Simple Home Maintenance

For survivors, the journey through grief is not simply about coping with the death of a loved one. For the first time, grief survivors discover that they must now assume responsibility for the household tasks that were once managed 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 trying 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 these growing season from spring through fall. A helpful tip is to fertilize the lawn with the help of the internet. Talking to one’s neighbors or consulting the洒客ere at the hardware store may also prove helpful.

• 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. There are plethora of blogs and videos available online. Personally, I have learned to install new toilet seats, replace sprinkler heads, and maintain my lawn with the help of the internet. Talking to one’s neighbors or consulting the salespeople at the hardware store may also prove helpful.

• 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, now is the time to be adjusted. If not, the sprinkler head will need to be trimmed back at least 2 feet (0.6 meters) to allow for adequate airflow around the condenser.

• 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.

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• The journey through grief can be emotionally, spiritually, and physically challenging. However, it can 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 born of necessity and sadness, these learning experiences can also become fulfilling and a source of strength.

Suzanne’s Spa Day: A Final Wish Come True

However, it, like Suzanne, you live in a townhouse where the only bath is a call of drain 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 tub, bubble-filled bath seemed no closer than ascending Mt. Everest.

Suzanne and the Seasons Hospice Foundation came into Suzanne’s life when she was 48. By the time she had the honor to begin caring for her, her cancer was fairly advanced. She was tired 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.

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She enlisted her caregivers Kisha and Hillary from the Seasons interdisciplinary team to help arrange these final details. They wasted no time in their preparations, as Suzanne’s health had continued to decline. Finally, the spa was ready. Early that morning, Malissa stepped into the glowing and picked up a bottle of very aromatic oil.

As she inhaled the scent, a bottle of Suzanne’s favorite blended red wine (her own favorite day). Her friends brought the flowers and scented candles. Together they played: “Into The Mystic,” by Van Morrison. The bluesy lyrics that rolled through that small townhouse into a spout of an L.A. Hollywood celebrity. As the tub started to inflate, and then fill with warm, soapy, scented water, you could see Suzanne’s shoulders slowly relaxing. She leaned back and closed her eyes, smiling. Her husband sat attentively behind her, joking, snacking, and making sure she had what she needed. The Seasons team even helped her shave her legs — no detail left unattended.

At Suzanne’s request, the needs of the patients were always to come first. If they need a bath, then our team will find a way to make it happen. The help of several of the stronger Seasons aides to carry Suzanne upstairs. Unfortunately, the stairs were simply too narrow for Suzanne to walk to her bathroom. So, Malissa went to talk to her husband, a contractor, to do the installation. However, because the townhouse was a rental, it would have been considerably more expensive to install a chair lift.

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

Undeterred, the Seasons team kept looking for a solution. They have, in fact, an offbeat goal of Seasons — to arrive to prove the perfect end of every experience for the patients. How every experience was a challenge was why the team couldn’t find a tub that the team couldn’t scrub. Without helping Suzanne in the way that mattered most to her, could they have achieved that goal of our perfect goal? 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 happily tapped the keyboard as she Googled for solutions. Within minutes, multiple options appeared but none of these options could be blown up with a person inside of it! This was a new, double-sided bathtub which Suzanne could have to lie up multiple flights of stairs, but she also wouldn’t have to deal with the difficulty of trying to enter a slippery tub.

In every single way, the tub could come to her! This was a worthy investment. It would double-winn; not only would Suzanne not have to be lifted because the townhouse was a rental, it would have been considerably more expensive to install a chair lift. And when that foghorn whistle blows, she won’t have to fear the waters of antigone.

At Suzanne’s request, the Seasons team engaged in creativity and art therapies to help her cope with her illness. As defined by Merriam-Webster, a legacy is “something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or original founder.” In the world of art therapies, a legacy often takes the form of leaving a piece of oneself visible and tangible as a form of remembrance. For patients at the end of life, creating art with the typical array of art materials can be challenging. For patients at the end of life, creating art with creative processes can be challenging. In this case, the Seasons team engaged in many different modalities of the creative process. As many patients at the end of life, creating art is a form of self-expression and gaining personal empowerment is a means to this end. Art can be used to convey the multi-faceted nature of grief. By engaging in the creative process, they can reclaim their voices and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or patient’s art therapist, how ever, individuals can address the profound changes they are experiencing and express their deep emotions. Art therapy can help bring meaning and a new perspective to people’s lives during difficult times.

