

HEART & HAND

Reaching for a hand and touching a heart



A LETTER TO MY GRIEVING FRIEND

BY CHAPLAIN LIZ DANIELSEN

Dear Friend,

I am sorry for your loss. I cannot understand what are you experiencing. No one can. Everyone grieves differently. There are those times when I do not understand the depth of my pain that I am feeling except that I know it hurts. However, in sharing some of my challenges on my grief journey in my letter to you, I hope it will give you the support you need. Just knowing that we are not going crazy and that most of what we are experiencing is normal helps us get through the most difficult times.

My grief is complicated as I have had multiple losses in a very short time. I am beginning to understand the importance of

processing one loss at a time and working through that loss. At times I am physically ill, but other times I want to sleep my day away. Some moments I cry until the tissue box is empty. Hearing a song, looking at a picture, eating a piece of homemade apple pie, or hearing an oxygen tank can take my breath away as it brings back memories. I feel like I am going in many directions and find that I am lost most of the time. I cannot focus and nothing satisfies me.

Grieving friend, there are times that I do not even know this new person who is emerging into this new world that I have never experienced. How about you? I will never be the same but why should I be? When you have loved and cared for somebody, you are changed. Hopefully, for both of us, we will not be bitter, but we will be better for having known them. The changes that happen daily the first year can be overwhelming. I am tired most of the time, trying to catch up with whatever needs to be done. Remembering things is not easy when we are grieving. How does a person forget their best friend's name? It happens when you are grieving. You forget a lot of

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things. For me, I have to rely on others to remind me that this will not last forever.

I am constantly in a learning mode, always learning new skills which is exhausting. It seemed that everything in my house or with our cars was breaking down after my losses reminding me that my loved one was no longer here to assist me which increased my sadness. My eyes hurt and are uncomfortable, so I find myself reading and writing less. Something I use to do happily. Who wants to cook or shop for groceries when you are cooking and shopping for yourself? I probably would have starved myself if God did not direct people to care for me by bringing me meals. They were such a blessing, and I cannot thank them enough for their expression of kindness.

Then there is that realization that you need to decide what you are going to do with all your loved one's belongings. Just the other day I decided to go through my



"There is a future for you and me. God still has a purpose for your life. We have a God that is greater and more powerful than any pain we will experience."

(A Letter continued on page 5)

GRIEF COUNSELING: I DON'T NEED IT...OR MAYBE I DO.

BY GENE ALWARD

My wife passed away last year after having Alzheimer's for six years. With my daughter and I being the sole caregivers, with awesome help from hospice, I thought the healing would be easy, and the first few weeks were easy because I was so busy with all the things I had to do. As I started getting things in order, I was still determined to deal with the grief myself.

A lady I have known for a long time, Ann Marie McCarty, called me one day. Then she was involved in a grief healing group at Chapel Springs Church, and she thought it might be something I would like to attend. Of course, being a man, I knew I didn't need that, but in order to show my friend I appreciated her concern for my healing, I decided to go to one session. After that one session, and listening to the wisdom of Chaplain Liz Danielsen, I not only came to all the rest of the sessions and signed up to take it again, which I did, but I volunteered



"...[SCSM] helped me deal with my hurt that I truly didn't know that I had."

to be one of the facilitators and have been deeply involved in the ministry ever since.

The sessions are put on by Spiritual Care Support Ministries, which has been doing this for a long time, and they helped me deal with my hurt that I truly didn't know that I had. One of the participants in one of the sessions asked me one day why I was so happy and had seemed to get over my grief. My answer was that people like you sharing your experiences has helped so much and then, when it is all coordinated by Chaplain Liz, it started a healing process in my life I never thought I needed. At the conclusion of

this process, I realized that healing had taken place, and still was taking place.

If you have any issues at all in your life that you are dealing with, then this is the place to go. The counselors and facilitators are all great, not paid, and have a compassion for people with a multitude of losses. Even though they have had training, the real value is that many have personally been through the grief you are now going through and are committed to helping you walk through your journey at your own pace and for as long as it takes. This truly is a Godly ministry that daily facilitates the healing process with the individual that is in the center of their grief.



