

IF I KNEW THEN, WHAT I KNOW NOW...

By *W. Michael Buckovich*

Have you ever noticed there always seem to be two points of view on everything? Work, life, politics, sports, and so on. I think it might be true of caregiving. One point of view is of an outsider – “That doesn’t look so hard. I bet I could do that.” And then there’s the second point of view that comes with first-hand experience – “Whew, I had no idea.” We now understand both points of view. And we wish we knew then what we know now.

Our mom, June Buckovich, suffered from Alzheimer’s disease. This was tough enough on its own, and then became more complicated when she had a TIA (transient ischemic attack). That’s an event whose symptoms mirror those of a stroke but don’t necessarily last long. But, in mom’s case, it permanently affected her ability to eat and swallow.

While everybody’s situation is different, ours felt like stepping into a tornado of activity. We found ourselves conferencing with various doctors, the care facility staff, nurses, insurance companies, family members, friends, and the other folks that became part of the process and her care. There was barely enough time to take a breath and think through the other priorities of caregiving.

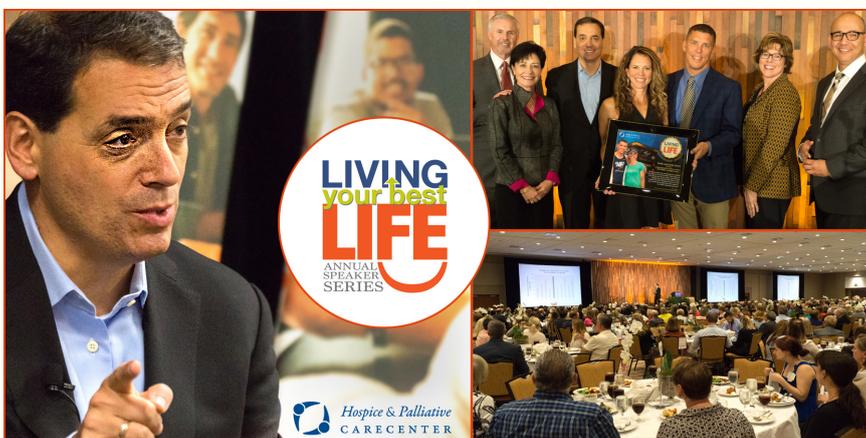
This hyper level of activity only increases as your loved one begins to decline and decisions need to be made. All the while, you still keep trying to make things better. To make a difference. To make the right decisions. You visit, help with



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LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE

Second Annual Speaker Series Community Luncheon



On October 3, 2017, we as a community came together at the Benton Convention Center to celebrate our second in the Living Your Best Life Annual Speaker Series. The day was lovely, the Convention Center was packed, and we were ready to enjoy lunch and hear an inspiring presentation by Daniel H. Pink, author of several *New York Times* bestsellers (*Drive*, *To Sell Is Human*, *A Whole New Mind*, and especially his latest book *When*, scheduled for release in January 2018).

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From Linda Darden, CEO/President

In early October we proudly hosted our second annual Living Your Best Life luncheon, featuring Daniel Pink, bestselling author. You may ask why we named the event “Living Your Best Life” and how that fits with an organization that started as Hospice of Winston-Salem. Going back to the very beginning, our mission and commitment has been focused on helping people make every day the very best it can be. When someone is facing end of life we can help them and their families reflect on what is most important, make plans to support their personal goals, and continue creating memories with loved ones. Our clinical staff are highly trained in advanced illness medical care, and our quality reflects their expertise at alleviating symptoms. At the same time, we have staff who simply connect with a patient and family to provide peace of mind, spiritual support, and emotional comfort – these are the most rewarding moments in the work that we do. And that’s why we embrace the philosophy of living your best life.

November is National Hospice Month, and it’s an opportune time to remind the community of our mission. It’s also a time to affirm that we are doing everything possible to provide education and easy access to our care. This year, our organization

will serve almost 3,000 patients, but for shorter and shorter periods. In fact, 38% of our patients received supportive Hospice care for one week or less. When I reflect on this statistic, I think of the lost opportunities to bring comfort to those families. One week is not much time. We want families, providers, and individuals to call earlier so that we can be a part of making weeks and months the best they can be.

