

From Us to You

Welcome to Newsletter No. 7
January ~ February ~ March 2023



Another New Year

Whilst other people compile their resolutions for the start of the New Year which will more than likely be something like resolving to be more patient, lose weight or start exercising, a new year without a loved one poses different challenges.

You may be managing, with tears and longing, to get through Christmas without your loved one but you may be

surprised that New Year's Eve as well as the start of the New Year may have been emotionally confusing and difficult.

You may have been anticipating some relief in leaving a year marked with memories of loss and pain but may find the new year does not live up to your expectations; instead you may be feeling some anxiety or apprehension.



A message from Jonathan

As another year draws to a close it is a time for reflection and we remember those we have lost this year.

We are pleased to be able to return to our Christmas remembrance services at St. Patrick's Church, for the first time since the start of the Covid pandemic, please do contact debbie@jonathanterry.co.uk for full details of the services and how to attend.

We also look forward with hope to the new year ahead. Please do join us for a cuppa and a slice of cake at our coffee mornings, where you will find a group of friendly, welcoming people to chat to.

Our next Grief Journey six-week bereavement programme will be starting at the end of January for those who are struggling to come to terms with their loss. If you are interested in joining in the programme, or would like further information about this or our one-to-one counselling, feel free to give Margaret Francis a call on 023 8044 0961.

We are excited to have managed to secure tickets to visit Highclere Castle in August, for our annual coach trip. Fans of Downton Abbey will enjoy this one. Places are limited so I recommend putting your name down soon!



My thanks, as always, go to Margaret and Anne for everything they do at The White Lily Centre and to all the caring, compassionate staff at Jonathan Terry's for their dedication to the families we serve.

To all of you, I send my heartfelt wishes for a peaceful Christmas. May the coming year bring you healing and companionship.

Jonathan

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Understand that the coming year also marks time without your loved one. This will be a time when you will start to create memories which do not include your loved one so do not underestimate the power of this process as you strive to move through your grief.

Be sure to be gentle with yourself and try these resolutions for the coming year:

- Be courageous and review the last year – including the pain, the challenges as well as the ‘gifts’.
- Do not compare your grief journey with others or where you believe you ought to be; each grief journey is unique: accept you are where you are supposed to be.
- Give yourself permission to “not be” your usual self right now and do things differently if you wish.
- Get plenty of rest; slow down, stop, relax or sleep. It can all be very restorative since grieving requires a lot of energy.
- Exercise gently: go for walks, stretch, try yoga, deep breathing and meditation.

- Make healthy food choices and drink plenty of water,
- Surround yourself with those who are supportive of your grief and who do not try to “hurry” you through it.
- Be tolerant, gentle and patient with yourself; your body and soul naturally want to heal, so allow that to unfold, one day at a time.
- Think of the memories you made together. Grieve that there will be no more new ones, and treasure the ones you recall. Things are valuable when they are both scarce and desirable. So think often of your loved one, and write down each memory as it comes to you. Each new scrap of memory is worthy of rejoicing over.

The beginning of the New Year is so often attached to great expectations but when you are facing it without the presence of a loved one it can sometimes seem overwhelming. Be sure to be kind to yourself and take the necessary time you need to grieve.

THIS MAY IN FACT BE THE BEST RESOLUTION YOU CAN MAKE



Poetry Corner

Another New Year

from Jean Kay

Another new year has started,
I wonder what it will bring,
daylight's getting longer
as we head towards next spring.

What seed thoughts are you planting
that you can encourage to grow?
What goals can you accomplish,
with everything you now know?

New Year resolutions
don't need to be drastic change,
they are more achievable
as small changes you can arrange.

Make plans for what you'd like to do,
take a trip by plane, train or car,
start a new programme or hobby,
be who you really are.

If your instincts tell you to say "No",
pay attention to what they say,
you don't always need to please others,
you deserve free time to play.

Have a safe, healthy new year,
may you prosper in every way.
May all the wonders of being alive
help you get the most of each day.