Spiritual Care Support Ministries Center
in Warrenton, VA.

TESTED

BY KRISTINA SCHNACK KOTLUS



"As a young mother, I certainly didn't want or expect such tribulation."

If I offered you the opportunity to hop on a brand new roller coaster at one of our local theme parks, would you take me up on it? What about the opportunity to be the first person on a new type of jet? Now, when I say first, you might think I mean "first guest," but no, I mean "test dummy."

Still interested?

Many of us wonder why bad things happen. We wonder why we must face trials and sometimes we even wonder that for

others. I have a friend who loves the Lord dearly and lost her first husband to cancer, her first child at four-days old, and then almost lost her second husband to a tragic operating mistake. How much suffering can one person take?

God sees our suffering a little differently. He sees it as a refinement of faith. We focus on verses from the Bible about joy and the promises of the Lord, but He invites us to test our faith so that it's firm enough to stand on, both for us and for those around us. The next time you are asking why something is happening, try on one of these "suffering verses" and remind yourself that tested faith is more precious than gold.

- Psalm 66:10-12
- Romans 5:3-4
- Isaiah 48:10
- James 1:2-4
- Matthew 13:20-21
- 1 Peter 1:6-7

I have had brain cancer since 2013, and it moved to my spine in 2017. As a young mother, I certainly didn't want or expect such tribulation. However, our family becoming who we are today has been worth every bit of difficulty and refinement that we

have endured. Let yourself be made better by suffering. It doesn't always feel good, but you can find joy in the purpose that God has for you. I know you can stand on my faith anytime. You won't be the test dummy.



Kristina with her kids after admission for surgery and then in preop in 2013.



Kristina with her family in 2021.

What does Spiritual Care Support Ministries mean to you?

"It means a guiding heart and hand, relying on God, to lead you down the path of grief to healing."
-Susan

Rescue."
-Robin

"Shelter in the grief storm."
-Sarah

"Peace. Assurance that what is shared is respected."
-Elizabeth

"A safe place."
-Jane

"It means a safe, loving, God-filled work environment where I can witness first hand the selflessness of our staff and volunteers who help bring healing to people who are hurting."
-Danette

"I think about how much Arvid supported Liz in the ministry that God has given her. The integrity of both and the testimony of the Goodness of God as SCSM has been a blessing and a beacon in our county and surrounding communities. Even in her loss, love for Jesus and those who are suffering shines through her."
-Sharron

"Hope."
- Sarah Joy

"A great place to recover from family loss and bond with others going through the same thing. Truly a God-ordained and God-blessed ministry."
-Gene

"Loved people."
-Joan

"A safe place to grieve, grow, and be encouraged."
-Marie

"Caring hearts... a safe place to share."
-Patty

"I am so grateful for this ministry. They have walked me through my first husband's passing, my first son's passing, and now the passing of my second husband. The loss has been so difficult. Being able to walk through this over the years has meant the world to me. I could not have walked it alone. The counselors have always been there to help me when I am in need...they have always been there for me...always faith based. They are so caring and such good listeners no matter what the need may be. Such a wonderful ministry!"
-Ann Marie

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

1. Pray Regularly
2. Give monthly to help with
 - Rent & Utilities
 - Supplies & Training Materials
 - Support Groups
 - Community Events
3. Make a One-Time Donation



ENVELOPE



OVER THE PHONE



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WWW.SCSM.TV/BLOG

SCSM Mission Statement

Providing support, education and a Biblical perspective to those who are ill, dying, grieving and experiencing personal loss, and to those who journey with them.

SCSM Vision

To establish a local, national and international resource center to provide ministry, training and a retreat for those who are ill, dying, grieving and experiencing personal loss, and to those who journey with them.

SCSM Values

- God's Word
- Prayer
- Value Every Life
- Integrity
- Confidentiality
- Excellence in Everything We Do

Move out of my comfort zone?

I don't feel like it!