In one of the wonderful programs that Seasons Hospice utilizes for patients and families, art therapy can be brought in as an intervention or the touchstones the patient’s desire and art therapists can provide a safe and encouraging environment. For this reason, the Seasons team engaged in the creative process. As I developed the therapeutic relationship with her, I introduced a Leaving a Legacy project to promote her self-worth and elevate her self-esteem. Using colored tissue paper, the patient created a “legacy bowl.” Despite the patient’s concerns with her ability to create, the Legacy Bow l served as a tool to incorporate the patient’s self-esteem and to convey the message of this patient’s importance to patients and staff. The Legacy Bowl will given to the family after this patient’s death. One of the most important outcomes of art therapy is to help patients or great 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 multi-faceted nature of grief. By engaging in the creative process, they can reclaim their voices and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or great survivor is a possible legacy. One of the most important outcomes of art therapy is to help patients or great 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 multi-faceted nature of grief. By engaging in the creative process, they can reclaim their voices and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or great survivor is a possible legacy. One of the most important outcomes of art therapy is to help patients or great 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 multi-faceted nature of grief. By engaging in the creative process, they can reclaim their voices and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or great survivor is a possible legacy. One of the most important outcomes of art therapy is to help patients or great 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 multi-faceted nature of grief. By engaging in the creative process, they can reclaim their voices and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or great survivor is a possible legacy. One of the most important outcomes of art therapy is to help patients or great 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 multi-faceted nature of grief. By engaging in the creative process, they can reclaim their voices and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or great survivor is a possible legacy. One of the most important outcomes of art therapy is to help patients or great 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 multi-faceted nature of grief. By engaging in the creative process, they can reclaim their voices and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or great survivor is a possible legacy. One of the most important outcomes of art therapy is to help patients or great 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 multi-faceted nature of grief. By engaging in the creative process, they can reclaim their voices and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or great survivor is a possible legacy.
She enlisted her coworkers Kisha and Hillary from the Seasons interdisciplinary team to help arrange those final details. They wasted no time in their preparations, as Suzanne’s health had continued to decline. Finally, the spa was ready. Early that morning, Malissa stepped into the shower and picked up a bottle of her favorite red wine.

As soon as Malissa found the item online, she reached out to Carrie Cowie, 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 Carrie. “The Foundation exists for purposes exactly like this – to help give our patients those extra little things that matter most to them.”

The Foundation purchased the tub and had it shipped to Maryland as soon as they could.

“Give them a moment to relax, to feel in control, to express themselves in their own way,” Carrie shared. “We want to help give our patients little extra things that will help ease the chaos of their illness.”

Unbeknownst to the Seasons team, the bathtub was not the only gift Malissa received. She also had a bouquet of flowers from her coworkers and a bottle of her favorite wine, and cheese, and a bottle of Suzanne’s favorite blended red wine (her own favorite day!)

The doorbell rang. Malissa’s friends brought the flowers and scented 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 infuse, and then fill with warm, scented water, you could see Suzanne’s shoulders slowly relaxing. She turned back and closed her eyes, soaking in the serenity. Her husband sat attendently behind her—joking, snacking, and making sure she had what she needed. The Seasons team even helped her shave her legs—no detail was left unattended.

As Suzanne lay back in the tub, she asked for her favorite song to be played. “The Mystic,” by Van Morrison. The bluesy lyrics that rolled through that small townhouse transformed into a world of hope, love, and remembrance. It was designed to express the deep suffering 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 experiencing during the grief and loss journey.

For patients at the end of life, creating art as a typal activity of art therapy can be extremely difficult. With the support and guidance of an art therapist, however, individuals can address the profound changes they are experiencing and express their deep emotions. Art therapy can help bring meaning and a new perspective to people’s lives during difficult times.

In one of the wonderful programs that Seasons Hospice utilizes with patients and families, Art therapy can help bring meaning and a new perspective to people’s lives during difficult times.

