Year One: The Dream, The Nightmare

On June 25th, Hospice Peterborough celebrated a year of ‘firsts’ in our new building on London Street – first end-of-life resident, medical care team, one-year anniversary in our new location, pandemic, and lastly our first virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Since the beginning of COVID-19 we have continued to provide care to people in the City and County of Peterborough who are at the end-of-life, living with a life threatening illness, or grieving.

A recording of this year’s AGM is available on social media and our YouTube Channel. It includes a video message titled ‘Year One; The Dream, The Nightmare’ by Dr. John Beamish, who is the Medical Director of Hospice Peterborough, one of the founding members of the organization, and a tireless advocate for hospice palliative care.

Over the last year Hospice Peterborough supported 928 bereaved adults, 165 children and youth, and received 1,352 new referrals. All of our services and programs are offered free of charge to residents of Peterborough City and County thanks to community support.

“Our community has been so fortunate to benefit from Dr. Beamish’s dedication and expertise for over 32 years. This latest example came during the height of COVID-19. To limit the risk of exposure to the virus, Dr. Beamish cared for all of our end-of-life residents in our Care Centre for many months, without a day off – words cannot express our sincere gratitude. Thank you.” stated Hajni Hos, Executive Director.

A Huge Hospice Peterborough Thank You to our community supporters for their vital and appreciated dedication.

Lessons from a pandemic:

“Where there isn’t joy, there is a lesson.”
A View from the Edge

By: DAVID KENNEDY, Supportive Care Counsellor

COVID-19 has changed everything for people. While some of those changes are shared and felt by all, there are so many different realities of this pandemic for people that we may not experience or understand but we need to be aware of. One of my mentors in grief work used to stress to me that the meaning of any event in life depends on where you stand. That is so true in times like this and in fact is so important if we are going to find a way to be compassionate and human through this pandemic.

My own experiences of this virus and the subsequent responses to stopping and controlling the spread have run the gamut from inconvenience and disappointment over plans that had to be cancelled, to grief and sadness from the death of a relative and friend from COVID-19. All of us see this event and the responses from Government and Health Authorities, and in turn the implications of these decisions, from where we stand. How are we impacted and what does it leave us with? What emotions, thoughts and actions flow from where we stand in this?

It is important to examine and identify this personal reality and life impact from our viewpoint of where we are standing. This informs our meaning of things that leads to our attitudes and course of action in response to this. It is easy however to develop tunnel vision when it comes to our understanding and compassion for people who are standing in a different place.

Roshi Joan Halifax in her book A View From the Edge: Finding Freedom Where Fear and Courage Meet, invites us to develop a strength that allows us to stand on the edge and have a wider view that includes all sides of the questions of life. This is so true for our response to what is happening in our world today.

The door that opens this opportunity to this view from the edge is empathy. Halifax says “Empathy is the experience of resonance with another. We identify with another or we include another into our subjectivity”. It is the ability and willingness to; as much as possible, feel the experience of another and when that involves suffering it has tremendous implications for our response.

Our work at Hospice is the wonderful gift of being with people who are standing in a very different place in life.

Here is what I have learned that helps me stand on the edge and appreciate a wider view of people in this time:

1. I spoke with one client who has recently been told that the cancer that had been in remission for several years has returned aggressively and the time remaining will be short. As we talked together about what this means for them, it became apparent that there was a huge elephant in the room that was overshadowing everything. They told me that they still feel pretty good and strong enough to do the remaining things on the Bucket List, however the restrictions in place around social distancing, isolation and travel will mean those gifts they hoped to experience before death will likely not be possible. They spoke deeply from the core of their being and were deeply crushed that even their death could not be what they had planned it to be. I felt and shared in a small way the suffering, not my world of postponing events, but their world of losing one’s last hope of fulfilling dreams and wishes.

Watch David Kennedy share his article ‘A View from the Edge on YouTube by clicking the photo above.

(or visiting our YouTube Channel)
2. I listened to another client who was diagnosed in the beginning of April and has had surgery but now needs a regiment of treatment to address this disease. I could feel the apprehension and worry as they told me that the Oncology Doctors are saying that the treatment plan needs to be altered and spread out because of COVID-19 and the strain on Health Care Resources. While I know that most clients are continuing to receive amazing support and treatment by incredible physicians and health care providers in oncology, there is a natural fear of those standing on the edge of cancer needing treatments and surgery that they may not be getting what they would have been getting if not for the pandemic. Clients are asking what does this mean regarding their health and timely treatment of their life threatening illness.

