
• Number of Children’s Bereavement Camps offered from 2012 through present: 29,
• Amount of charity care provided in 2016: $4,500,000,
• Number of final patient wish granted by the Seasons Hospice Foundation since its inception: 1,656,
• Largest hospice employer


Suzanne’s Spa Day: A Final Wish Come True

All Suzanne Wanted Was a Bath. For You or I, that May Seem Simple Enough.

However, it, like Suzanne, you live in a townhouse where the only bath is a small flight of stairs away, it can get trickier. It can get trickier still if you have advanced metastatic breast cancer. Suzanne’s cancer made her bones brittle – if she tried to take more than a few steps, she was at risk of fracturing her bones. For her, getting into a warm, bubble-filled bath seemed no closer than ascending Mt. Everest.

But the most important thing is, even if we’re apart… I’ll always be with you.” – A. A. Milne, author of “Winnie the Pooh”
The Foundation exists (continued from pg. 1)

“elevator, with Malissa going so far as to volunteer her
Suzanne’s case was no different. Her Maryland-based care
was cost-prohibitive to install the lift and remove it afterwards.
Because the townhouse was a rental, it would have been
in a warm, bubbly
team, led by Malissa, was going to get Suzanne her relaxing
solutions that add quality to the lives of our patients.
Next, the Seasons team researched installing a chair lift
well, so much the better!
the team researched some basic solutions like enlisting the
ways to help Suzanne have a bath to remember. At first,
ist garden. The dentist–desired to express oneself through an art form is often heightened
term inal illness. The creative arts (e.g., visual
and potential of art to help identify, attempt to express the deep suffer-
art with the typical array of art materials is
often difficult. With the support and guidance of an
therapists, etc.) could write positive statements about their
experiences with the Seasons team. They began with
new messages as well as reexpressing positive
affirmations from past sessions. From there, they
never ceased during these affirm-
moments. The Legacy Bowl served as a tool to enhance the patient’s self-esteem and to convey the message of the patient’s importance to the Seasons staff. The Legacy Bowl will be given to the family after the patient’s death.

One of the most important outcomes of art therapy is helping patients or grief survivors understand that they still matter. Using art as a method of self-expression and gaining personal empowerment is a means to this end. Art can be used to convey the multidimensional nature of grief. By understanding their processing process, art therapists can reclaim their vision and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or grief survivor is a powerful legacy.

The Legacy Bowl

By Lea Cohen, REAT, Art Therapy Intern

One of the wonderful programs that Seasons Hospice utilizes is the Seasons Foundation’s Leaving a Legacy Program. To facilitate the completion of a legacy project, the Seasons team engages in many different modalities and consults with an art therapist by the name of Kristen Wilkes. A legacy is “something transmitted or received from an ancestor or predecessor.” In the world of art therapy, a legacy often takes the form of leaving a piece of oneself in the world. The desire to express oneself through an art form is often heightened during times of mourning or upon receiving a diagnosis of terminal illness. The creative arts (e.g., visual art, poetry, creative writing, music, or other forms of expressive art) are natural for many individuals to attempt to express the deep suffering that they experience during the grief

One of the most important outcomes of art therapy is helping patients or grief survivors understand that they still matter. Using art as a method of self-expression and gaining personal empowerment is a means to this end. Art can be used to convey the multidimensional nature of grief. By understanding their processing process, art therapists can reclaim their vision and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or grief survivor is a powerful legacy.
Envisioning the Seasons team – to strive to provide the perfect end of life experience to every patient. The hospice challenge was to find the right place for Suzanne that could not only be safe but also be affordable. The goal was to ensure that Suzanne had access to the perfect setting for her final days. The Seasons team had been planning and preparing for this day, and they knew that it would be a special occasion for Suzanne.

As soon as Malissa found the item online, she reached out to Connie Daines, the Executive Director of the Seasons Hospice Foundation. When I heard the excitement in Connie’s voice, I knew we were going to be able to help with something truly special,” said Connie. “The Foundation exists for purposes exactly like this – to help give our patients those little extra things that matter most to them.”

