

REDEEMER HEALTH HOSPICE

CAREGIVER COMPASS

Volume II – Spring 2026

Health
Redeemer



*“ We can do no great things,
only small things with
great love. ”*

- Mother Theresa



A Message from Our Bereavement Coordinator

SUSAN KANOFF

Welcome to the second edition of Redeemer Health's hospice caregiver newsletter.

The goal of this newsletter is to provide support and information to our hospice families as they navigate the challenging process of caring for a loved one. We understand the difficulty of making life-changing decisions while experiencing emotions such as shock, grief, anger, and confusion that come with a life-limiting diagnosis. Our aim is to support you through these difficult emotions and enable both you and your loved one to have the most positive hospice experience possible.

In the first edition of Caregiver Compass (which you can access on the Redeemer Health website) we considered the meaning of a caregiver's "true north," the place where you feel most like yourself and are able to best care for your loved one while not losing sight of your own identity, needs, and well-being. Caring for a loved one through a serious illness can define you as "caregiver," and overshadow your identity as spouse, partner, parent, son, daughter, sibling, or friend. In this edition, we define each point on the compass and show how we can help

you return to your true north and maintain your true identity when the challenges of caregiving become overwhelming.

You will also find a list of resources for caregivers, along with an introduction to each member of our hospice team. Please note that we also have many resources available to help support the young children or teens in your family.

We encourage you to consider joining our virtual caregiver support group described on the last page of this newsletter. It can be encouraging to connect with other caregivers to remind you that you are not alone.

Finally, we hope you will reach out with your feedback about this newsletter, including suggestions for future topics and any non-medical questions you have about the experience of caring for a loved one.

Meet Your Hospice Team

YOUR PHYSICIAN

- An integral part of the hospice team
- Certifies that you are eligible to receive hospice care
- Directs the customized hospice plan of care
- Receives updates from the hospice team on a regular basis

MEDICAL DIRECTOR

- Oversees the medical services provided to each hospice patient
- Certifies you are eligible for hospice care and works with the hospice team in the development of the plan of care
- Available as a resource to the hospice team and your attending physician

CASE MANAGER

- Your nurse case manager coordinates the plan of care for you and your family
- Nursing services are provided based on a physician's orders on an intermittent basis
- Hospice nurses specialize in the management of pain and symptoms that are associated with your illness, perform prescribed medical treatments, arrange for medical needs such as equipment or prescription medications and educate family members and caregivers about your care

TRIAGE NURSE

- A triage nurse is available 24 hours/7days a week
- Addresses changes in a patient's condition, any new symptom or complaints, worsening of symptoms such as pain, anxiety, shortness of breath, restlessness, nausea or vomiting
- Answers your questions about medications, treatments or any other concerns
- Contacts on-call nurse if additional intervention is necessary

HOME HEALTH AIDE

- Supervised by a registered nurse
- Provides personal care and assists with activities of daily living
- Can assist with bathing, personal hygiene, exercise, dressing and feeding, special skin care, meal preparation and light housekeeping in the patient's area as specified in the hospice aide care plan

SOCIAL WORKER

- Assists with issues that can arise from illness and physical decline
- Helps strengthen coping skills and relieves caregiver stress
- Teaches, counsels and provides emotional support as needed
- Provides information about care options and access to additional supportive resources

CHAPLAIN

- Offers spiritual (not necessarily religious) support to our families regardless of religious affiliation, beliefs or practices
- Present in a non-judgmental way, without agenda or demands, to listen, to pray if requested to do so, to assist you in creating personal rituals that are meaningful to you and your loved ones
- At your request, can reach out to clergy from your own faith if you need assistance in arranging a visit or sacraments
- Whether your spiritual practice occurs in a house of worship, a meditation room, a park or forest, or at the ocean, our chaplains can help support this important aspect of your caregiving life
- If you are searching or struggling to find meaning in this challenging time, our chaplains can help

HOSPICE VOLUNTEER

- Provides support, companionship and respite to patients and caregivers
- Can assist with legacy work, helping to create an expression of values in the form of journaling, letter writing, scrapbooking or creating a book of favorite recipes
- Hospice volunteers are carefully screened, trained and supervised throughout their service

BEREAVEMENT COORDINATOR

- Helps loved ones cope with grief for at least 13 months following a loss
- Support is provided through telephone calls, periodic letters including resources, individual supportive visits in the home or our office, grief support groups and workshops, and memorial services

Resources for Caregivers

ORGANIZATIONS WITH INTERACTIVE WEBSITES

Alzheimer's Association: www.alz.org

Provides information and support for caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's and other dementias

Caregiver Action Network: www.caregiveraction.org

Includes articles, videos and a forum to connect with other caregivers

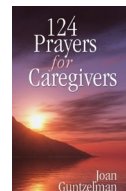
Family Caregiver Alliance: www.caregiver.org

