

Crossing Rivers Health Hospice



Meet Loretta

Meet Loretta Weipert RN, the newest member of the Hospice Bereavement Team.

My name is Loretta Weipert. I have taken over the role of Bereavement Nurse for Crossing Rivers Health Hospice. If someone had told me 29 years ago, when I started my nursing education, that I would be doing hospice care some day, I would never have believed them.

I knew already in 4th grade that I wanted to be a nurse because of the impact the healthcare field had on me during my childhood fight with cancer.

I have had the privilege of working in a variety of areas over the years. While going to college, I worked at the Postville Good Samaritan home and did homecare for a quadriplegic gentleman and an elderly woman. I fell in love with working with the elderly population. After I graduated from college, I worked at Prairie Health Care Center for four years (now known as Prairie Maison) as a staff nurse and then as a supervisor of one of the units.

I started my adventure working in the hospital environment at Central Community Hospital for two and a half years, where I was a staff nurse, and on Fridays, helped Dr. Rademacher's crew with surgeries. In 2001, I started my career at Prairie du Chien Memorial Hospital (now known as Crossing Rivers Health), where I gained experience by working in OB, Med Surg, ICU, ER, and Oncology one day a week. In 2008, I decided to start in Home Health at Crossing Rivers Health, which I believed was my calling until retirement. In 2018, the Home Health service was discontinued and my role changed to a Hospice nurse.

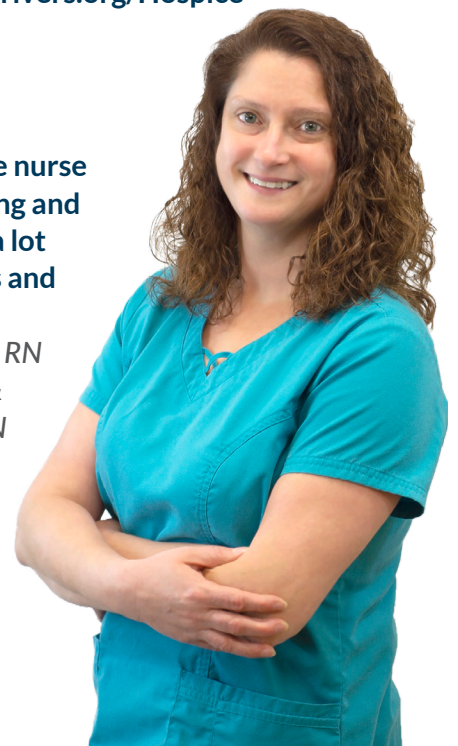
Initially, I found this very scary and thought it would cause burnout related to the daily sadness. Instead, I found it very rewarding and learned a lot from my clients and their families. As a Hospice nurse, you get very close to the families as you help them through a very difficult time. Now, I wish to continue to impact the families after their loved one's death. In my role as a Bereavement Nurse, I will be working side-by-side with our Hospice Social Workers, Haley Kregel and Brittney Miller, to support our families through the grieving process. Our bereavement program consists of regular follow-up calls for twelve to thirteen months, quarterly grief support newsletters, monthly support groups, and our annual Candlelight Memorial Service.

Remember, at any time if support is needed, please contact our bereavement team by calling the Hospice office at 608-357-2278.

Meet Loretta and the entire Hospice team at crossingrivers.org/Hospice

“Being a Hospice nurse is very rewarding and I have learned a lot from my clients and their families.”

*Loretta Weipert, RN
Hospice Nurse &
Bereavement RN*



A New Year.

Another year without those we love beside us.

A New Year.

How can this be? How it is that time has the audacity to move on in spite of our sorrow?

No new memories created. Frozen in time. They live in our hearts and in our minds, forever the same. Our memories a placeholder.

Those last moments, days, months, years relived, recycled so that we remain connected to what was as we venture forward one moment, one step, one day at a time. Trying to wrap our minds around the insufferable truth that what was can never be again, all while doing the unimaginable, living. Pain. Anguish. Heartache. Indescribable heaviness.

And yet, we are here.

We are here.

We are here to find ways to live meaningfully. With all of our love, our memories, our wishes, and even our unanswered prayers still miraculously beating within our broken hearts, we live. Every heartbeat. Every breath. We live for them. For ourselves. For our memories. For what remains. For what is yet to be.

We are here to be their light. To shine on their behalf, in their memory and in their honor. We are here to tell their story. To speak their name. To emulate the qualities we loved most. We are here to love, to laugh, to remember well. To carry on.

We are here to live. May 2021 be a year of healing, of remembering, of living life consciously forward. With strength, courage and love in our hearts may we find our way through the darkness of grief and into the light of living intentionally.