3. I have been with many of my clients via phone – another challenge – and have heard the common voice of suffering that expresses the strong feelings of being robbed of time in a way that is unique to people living with a life limiting illness. One person said it this way, “You can talk to your family and friends about what you will do when this pandemic is over. I can’t talk about that time because I will not have that time. I feel robbed.”

4. I also have had clients who see this time as a gift. They said to me the difficulty they had before this pandemic was that life around them was going at such a pace that they felt at such odds when they have been forced to slow down and to be home to sit with their thoughts. This has forced others to be present, to sit together, to find ways to live apart from distractions. These people see the gift of relationship strengthening and sharing as what they are choosing to embrace.

So much more we could share from my view from the edge. It has been humbling and enlightening and has made me a better human being. As Halifax explains, when we can experience life empathetically, it should lead us to a compassionate response. We cannot stay in empathy, but rather it calls us to ask of ourselves: “what do I have and am willing to share with this person that will in some small way alleviate their suffering even for a moment?” Sometimes the answer is nothing, but most cases there is something we can offer. It can come as a listening ear, a kind gesture, and gentle word of encouragement.

Perhaps, if we are courageous enough to be on the edge between fear and courage, we will see that our rush to simply get back to a world as it was may not be what others are needing. In my rush to not be inconvenienced and have my privileges restored am I seeing the picture from where others stand? What is the meaning of this pandemic and how do we have a compassionate response that embraces the views of others in suffering?

This is not easy and I am not under any illusions that everyone is willing to do this, but I know how important it is to make space and support to those who are standing in a different place than I am. These are strange times. However, they are times that offer all us a chance to slow down, to embrace what we have and to stand courageously on the edge ready to compassionately respond to others. We need each other during this time and we need all of us to be open to others even more. Hospice is committed to being on the edge and consider being here an honour and privilege. Hopefully this time of global impact has opened our lives to others and that we can embrace a wider understanding of how this pandemic impacts people.

Roshie Halifax said it beautifully...

“A world without empathy is a world that is dead to others—and if we are dead to others, we are dead to ourselves. The sharing of another’s pain can take us past the narrow canyon of selfish disregard and even cruelty into the larger, more expansive landscape of wisdom and compassion.”
In Memory of...

While all donations are appreciated and important to Hospice Peterborough, ‘In Memory Of’ donations hold a special place in our organization. Here are all the people who were remembered by their loved ones through gifts to Hospice Peterborough.

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<td>Glenda Lavery</td>
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<td>Johanna LeClaire</td>
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In Memory of continued...

Stewart Leeson
James Legros
David Alexander Lemaire
Josie Lemaire
Christopher Lohan
Hazel Lumsden
Tim Mackenzie
Patrick Mackey
Ronald MacLeod
Victor R. MacLeod
John Girard Mahoney
Jodean Maia
Peter Malkovsky
Carrie-Ann Mallory
Rita Maloney
Margaret Maltman
Mary Ann Marshall
John "Jack" Martin
Gladys Martyn
Mrs. Mayer
Edith McArthur
Dale McClennan
Cynthia McCormack
Kevin McCoy
Anne McGibbon
Leonard McIlmoyle
Timothy McKenzie
Robert William McKinlay
Sandra McManus
Bill Minaker
Debra Mitchell
Ross Moore
Iris Morgan
Jane Morrison
Lois Morse
Vernon Mulhall
Marie Murdoff
Martha Muskett
Ellen "Jane" Nelson
Mary Roberts
Bonnie Rochford
Martin Rodenburgh
Brodie Ross
Pauline Rowden
Jean Rowe
Susan Rowsom
Beverly Rushton
Joyce Russell
Jeremiah "Jerry" Ryan
Mark Saar
(Michael) Joseph Sabatino
Marianne Sabatino
Ilene Samells
Robert Sanderson
John Saris
Andrew Schillings
Keith Scott
Harry O'Rourke
Betty O'Toole
Brian O'Toole
Douglas Parker
Barry Parsons
Vernon Colin O'Brien
Joyce O'Connor
John Oosterbroek
Ian Parsons
Darlene Patrick
Evelyn Paxton
Ron Paxton
Carolyn Payne
Bob Pearse
Bonnie Penny
Monica Perk
Phyllis Pikey
Mary Pindar
Darlene Pinkney
Bob Pinnington
Janet Read
Katharine Reid
William "Bill" Reid
Owen Renout
Mary Rioux
William Robb
Glenn Roberts
Jim Spencley
Ruth Stephen
Connie Swinton
Malcolm Syr
Michael Taveroff
Bruce Thompson
Daniel Thompson
Helen Todasco
Marion Toms
Beatrice Tucker
Arthur Turner
Marin VandenBroek
Brenda Vrba
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Agnes Walton
Anne Warner
John Warner
Chip Watson
Elda Weese
Robert Weil
Jackie Weiss
Boyd Welch
Lynda Wells
Terry Wetmore
Fran Whitaker
Robert White
Josephine Whiteside
Joanne Wichmann
Ross Wiegand
George Willshaw
Fred Wilson
Margaret Wood
Mary Nora Woodcock
Dorothy Woods
Don Yale
Thank you to Our Amazing Community!