A Peaceful New Year to you all! - Jean

JANUARY

Feeling Nostalgic

"Where am I going? I don't know.
When will I get there? I ain't certain,
All I know is I am on my way."

Those lines from a song in
Paint Your Wagon,
Represent how dreams, plans and goals
are filled with flexibility and possibility
when we stay in touch with our souls.

An attitude of gratitude
is a good way to start the year,
not taking for granted life itself
or those we hold very dear.

Taking stock of what
I have and what I haven't, what do I find?
A healthy balance on the credit side.
Got no diamonds, got no pearls
still think I'm a lucky girl.

I got the sun in the morning
and the moon at night, I'm alright!"

Simply put, like those words from
Annie Get Your Gun,
we have so much to be grateful for.
Regardless of challenges and seeming lack,
opportunities constantly knock
at our door.

GRASP THEM!

Poetry Corner



FEBRUARY

Valentine's Day

February 14th is a day for love
according to St. Valentine.

Everybody loves to hear
someone ask: "Will you be mine?".

It's a day for those who are a bit shy
to express the love they feel,
to make it official, to say the words,
to allow their love to be real.

But love isn't just for lovers,
love is important for all,
it's what makes life worth living,
what makes a person walk tall.

Love is all about the little things,
small kindnesses given away,
expressions of appreciation
for the joy of living each day.

Love can be a warm handshake,
a smile, or a cheery "Hello",
It can be a hug, when appropriate,
or just expressing a loving glow.

Love is rewarding and healing,
it is definitely food for the soul,
it's the most precious gift to give or receive,
for without it we never feel whole.


Share your love with everyone
not only on Valentine's Day,
love will always come back to you
when you learn how to give it away.



MARCH

Never mind March, we know
You're not really mad or angry or bad.
You're only blowing the winter away
to get the world ready for April and May.





Let's get sharing . . .

JEAN KAY

writing poetry about sharing

“Write a poem for me,”
a friend of mine once said,
“about my elderly mother
who’s now confined to her bed.

“She’s a ninety-three year old
and a dear, sweet soul.
Throughout her long courageous life
she’s played many a role.”

I decided to take on the task
of writing poetic memories,
so I interviewed the daughter
who. I knew, I needed to please.

I had ten pages of her mother’s diary
she wrote during world war one,
during which she was a nursing sister
and it talked of hearts she won.

It said she kissed the Blarney Stone
while she was on a leave.
That fit with her sense of adventure
and good humour, so I believe.

I learned a lot from these pages
about her personality,
her sense of care and compassion
and respect for dignity.

My poem was a great success.
She said, after it was read to her,
“Someone’s written a book about me.”
To her, each verse was a life chapter.

It was posted above her hospital bed
and it changed her life they said,
for visitors could chat with her
about her memories as they read.

It’s exciting, as a poet,
to write about folks I don’t know,
to touch their lives in a special way
as I express what I came to know.

Poetry is transcribed thoughts,
on any topic of my choice.
For those who feel they cannot write.
I’m able to be their voice.

*I am a poet
Jean Kay
poetrytoinspire.com*

Let's get sharing . . .

Out of the Mouths

Children have a way of saying or asking things that provide us adults with endless entertainment. Whether it's chatting about life or their ferocious clap-backs, they always make us laugh or appreciate the simpler things in life.

My daughter is a pre-school teacher. She was walking around whilst the children were drawing pictures. As she got to little Esme, who was working diligently, she asked what she was drawing, Esme answered by saying "I'm drawing God". My daughter said "but no one knows what God looks like". Without looking up from her drawing, Esme replied, "they will in a minute".

Dorothy



After asking Rory if he wanted to have his picture taken with Santa to encourage Christmas joy, Rory replied with "that is just some creepy old guy with a fake beard". Needless to say, no pictures were taken!