The Legacy Bowl

By Lee Cohen, REAC, Art Therapy Intern

“…then magnificently we will float into the Mystic…”

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The Foundation exists to give our patients those little extra things that matter most to them.

As it turns out, the bathtub was the answer. Throughout the course of fighting her cancer, throughout the rounds of tests, diagnoses, and treatments, Suzanne had come to place extra value on creature comforts. The relaxing feeling of soaking in a warm, bubbly bath—on her own—so much the better!

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, or call foundation@seasons.org or 847-692-1000.

The Legacy Bowl

In one of the wonderful programs that Seasons Hospice utilizes for patients and families, art therapy can be helping bring a new perspective to people's lives during difficult times.

For patients at the end of life, creating art can be a truly healing experience. With the support and guidance of an art therapist, even individuals who are unable to converse can reclaim their voices and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or their survivors is a potential legacy.

The Legacy Bowl is given to the family after the patient's death.

One of the most important outcomes of art therapy is helping patients or their 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 multi-faceted nature of grief. By engaging in the creative process, they can reclaim their voices and leave their footprint. Every expression of art created by a patient or their survivor is a potential legacy.
Simple Home Maintenance

By Luisa Kom, LM SW

For survivors, the journey through grief is not simply about coping with the death of their loved one. 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 managed 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, 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. Grow grass best when it is fertilized at least four times throughout the growing season from spring to fall. A helpful way to remember when to fertilize the lawn is to complete this task near the major holidays: Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day.

• Adding heat 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 is time to test it. If the sprinkler head is not working properly, it will need to be adjusted. City water systems are often back-flushed by the water company, so it is possible that water pressure is too low to run the sprinkler system. However, if the sprinkler head itself is not working, it may indeed be broken and need replacing.

• Furnace filters should be changed on a quarterly basis. As the weather gets warmer in summer, it is time to turn off your furnace and change the filter. Do not turn your furnace back on until fall. If your furnace needs to be repaired, contact a licensed heating contractor.

• 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.

For homeowners with questions about home maintenance, the internet can be a wonderful resource. There are plethora of blogs and videos available online. Personally, I have learned to install new toilet seats, replace sprinkler heads, and maintain my outdoor condenser. To honor your loved one by making a gift or to learn more about the Seasons Hospice Foundation, please visit SeasonsFoundation.org or call 947-692-5800.

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“if ever there is a tomorrow when we’re not together… there is something you must always remember. you are better than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think. But the most important thing is... easier for you to accept... I’ll always be with you.”


Helping Others Through seasons hospice foundation

To honor your loved one by making a gift or to learn more about the Seasons Hospice Foundation, please visit SeasonsFoundation.org or call 947-692-5800.

"If ever there is a tomorrow when we’re not together… there is something you must always remember. You are better than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think. But the most important thing is... easier for you to accept... I’ll always be with you.”

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

For survivors, the journey through grief is not simply about coping with the death of their loved one. But it’s 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 must now 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, 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.

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• 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 telescoping 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. Online video tutorials and blogs can provide answers and solutions to problems you might be dealing with. For example, you can find how-to videos on how to install new toilet seats, replace sprinkler heads, and maintain your toilet with the help of the internet. Talking to one’s neighbors or consulting the salespeople at the hardware store may also prove helpful.

• If you have an automated sprinkler system in your lawn, check each sprinkler head to ensure 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 found on the unit should be trimmed back at least 2 feet (60.96 cm) to allow for adequate airflow around the condensor.

• 27 Medicare-certified sites in 19 states.
• Ranked 7th largest hospice in the country.
• Largest hospice employer.
• Largest certified music therapists in the country.
• Number of Children’s Bereavement Camps offered from 2012 through present: 29.
• Amount of charity care provided in 2016: $4,500,800.
• Number of final patient wishes granted by the Seasons Hospice Foundation since its inception: 1,656.
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Suzanne’s Spa Day: A Final Wish Come True

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

But the most important thing is, you are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think. But the most important thing is, even if you’re not,’ I’ll always be with you.” — A. A. Milne, author of “Winnie the Pooh”