About the Author
I graduated from the SSA Master of Arts program at the University of Chicago and have been working as part of a



private practice for over a decade. My areas of focus include working with individuals and families on grief, loss, bereavement, and difficult life transitions resulting from illness, marital conflict, divorce, and other complicated, fractured relationships. My focus as a cognitive behavioral therapist is to empower individuals to take meaningful and purposeful action to create desired change in their lives.

I teach clients about the power of choice, wise minded thinking, and productive communication strategies as stepping stones to healing and transformation.
https://transformativegrief.com

Reprinted with permission from Grief Digest Magazine.

Crossing Rivers Health
Hospice Grief Support Groups
The Hospice grief support groups are for those of us who are going through the grieving process following the loss of a loved one. The meetings have a planned program but are flexible according to the needs of those in the group. The support groups allow for the opportunity to share feelings and experiences. If you do not wish to share anything, this is respected as well. Due to COVID-19, Prairie du Chien support groups are not currently meeting. These will be reassessed in March. Anyone in need of bereavement support can contact the Hospice office at 608.357.2278 at any time.
WAUKON, IA..... Facilitator: Brittney Miller, LMSW
Veteran's Memorial Hospital, Education Conference Room
Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 5 p.m.
TopicLove, grief and gratitude
Tuesday, March 9, 2021, 5 p.m.
Topic Guilt and grief



Crossing Rivers Health
Hospice Reflections
Newsletter Subscription

Three convenient ways to register.

- ONLINE
crossingrivers.org/HospiceReflections
- MAIL FORM TO:
Crossing Rivers Health Hospice
Attn: Bereavement Team
37868 US Hwy 18,
Prairie du Chien, WI 53821
- CALL 608.357.2444
Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

First name:
Last name:
Street address:
City:
State: Zip:
Phone:
Email:

I would like to subscribe to the Hospice Reflections Newsletter:
Send via: Mail Email
Unsubscribe me from the Hospice newsletter

Outraged Grief. Put your anger to work.

Anger.

It's the hidden emotion that I must poke around to unveil in my grief counseling. The only other emotion more concealed is relief. But that's a topic for another day.

The objects of anger range from the deceased to doctors, to God, to self.

Maybe you feel like you should have seen signs of the disease yourself. Maybe you're mad at God for letting your person suffer, or for making parents watch their child die, or children watch their parents die. Maybe the doctors missed the diagnosis, and that made the difference. Maybe the government has been slow to fund research on this disease, and now it costs you personally. Maybe your person didn't take care of themselves or did something risky and could have prevented the death with better choices.

Anger is not a stage you experience once and move on from. It is woven throughout the grieving process for most people and often not far from the surface at any given time. You may feel sad, but anger is lurking in the background. You may feel joy when going through memories, but anger is still somewhere in the mix, depending on the circumstances surrounding the death. This constant background presence of anger, like theme music you can turn down, but not off, can create chaos for the bereaved spirit and body.

We tend to categorize anger as "bad," and it can be one of the scarier emotions we, as humans, have. It can often present as explosive, chaotic, loud, and even violent, so in those ways, it has earned its reputation as a negative emotion.

But anger is a justice-based reaction. It's an innate response to a perceived wrong, and it's given to us to right those wrongs. And that's how we usually use it. We get angry when a company rips us off, and we call and get our money refunded. We get angry when someone murders innocent people, and we put them in jail. We get angry when our kid gets bullied in school, and we go to the principal about it or confront the other kids' parents. We DO something in response to anger. We are supposed to.

But in this situation, what can we do? The injustice - the stealing away from us of someone we love - isn't something we can right. There is typically no one we can charge with the wrong, and nothing we can do to reverse the damage.

So, we tend to try to tamp it down, reason it away, or pretend we don't feel it. But emotions aren't so easily disposed of. Unless we acknowledge them and give them the "out" they need, they tend to churn around inside us, taking chips out of our peace and leaving us with another level of brokenness we can't quite put our finger on.

Anger demands a response from us, and when we don't give one, it quietly starts destroying whatever it can reach from within. This can look different for different people.

This unresolved, undealt-with anger is often the wide-eyed culprit behind some of the depression that hits the grieving person. It's often the reason for a seemingly unrelated meltdown over something small. It often wreaks havoc on other people we love or those we work with. It steals our physical health in the form of heart issues, immune system functioning, fatigue.

While we cannot safely ignore our anger, we are also not at the mercy of this powerful emotion. The key is to wrest back

control and learn to express our anger healthily.

The first step is to accept the anger for what it is. Don't feel like you must explain it away as something else. If your mother's doctor missed the symptoms of cancer and early treatment would have saved her life, you have a right to be angry.

If your sister committed suicide after being bullied at school and several appeals to school administration and teachers resulted in no intervention, you have a right to be angry. If your spouse didn't take care of themselves and laughed off your concerns about mounting health issues, you have a right to be angry. If a distracted or drunk driver hit and killed your child, you have a right to be angry.