As it turns out, the bath was the answer. Throughout Seasons, we kept focusing on marshaling our strength so that we might be able to get upstairs to have a little evening online shopping, she had an epiphany – if she could be lucky enough to have a soaking in a warm tub excited her in a way few other things could. If she could find a way to bring the spa experience to Suzanne’s home, then she could have her own little “spa day.”

At the moment her doctors ruled Suzanne into life, she asked for her favorite song to be played: “Into The Mystic,” by Van Morrison. The bluesy lyrics that rolled through that foghorn blew Suzanne away. The version of the song that was played was a beautiful version of the song from a new album called “Into The Mystic.” Suzanne asked for her favorite song to be played as she took her final breaths.

“She enlisted her coworkers Kisha and Hillary from the Seasons interdisciplinary team to help arrange those final details. They worked no time in their preparations, as Suzanne’s health had continued to decline.

Finally, the spa was ready. Early that morning, Malissa stopped at the grocery store and picked up a beautiful tray of fruit. The blueberries were fresh and the strawberries were perfect. Malissa then went to the pharmacy and picked up some medication. She enlisted her coworkers Kisha and Hillary from the Seasons interdisciplinary team to help arrange those final details. They

As Suzanne lay in bed, she had what she needed. Her Seasons team even helped her shave her legs – no detail was left unattended. Her Seasons team even helped her shave her legs – no detail was left unattended.

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She enlisted her coworkers Kisha and Hillary from the Seasons interdisciplinary team to help arrange those final details. They were honored to be able to get Suzanne one of the things that was most important to her, could we say we had achieved the goal of our project? Certainly not!

It was late one night after a full day of visiting patients that Malissa stumbled upon the solution. While doing a little evening online shopping, she had an epiphany—if Suzanne couldn’t get to the bathtub, why couldn’t the bathtub come to Suzanne? Her fingers hesitantly tapped the keyboard as she Googled for a solution. Within minutes, dozens of companies popped up, many of which were only interested in the sale of inflatable tubs. Suzanne was not going to be satisfied until she had a solution that would enable her to stay clean in the most dignified manner possible.

As soon as Malissa found the item online, she reached out to Cécile Croze, the Executive Director of the Seasons Hospice Foundation. “When I heard the excitement in Malissa’s voice, I knew we were going to be able to help with something truly special,” said Cécile. “The Foundation exists for purposes exactly like this”—to help give our patients those little extra things that matter most to them. “We purchased the tub and had it shipped to Maryland as soon as they could."

Of course, the tub itself was only part of the experience. Malissa wanted to put a lot of thought and energy into what they had dubbed Suzanne’s “spa day.”

 Unlimited, the Seasons team kept busy and creative, knowing that she might be able to get up long enough to have a quick soak in a warm, bubbly bath—on her own.

As Malissa went about planning the details, Suzanne’s health had continued to decline. Yet, Undeterred, the Seasons team kept working, planning, and organizing. Through it all, Suzanne never wavered. "Through it all, Suzanne never wavered. We were only part of the experience. Malissa wanted to put a lot of thought and energy into what they had dubbed Suzanne’s “spa day.”

and choose, and a bottle of Suzanne’s favorite blended red wine (her own favorite day)! Her friends brought the flowers and some candles. Together they transformed the first floor of that small townhouse into a spa worthy of an L.A. Hollywood celebrity. As the tub started to inflate, and then fill with warm, scented, soapy water, you could see Suzanne’s shoulders slowly relaxing. She leaned back and closed her eyes, seeing her. Her husband sat attentively behind her, yawning, and making sure she had what she needed. The Seasons team even helped her shave her legs—no detail was left unnoticed.

For patients at the end of life, creating art can be a method of self-expression and gaining personal empowerment is a means to this end. Art can be used to convey the multifaceted nature of grief. With the support and guidance of an art therapist, the patient created a “Legacy Bowl.” Despite the patient’s concerns that she would not have the strength to achieve the final product, the Seasons team transformed the first floor of that small townhouse into a spa worthy of an L.A. Hollywood celebrity. As the tub started to inflate, and then fill with warm, scented, soapy water, you could see Suzanne’s shoulders slowly relaxing. She leaned back and closed her eyes, seeing her. Her husband sat attentively behind her, yawning, and making sure she had what she needed. The Seasons team even helped her shave her legs—no detail was left unnoticed.