Rory is just 6


Jenny

From Tilly – aged 14

I lost my older sister to a brain tumour. My heart broke in a million pieces. I had no idea what to do with myself. But, I think she is looking out for me and behind me everywhere I go, we had the same sense of humour and fun. She paints the sky for me when I get bored. She is next to me in all of my lessons and when she is bored she will go and do the things that she never got to do, I am trying to live for her, doing all the most stupid things I could possibly think of. The things she never got to do in her short 18 years of existence. I feel like I've lost my backbone, all my support. The trampoline that just kept bouncing me back up when I was down. But, writing letters to her makes me feel better somehow, because I know they will get to her somehow, There is not a single day passes at the moment when I don't think of her and I will treasure forever my beautiful, kind sister.

Fly high Ally! xx

After the initial shock of any type of trauma, there are, of course, the various stages of grief that everyone goes through, including denial, rationalization, anger and acceptance. For those who are on this journey, it is important to have faith in yourself and the inner compass that guides you. If you do this, you'll understand that opportunities for growth and happiness lie in the most unexpected places, ready to be seized if you're open to recognizing and embracing them. I don't believe we ever get over a significant loss, but we do learn to move through it, live with it, and perhaps even use it creatively to find our life's purpose and harvest its lessons.



Let's get sharing . . .

Gardener "James"

I was looking forward to sitting in my armchair for the Winter with that 'good' book "Gardening for Dummies", BUT Karen has other ideas! She tells me that gardening can be rewarding even in winter ... !

She says that hard work doesn't harm anyone but I am not going to take any chances! She also tells me that gardening is a great hobby, and if you know a gardener, that is, beside myself, you know



how passionate they can be about their plants. I have listened to them talking for hours about frost dates, soil amendment techniques, the best tomato varieties and pest control. No wonder I sit at the back of the



Gardening Club and have a little snooze. All I seem to get are random bags of vegetables left on my doorstep. I dare not ask them in to look at my veggie plot!

I'll probably get another Gardening Christmas present this year from Karen – Hoe! Hoe! Hoe!

Guess what I've bought myself? - A leaf "Hoover"..... Karen says I won't spend five minutes sweeping the kitchen floor but I'll spend hours sweeping the garden with my power blower! Great fun except the leaves all seem to land in my neighbours garden so I do it when they are out!

With the lovely long hot summer of 2022, little Charlie was worried that the birds were not getting any water, so on

Let's get sharing . . .



one of his last visits we decided to make a bird bath.

Very ingenious for a 5-year-old! He found an old dustbin lid lurking behind the garden shed. We turned it upside down and stuck it on a plant pot, painted the whole thing stone grey and filled it with water (we didn't use the hosepipe, by the way!).

We got the look and the birds were overjoyed. Charlie now wants to make one for his Mum! We will have to go on the hunt now for dustbin lids! I think all our friends and relatives will be having bird baths for Christmas.

Thinking about Valentine's Day in February . . .


*Cabbage always has a heart
green Beans string along
You're such a Tomato,
will you Pease to me belong?*

*You've been the Apple of my eye,
you know how much I care,
so Lettuce get together,
we'd make a perfect Pear.*

*Now something is sure to Turnip,
to prove you can't be Beet:
so if you Carrot all for me
let's let out Tulips meet:*

*Don't Squash my hopes and dreams now,
Bee my honey dear,
or tears will fill Potato's eyes
while Sweetcorn lends an ear,
I'll Cauliflower shop and say
your dreams are Parsley mine
I'll work and share my Celery
so be my Valentine.*





Let's get sharing . . .

Snippets from the **DOCTOR'S SURGERY**

Winter is always a time of increased health care needs for patients – There's no such thing as bad weather – only the wrong clothes! Don't forget – winter always turns into spring and again, don't forget, one kind word can warm three winter months. Perhaps winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth; it is the time for home.

Joint pain tends to get worse in the winter for many different reasons. "Cold and wet weather; along with changes in barometric pressure, are the most frequent culprits." While it's hard to prevent, there are some simple ways you can help that pain fade away.

