



## Hospice Volunteers of Hancock County

### *April, 2020 Newsletter*

Hello Volunteers and friends. Sending our very best wishes to each of you and your loved ones!

*In these times of doing new things and old things in new ways, we are trying this new format for our monthly newsletter. It includes much about HVHC efforts and activities, and also many references to resources providing information and services during this time of caring-from-a-distance. Read on.*

Please know that we at HVHC are committed to practices that we know are necessary to help stem the tide of the coronavirus. While we are following the directions of the CDC, the Governor, and our medical hospice partners in suspending in-person visits, we are actively engaged in processes that will continue our care and outreach to those in need of support - patients, caregivers, those who are grieving, and our amazing volunteers. Here are some of the ways we are serving the community:

**Supporting our Patients, Caregivers and Grieving Family Members.** All of those receiving support and care through our programs as this community crisis has escalated have received direct phone calls from our staff and volunteers, with systems evolving to continue this phone support:



- One-on-one phone support for people who are grieving, with online group support being developed with our grief support volunteers.
- Volunteers serving patients are continuing to provide support via phone and other electronic means.
- Volunteers are receiving information, guidance and support through their respective program leaders.
- Staff are monitoring email and checking voicemail several times each day M-F, with direct contact information provided for as-needed support.
- To reach us contact:



- **Executive Director, Jody Wolford-Tucker,**  
[jwtucker@hospiceofhancock.org](mailto:jwtucker@hospiceofhancock.org)
- **Program Director (Patient Care Services), Lori Johnson,**  
[ljohnson@hospiceofhancock.org](mailto:ljohnson@hospiceofhancock.org)
- **Bereavement Services Coordinator, Jane Cornman,**  
[jcornman@hospiceofhancock.org](mailto:jcornman@hospiceofhancock.org)
- Or, leave a message for one of us, including **Office Manager, Emilie Disney** ( [info@hospiceofhancock.org](mailto:info@hospiceofhancock.org) ) at 207-667-2531.

**We are utilizing online tools such as Facebook and Zoom to connect** with volunteers and provide education and support to the community. We are supporting one another and figuring out this new way of working and living together. Here are some of the things we are doing:

- We have been training volunteers on how to use Zoom to connect with online meetings and are planning to offer online Bereavement support groups soon.
- We are offering a Facebook group called *HVHC Volunteers Group* as an additional way for volunteers to be in touch with each other, please visit our Facebook page to join.

**Our staff are active with several networks** of community service providers to ensure availability of supportive care and connection for members of our community throughout this time of the virus and social distancing. **HVHC volunteers** are being offered the opportunity to participate in efforts coordinated by [Healthy Peninsula](#) to join with other community organizations, including [Friends in Action](#), to deliver food or medicine to those who can't get these necessities for themselves, see the Community Resources section of this newsletter for more information.

We are grateful to our colleagues throughout the community who are also committed to working together to keep us connected and cared for.

Best wishes to you all! ~ *Jody*.

**Note from Jane:** There will be a **Bereavement Volunteer meeting this Monday, March 30, at 11 am.** Volunteers should check their email for Zoom instructions on Sunday afternoon.

**Note from Lori:** The previously scheduled monthly Patient Care MDT (multi-disciplinary team) meetings have been cancelled for the first of April. However, an all-regions MDT meeting will take place via Zoom on **Wednesday, April 8th at 1:30pm.** If you are not familiar with Zoom and would like to be and need assistance, please reach out to Lori as soon as possible so we can see you virtually on April 8th!

## **HVHC Postponements Due to Coronavirus**

As we shift and pick up many new ways of connecting with you, our patients and families, and grieving clients, we are having to let go of some things:



**Last Thursday's Volunteer Enrichment Day.** Though we had to let go of last week's date for this important annual event, please know that each of you are held as one of HVHC's precious gems! You enrich all of us in this community of caring, just by sharing you! We will reschedule VED once the timing becomes clear, and in the meantime, gift yourself with something that feels like a luxury - a piece of chocolate, a bubble bath, a sappy movie, phone calls with friends, a nap, dancing to some good old time rock and roll, a walk outdoors.