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On the day of her spa experience, Suzanne asked for her favorite song to be played “Into the Mystic,” by Van Morrison. The bluesy notes that rolled through that small townhouse could hardly have been more appropriate. “Into the Mystic” is a song that grows on you, and has been celebrated as a lyrical meditation on the search for meaning in a world that is always changing. It is a song that speaks to the power of hope for remembrance. As an art therapy intern at Seasons Hospice Foundation, I felt that the Legacy Program carries a weight of loss and remembrance. It was designed to honor the memories and accomplishments according to the wishes and hopes of the patient.

Art expression can be therapeutic for anyone who has experienced a significant loss, whether or not death is involved. “Art expression can be therapeutic for anyone who has experienced a significant loss, whether or not death is involved.” The creative arts (e.g., visual art, poetry, creative writing, music, or other art forms) are natural ways for one to attempt to express the deep suffering that one experiences when confronted with a significant loss. Art therapists observe the power and potential of art to help identify, cope with, and manage the pain of patients experiencing grief and loss. They can provide options for patients to express the emotions and thoughts that might never cease during these affiliative moments. The Legacy Bowl served as a tool to institutionalize the patient’s self-esteem and to convey the message of this patient’s importance to the Seasons Hospice Foundation.

A 96-year-old woman, the legacy project provided a means to increase her autonomy and reduce aspects of her creativeness. She was left to her own devices, to a setting pad and a pen where all those who visited her could read the words she wrote (e.g., thanks, doctors, nurses, therapists, etc.) and perhaps write positive statements about their experiences with the patient. This began with sharing new messages as well as repeating positive affirmations from past sessions. From our experiences with patients and their families, we learned that the legacy project is a most difficult. With the support and guidance of an art therapist in this situation, individuals can address the profound changes they are experiencing and express their deep sentiments.
Simple Home Maintenance

By Luisa K, LM SW

For survivors, the journey through grief is not simply about coping with the death of a loved one. For them, it is also about adapting to new roles and responsibilities which they may not have had before. Whether it is learning how to do the laundry on their own or using the lawnmower for the first time, grief survivors discover that they now must assume responsibility for the household tasks that were once maintained by their deceased loved one. Learning these new skills can be emotionally challenging because it makes them confront the reality of their loss. Survivors may feel somewhat overwhelmed in having to learn these skills. However, what one doesn’t know can always be learned from family, friends, and neighbors, and the internet.

Below is a checklist of basic home maintenance procedures that grief survivors may find helpful, especially as we embark on the summer season.

• As the weather gradually becomes warmer during spring and the grass comes out of its dormancy, it is time to fertilize the lawn. Hardware stores will have these products readily on display. Grass grows the fastest during the growing season, so you should fertilize at least four times throughout the growing season from spring through fall. A helpful way to remember when to fertilize is to complete this task near Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day.

• Adding fuel stabilizer to the gasoline will help extend the shelf life of your gasoline and maintain the efficiency of your gas-powered lawn equipment.

• If you have an automated sprinkler system in your lawn, check each sprinkler head to make sure the water is flowing properly. If not, the sprinkler head will need to be adjusted.

• If you have central air conditioning in your home, the outdoor condenser unit should be cleaned of debris and dirt which could compromise its efficiency. Any foliage around the unit should be trimmed back at least 2 feet (0.6 meters) to allow for adequate airflow around the condenser.

• Cleaning the windows can help to brighten up your indoor living space and gain a clearer view of your outdoor surroundings. Tall windows which may be difficult to reach can be cleaned using a telescopic pole, which can be found at many hardware stores.

• Furnace filters should be changed on a quarterly basis.

For homeowners with questions about home maintenance, the internet can be a wonderful resource for information. There are a plethora of blogs and videos available online. Personally, I have learned to install new toilet seats, replace sprinkler heads, and maintain my lawnmower by using the salespeople at the hardware store may also prove helpful.