Provides information, education and support for caregivers, including a state-by-state tool to find local resources

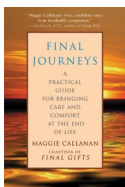
SELECTED BOOKS



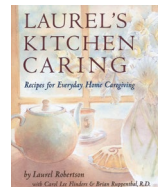
Callanan, Maggie, & Kelley, Patricia
Final Gifts: Understanding the Special Awareness, Needs, and Communications of the Dying
New York: Bantam Books, 1992



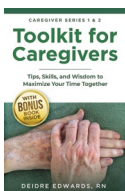
Guntzleman, Joan
124 Prayers for Caregivers
Winona: St. Mary's Press, 1995



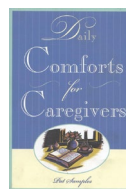
Callanan, Maggie
Final Journeys: A Practical Guide for Bringing Care and Comfort at the End of Life
New York: Bantam Books, 2009



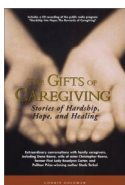
Robertson, Laurel
Laurel's Kitchen Caring: Recipes for Everyday Home Caregiving
Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 1997



Edwards, Deidre
Toolkit for Caregivers: Tips, Skills, and Wisdom to Maximize Your Time Together
Diedre Edwards, 2019



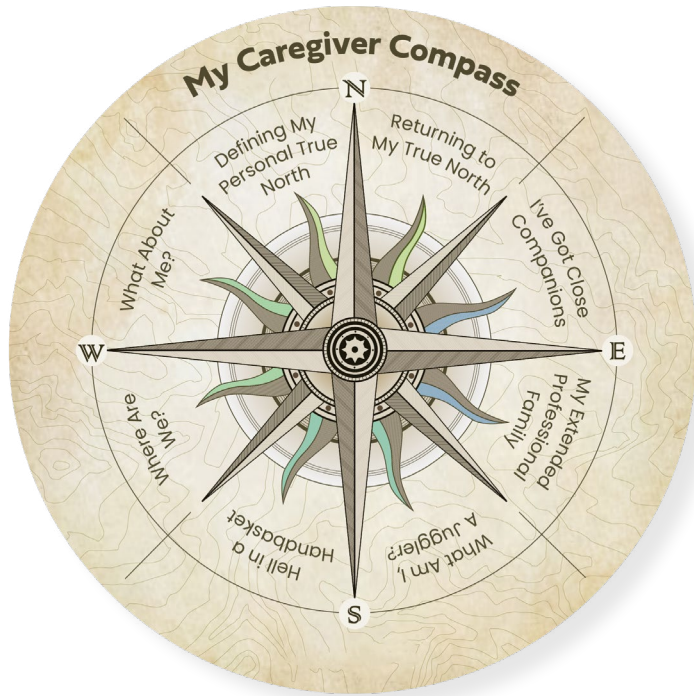
Samples, Pat
Daily Comforts for Caregivers
Minneapolis: Fairview Press, 1999



Goldman, Connie.
The Gifts of Caregiving: Stories of Hardship, Hope, and Healing
Minneapolis: Fairview Press, 2002

For a more extensive reading list,
please contact skanoff@redeemerhealth.org

Your Caregiver Compass



We offer this compass to help you gauge where you are in your caregiving journey and to remind you of the resources available to keep you oriented toward true north, so even when you're lost, you have a way to get yourself home. Trying to juggle care for your loved one with other responsibilities can take you farther away from yourself. Taking care of yourself will ensure your loved one has the best of you during these precious days together.

True North

(Defining My Personal True North)

Think of a time when you felt at your best: physically, spiritually, emotionally, socially. Consider the relationship with your loved one before their illness intervened. Are there aspects of either of these that you can recapture with some self-care and help from others?

West

(Where Are We? What About Me?)

You just took in a lot of information and need to take a breath. Consider your feelings regarding your loved one's condition and how your role as a caregiver is different from what you have been through in seeking treatment for your loved one. What challenges do you imagine? What strengths can you draw upon?

South

(Hell in a Handbasket. What Am I, A Juggler?)

Things can go south when family conflict arises. As the primary caregiver, you may be second-guessed or criticized for your caregiving or decisions, sometimes by individuals who are doing little to help. Speak with your hospice social worker or chaplain, who may be able to bring some clarity into complex family dynamics. You may feel guilty for neglecting other relationships or responsibilities. You are likely juggling many different roles and responsibilities: spouse, parent, sibling, friend, student, or professional. There is now an urgent need to provide care to your loved one in their last days, weeks, or months. Talk to the others in your life about what you are facing and how much you value your relationship. Don't simply disappear. Your hospice social worker or chaplain can help you sort out your highest priorities and identify additional resources.