In the pages of this newsletter, you’ll hear more about the benefits of connecting with our care sooner. You will read more about the very enlightening presentation Daniel Pink shared at our luncheon. There is also information here for you, or those you may know, who are facing the holidays after experiencing the loss of a loved one. We offer counseling as well as special workshops to help give people the tools to cope with loss, and ultimately, a sense of hope for the future.

Thank you for your continued support of our mission. I wish you a peaceful holiday season and good health and happiness in the new year.



Our Mission

Hospice & Palliative CareCenter/Rowan Hospice & Palliative Care provides compassionate care for those individuals living with a life-limiting illness and their families, through quality medical, emotional, spiritual, and social support.



Hospice & Palliative
CARECENTER

COWBOY BOOTS AND GOLF CLEATS MEET AGAIN



In July, nearly 200 golfers, donors, and volunteers teamed up with participating sponsors to participate in our annual Hope Classic at Tanglewood. The festivities began the night before with the Hospice Hoedown at WinMock where guests, many in cowboy boots, kicked up their heels and mingled with the friendly competitors they would meet on the golf course the next day.

A huge thank you to our presenting sponsor, First Tennessee Bank, and to our excellent volunteers who made it possible. This year's

Hope Classic raised \$94,000 to support the patients and families we serve. Thank you to everyone who embraces our mission and supports our fund-raising efforts.

LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE (continued from page 1)

Daniel shared several key takeaways that we as an organization can incorporate into our mission of helping people to live their best possible quality of life:

Endings are represented by four components: Energize, Encode, Edit, and Elevate.

- ✔ We are **energized** seemingly more at certain milestones, 9-enders for one. We generally challenge ourselves at those milestone birthdays (29 years old is the most common age to run a marathon, for instance). We seek meaningful events at those milestone times.
- ✔ **Endings** help to encode the quality of our life. Daniel shared the 'James Dean effect,' in that although Dean's life was brief, it was intense and rich in experiences that reach people even today. We tend to pay attention to how something ends.
- ✔ We **edit** our lives. For example, early on folks have friends in three distinct circles – inner, middle, and outer. As we age, we begin editing to the essentials, seeking meaning, and actively looking for the right choices. Generally, our friends evolve to the inner circle – i.e., those with whom we have the closest relationship.
- ✔ We seek to **elevate** endings to the best possible situation. Daniel used the 'good news versus bad news' scenario with the finding that most people want the bad news first, thus ending on an upbeat note. This is a good point to keep in mind in our daily interactions with those we serve. People actively want endings in a positive way.

Daniel concluded several key thoughts:

- 💡 Be conscious of endings.
- 💡 Use endings to energize yourself and others.
- 💡 How people behave at the end of a situation profoundly shapes how we remember them.
- 💡 When you find yourself at an ending, don't be afraid to edit down to essentials.
- 💡 Always give the bad news first.
- 💡 Use endings as 'meaning makers.'
- 💡 In the end, we all seek meaning.

These insights can be of value to Hospice & Palliative CareCenter as we seek to help patients live their best possible quality of life. Facilitating conversations that answer 'What is important to you?' or 'What do you want to have happen?' help identify meaning at critical times of life.

We offer a special thanks to all our sponsors. Those in attendance especially enjoyed the bread pudding dessert from Dewey's, the Presenting Sponsor. The beautiful centerpieces, white orchids presented in globe vases, were available for purchase at the end of the event. Congratulations to Emily and Keith Davis, owners of Fleet Feet Sports, for their well-deserved Best Life Leadership Award.

Mark your calendars for next year's Living Your Best Life event, scheduled for October 2, 2018, when Isaac Lidsky, author of *Eyes Wide Open*, will be the keynote speaker.

IF I KNEW THEN, WHAT I KNOW NOW... (continued from page 1)

feeding, sit by the bed having chats. Whatever creates happiness is what you do. But it was clear...our mom needed a level of care that she wasn't getting or that we could provide. We were in unfamiliar territory and didn't really know what to do next. This might sound familiar.

When you're in this tornado of activity, and simply trying to keep it together, you are too busy to step away and think clearly. Looking back, if we had talked about her wishes for her care in advance, we would have done some things differently and sooner.

Finally, we made the call to Hospice & Palliative CareCenter. While I wasn't 100% sure of all the services they provide, I knew from friends and associates they had incredible, caring staff and a reputation for being there during end of life to help not only the loved one, but the family as well.

Within minutes, I received a call back and was told that an admission nurse would come to visit us immediately and perform an assessment and provide us with information. This allowed our family to make better informed decisions. And while it was difficult, that decision was to get Mom Hospice care. An hour or so went by, a couple of phone calls were made, and then the magic started to happen.