Throughout COVID-19 our dedication to our goal and mission remains unchanged - to ensure the best hospice palliative care is provided for our community, at no cost to them.

However, our operations have felt the weight of the pandemic's extra costs—in technologies to keep those most vulnerable from becoming isolated, and in medical costs such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to help keep our residents, their families, our staff, and our community safe.

We want to thank the following individuals and groups who have donated PPE or gave funds to purchase PPE:

Karen Adams
Tim and Shelley Barrie
Suzanne Boyer
Crystal Civaulo
Sandra Clements (Remax)
Mike D’Angelantonio
Alicia Doris
Enbridge Gas
Giant Tiger Lansdowne St.
Giant Tiger Selwyn
Beverly Handlechner

Kevin Hickey
Vedra and Jim Hill
Carol Knott
Natalie Koshowski
Living Local Box & purchasers
Sherri Maddison
Sweet Peach
Rotary Club of Peterborough Kawartha
Dave Smith MPP
Dawn Straka
Anonymous donations

We apologize for anyone we may have missed!

Sunday
SEPTEMBER 13, 2020
Hike for Hospice
Reimagined for a new world.
Stay tuned!

Hospice frontline staff (staying safe in PPE) showing some love for the amazing community that supports our work!
“Not enough can be said about this wonderful facility, the kindness, care and support to our family at this most difficult time was beyond all expectation. Thanks to the staff for all you have done for us and our loved one.”

- Online Feedback January 2, 2020
COVID-19 Update: Next Steps for Hospice Peterborough

As the pandemic storm begins to subside and life cautiously tackles a new normal, Hospice Peterborough will implement the next phase of our ongoing Pandemic Plan in response to the shifting COVID-19 climate.

We recognize the significant amount of uncertainty and apprehension that will follow as we navigate the process of clients, volunteers, visitors, and staff coming back into the 325 London Street location.

Acknowledging that at any time the community can be forced back into isolation and social distancing measures, nimbly and vigilantly we continue to monitor, adjust, and learn from each phase of this pandemic.

As echoed throughout this crisis by the Board of Directors and the Executive Director, “the health and safety of clients, residents, family members, volunteers, staff, partners, and community members is of utmost importance. Therefore, we will take each step slowly after significant consideration and consultation with health authorities and other hospices.”

Hospice Peterborough Executive Director Hajni Hos and Past Board President Shelley Barrie.

We are all in this together, and we will get through this together... we all play an important role in the future recovery of our community.

Warmly,
Hajni Hos, Executive Director
Shelley Barrie, Past Board President

Changes in our Board of Directors!

At our June 25th AGM we welcomed 3 new board members:

Heather Eatson
Marie Hynes
Dr. Becca Webster

We are thrilled to welcome these new additions to our Board of Directors and are so appreciative of them lending their knowledge and expertise to our organization.

We would also like to recognize and thank retiring Board Members for their commitment, hard work and leadership:

Karan Aquino
Dr. Michael Gibson
Evelyn King

Keep in touch:
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