Define the anger, acknowledge it, and own it as rightfully yours. Now take your anger and give it its own life. Write it out in an essay, or a letter to whomever you think deserves your wrath. Draw or paint it out into whatever form takes shape on the paper. Pound and beat a hunk of clay into whatever beast fits the feelings that you know are yours. Sit down at a chosen instrument and force the strings, or the keys, or the sticks or the brass to scream out for you the incredulous, justified, biting fury that so far only you have had to listen to. Let the anger flow off the tips of your fingers and breathe life into this creature whose reality only you know.

And then take this thing and show it to others. You might think they'll be abhorred, but if they are, you've shown it to the wrong person. It's far more likely that they will be relieved to see that someone has taken their own monster and caged it on a page, or in stone, or in song.

Exposure is the great disarmer. You'll have struck a major blow to its power to harm both you and others.

Maybe you use this to affect real change in cases of medical neglect. Maybe you use it to entice legislators to enact stricter drunk driving laws. Maybe you use it to encourage people to take their health more seriously.

Or maybe all you use if for is yourself, to give this legitimate, righteous component of your grief the voice it's been screaming for, so that you can rest in peace. Even if only until it boils back up and you do this again, periodically, as a new normal in your life going forward.

Not only will you edge just a bit closer to healing each time, but so will everyone who has the privilege of being allowed to share your wrath.

About the Author Donna Trimm Calk, LMSW I am a New York State Licensed Master Social Worker. I received a Bachelor of Social Work from SUNY College at Buffalo and a Master of Social Work from Columbia University in New York City. I have a clinical social work background in Pediatric HIV, Pediatric Oncology, End-Stage Renal Disease, and Hospice and Palliative Care. I've worked with children, families, and the elderly as they travel through terminal illness, anticipatory grieving, and the dying process. My clinical background includes individual counseling and support group facilitation. I am currently the Bereavement Coordinator at Hospice and Palliative Care of St. Lawrence Valley. I carry a clinical caseload of individual grief counseling clients, facilitate support groups for students ranging from kindergarten through high school in area schools, train teachers, school counselors, and mental health professionals in the basics of grieving children, and provide crisis intervention counseling for schools, agencies, and businesses who've experienced a sudden and/or traumatic death within their community. I also facilitate specialty grief groups for widows, bereaved parents, bereaved teens, adults who've lost a parent, and suicide/overdose survivors.

Anger is a looming, largely subjugated emotion that I encounter during my work, and this article is my attempt to help people dive into this emotion and pull as much healing from it as possible.

Reprinted with permission of Grief Digest Magazine



Gentleness

By Haley Kregel LMSW

The Bible teaches us that one of the Fruits of the Spirit is gentleness. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.* Galatians 5: 22-23. I think we can all agree that today's world can use a little more gentleness. Let's explore what God's word shows us about gentleness, and how we can apply it to our lives in the new year.

I, Paul, myself entreat you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ — I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold toward you when I am away! — 2 Corinthians 10: 1. Here, Paul is explaining the character of Christ. He describes Jesus as being meek and gentle. In today's world, there is often a negative connotation with being "meek." However, dictionary.com defines meekness as "the quality of being patient or quiet in nature." Weakness is wrongfully associated with being "meek," but there is nothing weak about being patient or quiet. In fact, both take much strength and self-control.

We are so very blessed to be loved by a God who is patient. *The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.* 2 Peter 3: 9. There are many examples of Jesus being quiet in nature or silent throughout the Bible. Perhaps the most significant example of Jesus staying quiet, is when he was being questioned before the council, prior to his crucifixion. *But he remained silent and made no answer.* Mark 14: 61.

Here we see our Lord demonstrating gentleness in these vital components of our Christian faith. Jesus exercised gentleness as he was waiting to be taken to the Cross to give the ultimate sacrifice by dying for our sins. God waits patiently for those to come to the Lord Jesus and trust in His plan of Salvation.

These great examples teach us the importance God places on gentleness. *Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.* Colossians 3: 12-13. We must not forget we are all sinners walking through this difficult journey on Earth. Although the details of our lives may vary greatly, we share the common needs, emotions, and hopes that make us human.

Let us remember during all of the chaos in today's world, what really matters and is the most important. We turn to the Lord and His example, for how we can help one another through trials, grow in our faith, and point others to Christ. *Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth,...* 2 Timothy 2: 23-25.

The greatest
strength is *gentleness*

*Hospice Reflections is a publication of Crossing Rivers Health Hospice.
For more information on our hospice services, call 608.357.2000.
Our office hours are Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Other hours are available by appointment.*

Accredited by
The Joint Commission
Medicare Certified