**The Lord had said to Abram,
"Leave your country, your people
and your father's household and
go to the land I will show you."**

Genesis 12:1

I was recently challenged to step out and take on a task that was new to me, out of my comfort zone. I'm often asked to do just that...by my staff, other ministries, a family member, or friend. Sometimes I say 'yes' because of an obligation I feel towards the person proposing the idea or because of my close relationship with that person. Or even because part of me knows it's the right thing to do. But this time, I made excuses. The skill was out of my comfort zone. I believed I didn't have what it took to accomplish the task. And most importantly, in my mind...I didn't feel like doing it.

Sound familiar? How often do we use the excuse as a fallback position, "I don't feel like it!" Looking at those words in print, I can see it's so lame. In fact, it's the type of statement I might call to someone's attention by saying, "And how often have your feelings led you to a sound decision?" If it were up to my feelings, I wouldn't get out of bed till 7:00 everyday, and would never eat a vegetable. I would probably yell at people a lot more, blurt out hurtful comments, and buy unnecessary items. What was I thinking? Why did my feelings become the default mode for my decision? My faulty reasoning was the result of a trap, a trick, a lie. And for a short time, I actually bought it.

Eventually, I actually did complete the task. What turned around the situation? Prayer...a conversation with God in which I asked Him to show me the right decision to make. His answer came as I was reading about Abraham in the Bible. God told Abraham to leave his hometown and go to a place he didn't know, and Abraham did it. As soon as my eyes passed over those words, I stopped reading. I knew I was to leave my comfort zone and take on the task. I felt comforted, affirmed, loved, and protected. I told God I would do it.

Just as the Lord was with Abraham, you can trust Him to be with you and guide you. The God who knows and loves you won't hang you out to dry. His words and promises are the solid rock on which you can build every decision. He's faithful and true. Unlike human feelings, He doesn't change...ever. So the question is, "Will you choose to trust His call to follow Him out of your comfort zone?"



**"His words and promises are
the solid rock on which you
can build every decision."**

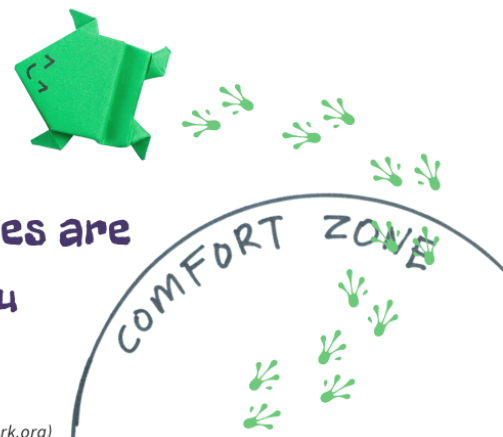
Today, just like every good parent, God is actually calling you out of your comfort zone. Identify one area of your life in which He is stretching you. Now try to really dig inside yourself and examine why you won't follow. What feelings do you fear? What feelings drive your me-centered decisions? You see, the truth is, your comfort zone is the least comfortable spot compared to the place to which God calls you. Your true "comfort zone" is in His hands. Whether you venture out and follow God to the land of milk and honey or you stay put in that false comfort zone leading to your destruction and uneasiness is your decision, so choose well.

WILL YOU JOIN ME IN PRAYER?

Thank you, God, for hearing and answering my prayer. Thank You that You are a God who is holy and who does not change. I am so glad that You, the all-powerful God of the universe, are also the God who cares about the details of my life. Help me overcome my fear of the unknown, to overcome my reliance on feelings to determine what You desire for me. I trust You to be with me and to guide my steps. Teach me to call out to You, to listen for your answers, and to rely on them. I pray in the name of the one Who went way out of His comfort zone for me, Jesus Christ, and all God's children say, Amen!

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. Hebrews 11:8

Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7



NEW TREASURER JOINS THE SCSM BOARD OF DIRECTORS



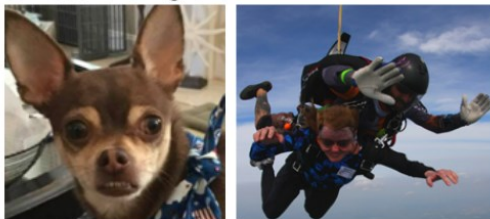
We would like to welcome Brenda Barber as SCSM's new Treasurer on our Board of Directors as of April 2021. She comes to us with a wealth of experience in finance and project management. She first joined SCSM last November to help with deposits and our database when she was looking for a meaningful place to volunteer after retiring that year from a financial services organization.

