

HOSPIRATIONS

The Official Newsletter for Crossroads Hospice



"I am grateful for what I am and have. My thanksgiving is perpetual."

Henry David Thoreau

Making the Most of End-of-Life

How Chaplains Enhance Your Hospice Experience

During October, we celebrate Chaplain Appreciation Month to thank all the chaplains that play an essential role during end-of-life support. Chaplains provide an immeasurable amount of spiritual and emotional support to families and patients which are crucial factors addressed in order to healthily cope with their diagnoses and end-of-life-experience. Their role is often misunderstood as being religious, but a more accurate description would be a spiritual care specialist who identifies and supports patients with spiritual distress or unmet spiritual needs.



Making the Most of End-of-Life

How Chaplains Enhance Your Hospice Experience cont.

Addressing Spiritual Needs

As spiritual care specialists, chaplains can help address any spiritual distress stemming from fear: of death, the afterlife, pain and suffering; losses of grief: from lost mobility, independence, and control; and other negative emotions such as anger, frustration, and despair.

Chaplains may guide patients and families in any unfinished business. For example, forgiveness or reconciliation. They can also empower patients by gaining involvement and control in their care plan or medical decisions.

Positive & Present

Chaplains can help maintain a positive outlook by utilizing spiritual strengths and personal resources to keep an open mind and live in the present.

End-of-life can be especially overwhelming to some patients who feel as though their voices get lost in the sea of concerns and planning made by family members. The chaplain is there to truly be present in the moment and listen to the desires of the patient which gives them a sense of sovereignty.

A Resource

Although the primary role of a chaplain is to provide spiritual and emotional support, they are able to help connect patients and families to outside resources and services that may be useful.

Thanksgiving Food Drive

Addressing Houston Hunger

According to the Houston Food Bank, as of September 2020 more than 1 million people in southeast Texas are food insecure and the need for food assistance has increased drastically as the COVID-19 situation has continued.

This November, Crossroads Hospice is hosting a **Thanksgiving Food Drive** to address the hunger and food insecurity needs within our Houston community. We are collecting canned goods and non-perishable food items at the listed locations below until November 24th at 5 PM. We are thankful for our partners in the community who are supporting our efforts by allowing drop-offs at their facilities. We will be gathering all the collected items and donating to the Heights Interfaith Ministries Food Pantry in time for the Thanksgiving Holiday. Please donate where you are able and share to friends and family!

Drop-Off Locations:

Crossroads Hospice
(888) 791-6770
8582 Katy Fwy, Suite 225
Houston, TX 77024

The Forum at Memorial Woods
(713) 956-0870
777 N Post Oak Rd
Houston, TX 77024

The Delaney at Parkway Lakes
(832) 500-7702
21700 Bellaire Blvd
Richmond, TX 77407

LOVESPIRATIONS

Death and Dying: The Reflections of Dr. Morrie Schwartz Part II

Greetings!

Last month, I began a series reflecting on the last 14 weeks of Professor and Sociologist, Dr. Morrie Schwartz's life as documented in Tuesdays with Morrie. This chronicling of his life was written by a former student and close friend, Mitch Albom. Last month I shared weeks 1-5. The following narratives are weeks 5-8:

- Fifth Tuesday: Talk About Family - "I think, in light of what we've been talking about all these weeks, family becomes even more important. The fact is, there is no foundation, no secure ground, upon which people may stand today if it isn't the family. It's become quite clear to me as I've been sick. If you don't have the support and love and caring and concern that you get from a family, you don't have much at all. Love is so supremely important. As our great poet Auden said, 'Love each other or perish.'
- Sixth Tuesday: Emotions - Morrie talked about his most fearful moments, when he felt his chest locked in heaving surges or when he wasn't sure where his next breath would come from. These were horrifying times, he said, and his first emotions were horror, fear, anxiety. But once he recognized the feel of those emotions, their texture, their moisture, the shiver down the back, the quick flash of heat that crosses your brain—then he was able to say, 'Okay. This is fear. Step away from it. Step away.' "Detach."
- Seventh Tuesday: Fear of Aging - Morrie had aging in better perspective. 'All this emphasis on youth—I don't buy it,' he said. 'Listen, I know what a misery being young can be, so don't tell me it's so great. 'Mitch, I embrace aging.' Embrace it? 'It's very simple. As you grow, you learn more. If you stayed at twenty-two, you'd always be as ignorant as you were at twenty-two. Aging is not just decay, you know. It's growth. It's more than the negative that you're going to die, it's also the positive that you understand you're going to die, and that you live a better life because of it.' Yes, I said, but if aging were so valuable, why do people always say, 'Oh, if I were young again.' You never hear people say, 'I wish I were sixty-five.' He smiled, 'You know what that reflects?' Unsatisfied lives. Unfulfilled lives. Lives that haven't found meaning. Because if you've found meaning in your life, you don't want to go back. You want to go forward. You want to see more, do more. You can't wait until sixty-five.
- Eighth Tuesday: Money - 'We've got a form of brainwashing going on in our country,' Morrie sighed. 'Do you know how they brainwash people? They repeat something over and over. And that's what we do in this country. Owning things is good. More money is good. More property is good. More commercialism is good. More is good. More is good. We repeat it—and have it repeated to us—over and over until nobody bothers to even think otherwise. The average person is so fogged up by all this, he has no perspective on what's really important anymore. 'Wherever I went in my life, I met people wanting to gobble up something new. Gobble up a new car. Gobble up a new piece of property. Gobble up the latest toy. And then they wanted to tell you about it. 'Guess what I got?' Guess what I got?' You know how I always interpreted that? These were people so hungry for love that they were accepting substitutes. They were embracing material things and expecting a sort of hug back. But it never works. You can't substitute material things for love or for gentleness or for tenderness or for a sense of comradeship. 'Money is not a substitute for tenderness, and power is not a substitute for tenderness. I'm sitting here dying, when you most need it, neither money nor power will give you the feeling you're looking for, no matter how much of them you have.'

Next month, I will conclude this series with chapters 9-14. Have a Safe and Bountiful Thanksgiving Holiday!

Peace and Blessings!
Rev. Ann K. Lister, M.Div.