Our experience involved taking Mom directly to the KBR Hospice Home where a team of professionals took over. There was quick and precise communication among all parties. I immediately met the nurses and other care providers and knew everything was in their capable hands now. The level of compassion and care for someone they had just met was a blessing that I wasn't prepared for. Mom was comfortable within minutes of arrival and seemed to be at peace with her surroundings. A look of ease and calm was on her face that I hadn't seen in such a long time. I took a deep breath for the first time in 6 months.

Mom passed away shortly afterwards surrounded by family and the Hospice staff. She fought so hard for so long. We were able to take solace in seeing the peace and ease she was in.

If you've ever met someone that has had an opportunity to experience Hospice & Palliative CareCenter, you will hear two things over and over again: The staff are angels, a special type of person. And – I wish we had called earlier. In this most trying of times, you might forget about all the support that is around you – spouse, significant other, family, friends, care facilities, church, community, and Hospice.

Calling Hospice does not mean giving up hope – it means “letting hope in, for help and support, when you need it most.”

If I knew then what I know now...

A NIGHT OF REFLECTIONS – LUMINARIA LABYRINTH WALK

Plan to join us on Tuesday, December 12, 4:30-7pm, for our special labyrinth walk. Enjoy the beauty of the luminaries as you walk the labyrinth. The Glenn & Wilma Pettyjohn Meditation Garden & Labyrinth is open to the public.



WHEN TIME MATTERS MOST

By Virginia White, BSN, MPH - Sr. VP of Clinical Operations



“I was thoroughly impressed with the care and support from Hospice. Once we were referred to you all, the care she received was unbelievable. She finally felt validated and respected in regards to her decision and everyone on the team was knowledgeable, kind, and caring. I only wish she could have gotten into Hospice sooner... we talked to several of her doctors but it took us months to get referred...”

These are verbatim comments from a family member on the Hospice CAHPS (family satisfaction) survey regarding their Hospice & Palliative CareCenter experience.

Unfortunately, Hospice staff hear these words too frequently from our patients and family members. Reasons for late referrals to Hospice include new medications or advances in treatment options, physicians being unaware they can continue their role with patients, a belief that Hospice is limited to only the last few days, or a family’s fear that “if we choose Hospice there is no hope and nothing can be done.”

In reality, patients and families often find that more is done for them when Hospice arrives than previously – it is just a shift in what is done. We are experts at managing symptoms, and our focus is on what matters to you the most – your goals and hopes – goals that expand beyond just medicines and equipment. Is it most important that you attend your grandson’s wedding or your daughter’s high school graduation? Tend the flowers in your garden? Write down treasured family recipes to pass down to your daughters? Work on that old clunker car with your grandson? Hospice can help you feel well enough to do that.

Hospice staff and volunteers open discussions about wishes, they gently share with caregivers what to expect during the coming months, and they provide support and guidance through this life journey.

Our patients tell us what matters most to them is dignity, knowing they made a difference in the world, and time for reflection with those they love. Hospice helps people explore and revel in the life they are still living.

The Hospice benefit was designed to be available for the last six months of life – not weeks or days. Medical journals document that patients with certain diagnoses actually live longer when they use Hospice than when they do not. Recent national data shows that the median time on Hospice is decreasing; in 2015 it was only 23 days. Unfortunately, 38% of our patients elect their Hospice benefit for only the last 7 days of their lives, leaving most families wishing they had connected to Hospice care sooner.

Meaningful, important things in life take time; don’t limit that time when it matters most.

Call us early and we will discuss options with you. If you need help speaking with your physician- we can do that. If you need help talking with family members – we can do that. We will help guide you even if you aren’t ready to enter into Hospice care yet.

Call us – we will answer.

A GIFT WITH MEANING AND LASTING VALUE

Sometimes the most thoughtful gift you can give someone is a donation to charity in their honor.



When looking for gifts for this holiday season, why not consider an alternative gift with a donation to Hospice & Palliative CareCenter? Alternative gift giving is a concept that has been around for years and is founded on the premise that sometimes the most thoughtful gift you can give someone is a donation to charity in their honor.

We have holiday cards that you can present to relatives, neighbors, friends, and associates, honoring them with a contribution made in their name. Recipients of these cards are touched, knowing the gift they received has a very real and meaningful impact on the people in their own community.