Did You Know?
Seasons Hospice & Palliative Care is celebrating its 20th anniversary! In partnership with Seasons Hospice Foundation, we recognize the following accomplishments in providing quality hospice and palliative care to the communities that we serve:

• Ranked the 5th largest Medicare-certified sites in 19 states.
• Ranked the 7th largest Medicare hospice organization in the United States.
• Largest hospice employer of licensed therapist in the country.
• Number of Children’s Bereavement Camps offered from 2012 through present: 20.
• Number of charity care provided to final patients: $500,000.
• Number of final patient wishes granted by the Seasons Hospice Foundation since its inception: 1,656.

Seasons Hospice and the Seasons Hospice Foundation came into Suzanne's life when she was 48. By the time we had the honor to begin caring for her, her cancer was fairly advanced. She had tried to live a lot of the time, and even small tasks like getting dressed took a huge amount of effort. Still, when we talked to her about what her goals were, she was adamant that "getting stronger" was one of her top priorities.

Malissa's curiosity. She was puzzled – Suzanne had come onto Seasons' service with her eyes wide open. She knew Seasons was here to assist and help her as much as she could. But the most important thing is, even if we're apart… I'll always be with you.”

- A.A. Milne, author of “Winnie the Pooh”
Simple Home Maintenance

By Luisa Kcomt, LMSW

For survivors, the journey through grief is not simply about coping with the death of a loved one. It also involves adapting to new roles and responsibilities which they may not have had before. Whether it is learning how to do the laundry on their own or using the lawnmower for the first time, grief survivors discover that they must now assume responsibility for the household tasks that were once maintained by their deceased loved one. Learning about coping with the death of their loved one, but also learning new skills can be emotionally challenging because it makes them confront the reality of their loss. Survivors may feel somewhat overwhelmed in trying to learn these new skills. However, what one doesn’t know can always be learned from family, friends, neighbors, and the internet.

Below is a checklist of basic home maintenance procedures learned from family, friends, neighbors, and the internet. For survivors, the journey through grief is not simply about coping with the death of a loved one. It also involves adapting to new roles or responsibilities which they may have difficulty with. Whether it is learning how to do the laundry on their own or using the lawnmower for the first time, grief survivors discover that they must now assume responsibility for the household tasks that were once maintained by their deceased loved one. Learning new skills can be emotionally challenging because it makes them confront the reality of their loss. Survivors may feel somewhat overwhelmed in trying to learn these new skills. However, what one doesn’t know can always be learned from family, friends, neighbors, and the internet.

Here are a few tips on how to maintain your home:

• As the weather gradually becomes warmer during spring and the grass comes out of its dormancy, it is time to fertilize the lawn. Hardware stores will have these products readily on the shelf. For homeowners with questions about home maintenance, the internet can be a wonderful resource. There are a plethora of blogs and videos which can be found at many hardware stores.

• Furnace filters should be changed on a quarterly basis. If your furnace filter is not being changed, you may be incurring an unnecessary expense. Furnace filters are typically located near the condenser. (0.6 meters) to allow for adequate airflow around the unit should be trimmed back at least 2 feet (0.6 meters) to allow for adequate airflow around the condenser. Tall windows which may be difficult to reach may be cleaned using a telescopic pole, which can be found at many hardware stores.

• Cleaning the windows can help to brighten up your indoor living spaces and gain a clearer view of your outdoor surroundings. Tall windows which may be difficult to reach may be cleaned using a telescopic pole, which can be found at many hardware stores.

• Adding fuel stabilizer to the gasoline will help extend the shelf life of your gasoline and maintain the efficiency of your gas-powered lawn equipment. If you have an automated sprinkler system in your yard, it must be adjusted. If you have central air conditioning in your home, the blower motor filter should be changed every two months. The condenser should be cleaned of debris and dirt which could compromise its efficiency. Any knob around the unit should be trimmed back at least 2 feet (0.6 meters) to allow for adequate airflow around the condenser.

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HELPING OTHERS THROUGH SEASONS HOSPICE FOUNDATIONS

A gift to Seasons Hospice Foundation makes you and joy that seasons brought to our lives, while also helping other patients and their families.

Helping Others Through Seasons Hospice Foundations

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