East

(I've Got Companions and an Extended Professional Family)

You may feel you are the best person to care for your loved one and may resist asking for help from others. Remember that many people really do want to help. When they offer, say "Yes!" A bit of respite will allow you to return to your caregiving refreshed. When it comes to family, try to split caregiving responsibilities from the start so others don't become dependent on you to do it all.

Think of your hospice team as your extended family when an issue arises. We sincerely want to help when and wherever we can and we want you to call us. Our triage nurses are always available to answer clinical questions or guide you toward the relevant team member. Familiarize yourself with the hospice team members described here and rely on their expertise, including social worker, chaplain, and volunteer. We recognize that grief begins with diagnosis, and our bereavement coordinator is also available for support throughout the hospice experience.

North

(Returning to My True North)

Try to find some "me" time, even for a few moments several times a day...more if you can manage. Take a walk, catch up with a close friend, pray or meditate, indulge in a restorative nap. If possible, spend some time every day with your loved one, focusing on your relationship rather than their illness.

Redeemer Health's Virtual Hospice Caregiver Support Group

Caring for a loved one who is receiving hospice services can feel like a journey filled with obstacles that take you farther and farther from your True North. Your True North is the place where you feel most centered, most like yourself, most able to cope with challenges and optimize quality time with your loved one. If you are feeling unprepared, overwhelmed or have a million questions, our caregiver support group can help you as you navigate the journey of caregiving.

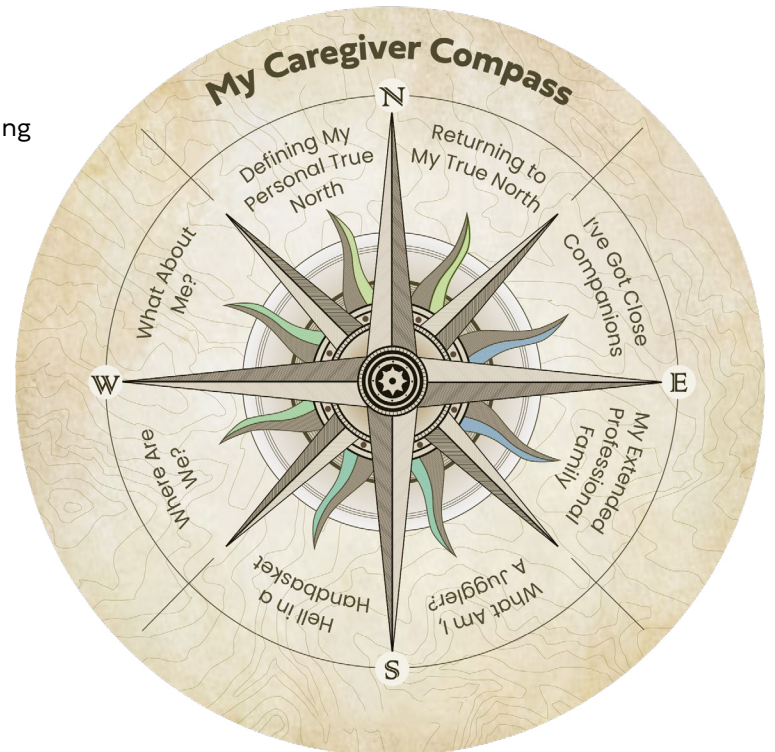
Consider joining our Zoom meetings if you:

- Need a place to share your thoughts, concerns and questions with other caregivers who understand.
- Feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities of caregiving and the anticipation of losing your loved one.
- Have questions about what to expect as time goes on, and what support is available for you in the future.

The group is facilitated by Susan Kanoff, Bereavement Coordinator, with help from special guests who contribute their expertise at your request.

Contact Susan at **267-314-0289** or skanoff@redeemerhealth.org if you have questions, if you are unfamiliar with Zoom, if you would like more information, or if you would like to register.

The support group meets on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.



Grateful for the Sister Jean Endowment Fund

This publication is funded by an endowment made possible by the Sperger family. The family created the Sister Jean Endowment Fund, in honor of their sister, who was a nurse and a member of the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne, Servants of Relief for Incurable Cancer. She cared for and comforted patients and families when they faced terminal cancer. Cancer claimed Sister Jean in 1991 at age 68. Created almost 30 years ago to continue Sister Jean's mission, the endowment helps patients and families receive strength and support in the form of hospice services, nurturing physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing during a vulnerable time.



Visit www.redeemerhealth.org/sister-jean to learn more about the Sperger family and the Sister Jean Endowment Fund.



Read more about Redeemer Health's community ministries at www.redeemerhealth.org/community-ministries