Please call Sara Tavery at (336) 768-3972 if you wish to take advantage of this program or have any questions. **Your donations make a significant impact for generations to come.**

COPING WITH THE HOLIDAYS

A free workshop designed to develop coping skills during the holiday season for those who are mourning the death of a loved one



Winston-Salem Workshop Dates:

Tuesday, November 14, from 6:00-7:30pm
Thursday, December 14, from 1:30-3:00pm
Held on the Campus of Hospice & Palliative CareCenter
101 Hospice Lane - The Education and Counseling Center (Bldg. #121)
To register, call 336-768-6157, ext. 1600

Salisbury Workshop Dates:

Tuesday, November 28, from 6:00-7:30pm
Held in the Rowan Public Library
(Stanback Auditorium), 201 Fisher Street
To register, call 704-637-6745, or 336-331-1348
and ask for Susanna Lund

HOLIDAY WISH LIST

Helping Hospice Patients and Families in Need

If you would like to provide support to help patients and families during the holidays and throughout the year, please consider a gift to our Patient Support Fund. This fund is especially designed to help patients and families with some of life's basic necessities, as well as brighten the holidays for those most in need.

Contributions from individuals and community organizations will:

- ❄ Support the purchase of holiday meals for patients and their families
- ❄ Grant holiday wishes for patients and their families who might otherwise go without
- ❄ Help provide emergency funds to ensure that patients and their families are able to stay warm during the winter months

If you are interested in helping, or have questions, please contact volunteer@hospicecarecenter.org



“Because I had lost my husband, I wanted to write a poem that would bring comfort to others who had lost a loved one. Although

someone we love may no longer be present with us, they are very much alive in our thoughts. We can still have our moments with them because they live on in our hearts and minds.

Focusing on the good memories often brings me peace. It doesn't mean there aren't difficult times, but it helps to have those good memories that will always live on inside of us.”

*By Anita Ford, MSN, RN, CHPN
Vice President of Clinical Services*

Embracing Hope

*Underneath the quiet skies
I breathe a sigh and close my eyes
And picture you when you were near
Recalling times that you were here*

*I dream of you, I see your smile
I seek your touch, and all the while
I travel in my thoughts to find
The memories you've left behind*

*I hear your laugh, I see your face
I feel the warmth of your embrace
And even though we are apart
Your presence lives within my heart*

*I struggle some, but I will cope
For I will be embracing hope
That brings me peace and lets me see
You are not gone; you live in me*

REMEMBERING HELPS HEALING

The holidays can be an especially difficult time for those who have lost a loved one. As you face traditions and events associated with the holidays, it is important to take care of yourself and give yourself permission to say no, to create new traditions, and to create some time and space to remember your loved one who has died.

One way of remembering a loved one who has passed away is to consider a ritual in their honor. A ritual is a helpful way to transform a lifetime bond so that your once vital connection lives on in a new way.

As the holidays unfold, you may consider some of the following rituals helpful:

 **Light a candle.** The candle flame is a universal symbol of vigil and honor. You can create your own candle lighting ritual. Tell a story, read a letter to your loved one, or just observe a moment of silence.

 **Create a sacred space.** Assemble a “memory box” of photos and small personal items to open on special occasions or when you simply want to reflect. Or create a home altar as a space for reflection in the privacy of your own thoughts. For public honor, arrange to plant a tree or donate a bench to a nearby park.

 **Walk, run, or ride for a cure.** Gather a team or go by yourself to raise funds for research in your loved one's name. Many national organizations hold walks and runs in our area. Or consider our Annual Hospice Hope Run/Walk and begin training and dedicate your participation to your loved one.

 **Support their passion.** Host a gathering and serve your loved one's signature foods. Or play their favorite music and games. Make a contribution to your loved one's favorite charity or club.

Please remember that Hospice & Palliative CareCenter/Rowan Hospice & Palliative Care offers individual and group counseling, free of charge – thanks to donations. Don't hesitate to call 336-768-3972 or visit our website at www.hospicecarecenter.org and arrange an appointment.

Since the last issue of The Circular, we were awarded Level IV status, the highest level, as participants in the “We Honor Veterans” program. It is a program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and the Veterans Administration. Our participation in the program is voluntary, yet we embrace the knowledge that veterans have had unique experiences they carry with them throughout life, and we strive to make sure we honor those experiences.



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