**The Rotary Auction** that was scheduled for May 8, and for which we are this year's charity partner, has been rescheduled for September 18. We will stay in touch as soon as the process for seeking donations and the callout for volunteers for this event has reopened. Thank you for helping us be our "boots on the ground" for this event.



**The Hospice Foundation of America Annual Educational Program** on the topic *Intimacy and Sexuality During Illness and Loss*, previously scheduled for May 14. HFA has had to reschedule their taping of the program until September, so we will be able to obtain it after that and will reschedule our conference accordingly. We will of course, keep you posted on this valuable annual opportunity as well.

## Reframing our Language about the Coronavirus Pandemic

We received a very thoughtful piece from the **Frameworks Institute** about the language we are hearing during this time of challenge and change, so we thought we would share some of the interesting pieces from it. Enjoy!

How we talk to - and about - each other always matters, and is especially important during this time of challenge. Common Good Framing offers positive strategies for communication in tough times:

1. ***Stay focused on the broad "Us"***. For example: "When we wash our hands and keep our distance, we protect everyone in our community. Let's come together by staying apart."
2. ***The shared values, ideals and principles that have guided us in the past are powerful motivators***. Let's call on those now with inclusive language that promotes awareness and justice: "The right thing to do is ensure we all have what we need to be well - regardless of how we earn a living or how much we make. People already pushed to the brink by low wages and high housing costs will be most affected by this virus and an economic slowdown. This is the time to live up to our ideal of justice for all."
3. ***Look for the positive aspects of interconnection while social distancing***, by evoking our "can-do spirit" for the common cause. Lean toward each other and see our connection as strength: "We're being reminded just how connected we all are - and how much we depend on one another. And it's not just the spread of the virus. For everyone who works from home, there are many more who make that possible by working at the hospital, the power plant, the grocery store, the delivery service. This moment shows us how much we all need each other to keep going."

~ Adapted from a current series of work by Frameworks Institute, drawing on their 20 years of research, connecting people to the bigger picture of health, community and hope; with gratitude.

<https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/>

## Community Resources during Coronavirus

**Friends in Action** has volunteers who are willing to help with home deliveries of groceries, medicine, meals and food boxes from food pantries. They are also setting up telephone check-in calls for well-being and to combat loneliness. Call 664-6016 to volunteer or if you know of a neighbor or family member needing help.

**Healthy Peninsula** is offering grocery/prescription delivery and reassuring calls for chronically ill or older community members on Blue Hill Peninsula and Deer Isle/Stonington. Contact Anne Schroth at [aschroth@healthypeninsula.org](mailto:aschroth@healthypeninsula.org) for more information about getting involved, or with concerns about a community member.



**Healthy Acadia** engages community health initiatives throughout the Downeast-Acadia area and offers links to community resources through their website at <http://www.healthycadia.org>, facebook (HealthyAcadia) and via phone, 667-7171.

**Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities** has information on community resources in the Bucksport area online at <https://www.bucksportbayhealth.org/>, on facebook (bbhcmaine) or by phone at 469-6682.

**Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine** is maintaining a list of food resources from partners across the state. Visit online at <https://www.gsfb.org/mainecovid/> This site is updated daily.

**Beth C. Wright Cancer Resource Center:** offering online cancer support groups through Zoom, including Open Arms Breast Cancer Survivor's Support Online Zoom Group, starting Sunday, April 5, 2020 at 2 PM – 3 PM.

**Mindfulness Practice for Service Providers** with Mindfulness Instructor and Resiliency Trainer Jen Harry. Learn practical strategies to calm your nervous system, find your inner resiliency & cope with the anxiety & stress of the COVID-19 pandemic. Offered online at no charge by Beth C. Wright Cancer Resource Center on April 3 at 10:30 am - 12:00 pm via Zoom. Call 664-0339 or email [info@bethwrightcenter.org](mailto:info@bethwrightcenter.org) to register.