God offers us wonderful and unique opportunities at the most appropriate times. She is excited to learn our systems,

meet new people, and make a difference by using her talents for God.

Occasionally, Brenda takes a step out of the norm to try new things. In April, she fulfilled a bucket list item by skydiving at the Orange County facility. She said it was exhilarating but certainly a one-time experience.

Brenda lives in Warrenton, VA, with her husband Glenn and little Chihuahua, Cocoa, who is 4-years-old. She has two daughters, Amy and Debbye, who work in the public school system, and five grandchildren (ages 11-16). They are the joy of her life and loves to watch them grow.



Brenda's dog, Cocoa
and Brenda skydiving.

THANK YOU TO VIRGINIA WRIGHT

BY CHAPLAIN LIZ DANIELSEN



Finding words to adequately express our gratitude to Virginia Wright for all that she has done as an Executive Board Member of Spiritual Care Support Ministries for 15 years would be impossible. She gave so much of her time. Her guidance and wisdom was appreciated at our many board meetings, as well as her help at many events. I will also always be grateful for her willingness to help as the Treasurer immediately after my husband died. That will never be forgotten. Thank you, Virginia, for your huge contribution to this ministry.

UNDERSTANDING MEN IN GRIEF

Men grieve differently than women - and no two men grieve alike. Many men are not expressive with their feelings. They may not show tears outwardly, but they may be crying on the inside. Here are some things to keep in mind.

- Men may feel the need to be strong.
- Men may feel the need for control.
- Men may feel the need to be active.
- Men may feel the need to be protectors.
- Men may bottle up their feelings.
- Men may feel that they have lost part of themselves.
- Men may use negative coping behaviors to help with the pain.
- Men who are grieving often value their aloneness.

We need to understand that processing grief can be very difficult for men. We need to be there for them and we need to pray for them.

HAPPY 99th BIRTHDAY SYLVIA LEGGETT!



Join SCSM in wishing a very happy birthday to our oldest volunteer, Sylvia!

For the past 20 years, she has made over 600 beautiful and delicious cakes for our bereavement classes.



"Praise the Lord that our God has a gardener's heart! He cares for each and every one of us. He nurtures and waters. If we are not ready to shine in the spotlight, He provides a place of rest, hidden away for a season while we regain strength. He does not give up on us. He knows there is life inside."

husband's drawers. Wow, that was harder than I ever thought it would be. I was laughing and crying with each item I held in my hand, wondering why he would want to save these items. Then came the empty closet and more tears. Although difficult, it was good for me to do this, and when you are ready, it will be good for you too.

My grieving friend, I now have the good news to share with you. We are both in a new season of our life. The pain of separation is real. Everything is different now, but God will take care of you, and He will take care of me. There will be those dark moments in our life, and I have experienced them when I least expected it. The enemy of our soul wants to rob us of this truth. We will make it, we matter to God, and you matter to me. It is important for you to find people

who will allow you to mourn and tell your story about your loved one. Dr. Alan Wolfelt taught me so many years ago that "Mourning is grief going public." Healing comes when you can talk about your loss. You do not have to apologize to anyone for how you feel.

There is a future for you and me. God still has a purpose for your life. We have a God that is greater and more powerful than any pain we will experience. Grief reminds us of our humanity. We are human, and God placed in us these emotions that help us heal. My tears are liquid prayers before God. They are sacred to Him. God meets us where we are, not where we hope to be. The alcoholic beverage, the medication, overeating, overspending, etc., are temporary solutions to a deep need that

only God can help you with. He wants to give you a permanent solution. I have experienced the presence of God as I have grieved my many losses, and my prayer is that as you make that decision to focus on Him, you will experience His presence as well. When I am weak, He gives me strength. I am encouraged by Jeremiah 29:11 which says, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."