Dr. Simon recommends keeping your joints pain-free this winter by dressing warmly in layers and staying active, doing low-impact activities like walking and just a few gentle exercises. You can also try taking vitamin D. "We don't get enough vitamin D from the sunlight in the dreary winter months," he says. Certain studies

have shown a connection between vitamin D deficiency and joint pain.

AND

Don't forget to increase the amount of water you drink. A cold and dry air can lead to dehydration, which can also bring on headaches amongst other things. Between the heating in your home and the cold winds outside, winter weather can really dry out your eyes, causing irritation. It is always helpful, at bedtime, to hydrate your eyes with a hot compress of water.

REMEMBER: If it's extremely cold outside, stay indoors. And if you do go outside, always make sure you're covering your hands, head and ears. – not forgetting the warm socks!

On a positive note . . .

You won't see any mosquitos!





The u3a Story

Founded in 1982, the UK u3a movement (based loosely on the French model) aims to encourage groups of people no longer in full-time work, to come together and continue their enjoyment of learning subjects of interest to them.

From the start, the guiding principles were to promote lifelong learning through self-help interest groups covering a wide range of topics and activities as chosen by their members. There is no minimum age, but a focus on people who are no longer in full-time employment or raising a family. Our founders envisaged a collaborative approach with peers learning from each other. The u3a movement was to be self-funded, with members not working towards qualifications but learning purely for pleasure. There would be no distinction between the learners and the teachers – everyone could take a turn at being both if they wished.

The movement grew very quickly and by the early 1990s, a u3a was opening every fortnight. U3a started in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and in 2008 membership was increasing by 11% every year. 2010 saw our membership hitting the quarter million mark. 2022 saw the

40th Anniversary of the movement in the UK and was celebrated with a year-long programme of events and celebrations.

There is also a strong social side to u3a with many varied activities including trips, coffee morning, lunch and supper clubs.

If you'd like to find out more about u3a and how to become a member, please visit the national website at <https://u3a.org.uk> or by visiting one of the local branches below.

Chandler's Ford branch: Methodist Church and Dovetail Centre, on Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford. 3rd Monday of each month at 2pm. <https://cfordu3a.org.uk>.

Eastleigh branch: Fair Oak Village Hall, Shorts Road, Fair Oak. 3rd Wednesday of each month at 2pm. <https://u3asites.org.uk/eastleigh/home>.

Monks Brook branch: St. Boniface Hall, Hursley Road, Chandlers Ford, 1st Wednesday of each month at 2pm. <https://monksbrooku3a.org.uk>.

Southampton branch: St. James Methodist Church, St. James Road, Shirley, 2nd Tuesday of each month at 2pm <https://u3asouthampton.org.uk>.

Book Corner

THE YEAR OF MAGICAL THINKING – Joan Didion

Books can be a great comfort during difficult times, a way to process tough emotions, a magical escape, or simply a reassurance that we are not alone.

"Grief turns out to be a place none of us know until we reach it".

Joan Didion's very personal account of the year following the death of her husband and then her daughter is one of the most well-known books on grief. Joan's honest writing will connect with everyone who has ever lost a loved one.

This powerful book is Joan's

"attempt to make sense of the weeks and then months that cut loose any fixed idea I ever had about death, about illness . . . about marriage and children and memory . . . also at the shallowness of sanity, about life itself".

The result is an exploration of an intensely personal yet universal experience; a portrait

of a marriage, and a life, in good times and bad.

Review . . . *My father died nearly 10 years ago, and it was Joan Didion's "The Year of Magical Thinking" that pulled me through.*

At first I wanted to hide in a foxhole, isolated with my own emotions as I processed the loss of my father. I withdrew from college and friends and would, on some occasions, drag a chair to the far corner of the garden and cry.

Several books helped me navigate the process of grieving, but it was Didion's memoir, which documented the year following her husband's death, that offered the most solace. I've since read the book every year since my father's death, long enough to memorize its passage about "how grief comes in waves."

This book really has helped me to survive this period of loss . . . Thank you Joan.

Susan x



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