**Alzheimer's Association Coronavirus Tips for Dementia Caregivers** for staying healthy while caring for a loved one with dementia at home or in an assisted living facility. [https://alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-\(covid-19\)-tips-for-dementia-care](https://alz.org/help-support/caregiving/coronavirus-(covid-19)-tips-for-dementia-care)

**State of Maine CDC Coronavirus ResourcePage:** A link to the Maine Center for Disease Control for sensible, factual information about COVID-19, with links to further information. <https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/covid-19>

## Mindfulness Tools to Deal with Fear, Anxiety, & Uncertainty

(From Infusion Mindfulness 2020) Thanks to Julia Gilmore for sharing this information!

**Practice Mindfulness**—Every time you find yourself getting lost in the future or past, and feeling anxious, practice bringing your attention back to the present moment with curiosity, non-judgment & self-kindness—to do this quickly check in with your body and breath, feel your feet on the ground, use all of your senses, notice where you are and what you are doing.

**1) Breathe & Relax Muscles:** Whenever you have a fear-based thought there is also a physical response to it. Check in and notice yours—tension in the neck, shoulders, chest tightening, heart pounding? We can calm that response by breathing low & slow, with a longer exhale than inhale, while relaxing your belly— this type of breathing connects directly to the part of your nervous system that counters fight or flight. As you breathe, check in with your jaw, neck, shoulders, hands, belly, consciously allowing them to soften & relax, this also helps calm our nervous system response. Slow deep breathing brings us out of our head & into the body, it's easy to use, it doesn't take long to work and it's free!

**2) Keep up Self-Care Habits:** It's more important than ever to keep up with the things that nourish us and keep us healthy—healthy food, exercise, time outside, plenty of sleep (extra times for naps!).

**3) Limit News/Social Media Time:** It is easy to get caught up in wanting to read everything possible about the corona virus—doing this can ramp up the feelings of fear & anxiety, be mindful of how it affects you and take breaks when needed.

**4) Use the Choose Again Method for Anxious Thoughts:** See the following article for a technique to address anxiety as an example.

**5) Notice the Gifts & Opportunities:** Identify the gifts and opportunities of this current situation for example, it's a great opportunity to practice mindfulness & relaxation techniques, there is less pollution, there is finally time to do all the projects we've been putting off, people all over are supporting & helping each other.

**6) Connect with Others:** We are all in this together and one of the opportunities of this situation is the time to connect with those we love, at home, on the phone, online. Make someone who you have not talked to in a while's day by giving them a call! Many groups are popping up to connect & help each other through these hard times.

**7) Savoring:** Taking time to really enjoy and appreciate the little things, the warmth of a cup of tea, time with pets, long walks helps to bring us into the moment and allows us some relaxation and enjoyment in the midst of difficult times.

**8) Practice Gratitude:** Notice the things that you have to be grateful for in the moment. Consider a daily gratitude practice such as writing down 3 things at the end of each day that you are grateful for (different ones each day). Do this practice for at least 2 weeks. Or replace fearful thoughts with thoughts of what you are grateful for in the moment.

**9) Be Kind to Yourself:** There is a lot going on right now and it is easy to get caught up in fear & anxiety. Be gentle and extra compassionate with yourself and others during this time (and always!). Remember, these are all practices and as humans we use them, then forget, over and over but each moment offers a new opportunity to begin again.

[The Choose Again Method for Anxious Thoughts \(from author Gabby Bernstein\)](#)

**1. Notice the Fearful Thought**—Witness your fearful thoughts getting out of control. Notice feeling fear, pressure, uncertainty. Identify where you feel it in your body. What is your physical nervous system stress response? Tension in the head, neck, shoulders, chest tightening, heart pounding? Breathe into those spots.

**2. Forgive the Thought** –Forgive yourself for getting caught in the thought & forgive the thought all together. Forgive yourself for getting hooked into the obsessive ideas, panic, and catastrophizing. You can just say “I forgive this thought”.

**3. Proactively Choose a Better Thought**—This is a powerful technique for pulling yourself out of the fear-based thought. Once you’ve witnessed the thought, forgiven it, then reach for the next best feeling thought ex. “I’m terrified I’m going to get coronavirus” replace with “I’m healthy right now” “I’m taking proper precautions” “I have what I need in this moment”

*Again, to all of our precious volunteers and supporters, we send our very best wishes! We look forward to the next ways that we will grow together.*