I would really like to hear your story, so please contact me by emailing

ChaplainLiz@scsm.tv

or sending a letter to

**7179 New Hope Lane,
Warrenton, VA 20187.**

Let us find healing together as we experience God at work in our lives.



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2:30 - 5 pm (by appt. only)

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Filled with true stories of God's miraculous healing power told by SCSM clients and volunteers. Your spirit will be renewed by the faith of people in devastating situations that should have robbed them of happiness and comfort, but instead brought strength and courage to their lives.

REMEMBER ME

BY ANONYMOUS

To the living, I am gone.
To the sorrowful, I will never return.
To the angry, I was cheated.
But to the happy, I am at peace.
And to the faithful, I have never left.
I cannot be seen, but I can be heard.
So as you stand upon the shore
Gazing at the beautiful sea - remember me.
As you look in awe at a mighty forest
and its grand majesty - remember me.

Remember me in your heart,
Your thoughts, your memories
of the times we loved,
The times we cried, the times we fought,
the times we laughed.
For if you always think of me,
I will never be gone.

Be on the lookout for our
Wreath Fundraiser!



SCSM will be selling holiday evergreens
from September until November.
You do not have to live locally to participate!

People need to hear
your story!

Please let us know how SCSM
has impacted your life. Send in your
stories or short testimonies to:



Anna Hansen
marketing@scsm.tv



Newsletter Editor
Anna Hansen
Associate
Cheryl Reynolds

MEMORIALS, HONORARIUMS, AND THANK YOU'S

IN MEMORY OF

Lorene Priest, given by Samuel and Sharon Rizzo; Sgt. Jason A. Shaffer, Jennifer Nicole Shaffer (newborn), Sheeba, and Sebastian, given by Roger and Gwen Shaffer; Patsy Nichols, given by Barbara Wolford; Patsy Nichols, given by Sandy Martin; Nicholas Daymude, given by John Daymude; Arvid Danielsen, Frank Conti, and Eddy Abrahamsen, given by Helen Danielsen;

Arvid Danielsen, given by Joseph Dahle; Rev. Terry W. Sisk, given by Ellen Sisk; Chester Bartlinski, given by Collette Reynolds; Arvid Danielsen, given by Liz Danielsen; Karen Gardner, given by Dorothy Vasi; Rachel Wilkinson Caprio, given by Cathy Wilkinson; Maria Buonomo, given by Vincent Buonomo; Rob Christiansen and John McCarty, given by Ann Marie McCarty.

IN HONOR OF

Liz Danielsen, given by Marianne Nigreville.

THANK YOU

Kathy Huryk for supplying ice cream sundaes (toppings and all) for our Five Faces of Grief Class; Karen Duby for the notecards; Pam Mehiel for donating coffee pods; Jim Pressley for donating cases of water; Dennis and Vickie Yeatts for the planted flowers along the sidewalk of the SCSM Center; Ginny Peltzer for donating books for the SCSM Library; Ruth Dominguez and Cathy Rogers for donating delicious food for the Coffee and Conversation 4th of July Celebration (pictured below).



PRAYER & PRAISE

WE PRAY FOR . . .

- Wisdom and fresh ideas to better meet the needs of those we seek to help.
- More pastoral counselors that can give a couple of hours each week.
- More counselors that can work with children and teens.
- Volunteers who enjoy doing computer work.
- Our interns and that they would learn a lot from their time at SCSM.
- Those who are suffering emotionally, physically, & spiritually.
- Those who are sacrificing their lives to defend our freedoms, and their families that are left behind. May their every need be met.

WE PRAISE THE LORD FOR . . .

- The privilege of being His hand extended to those who are hurting.
- His mercy and grace each day that helps us do what we need to do to continue the vision of SCSM.
- Our SCSM volunteers who give of their time and talents. They are a blessing to us.
- Our new Center and all the extra space we have for ministry.



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Reaching for a Hand and Touching a Heart
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**Let us not become weary in doing good,
for at the proper time we will reap a**

HARVEST
IF WE DO
NOT GIVE UP.

Galatians 6:9

