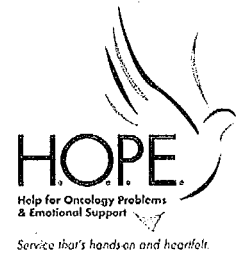




December 2017

# H.O.P.E. LIFELINE



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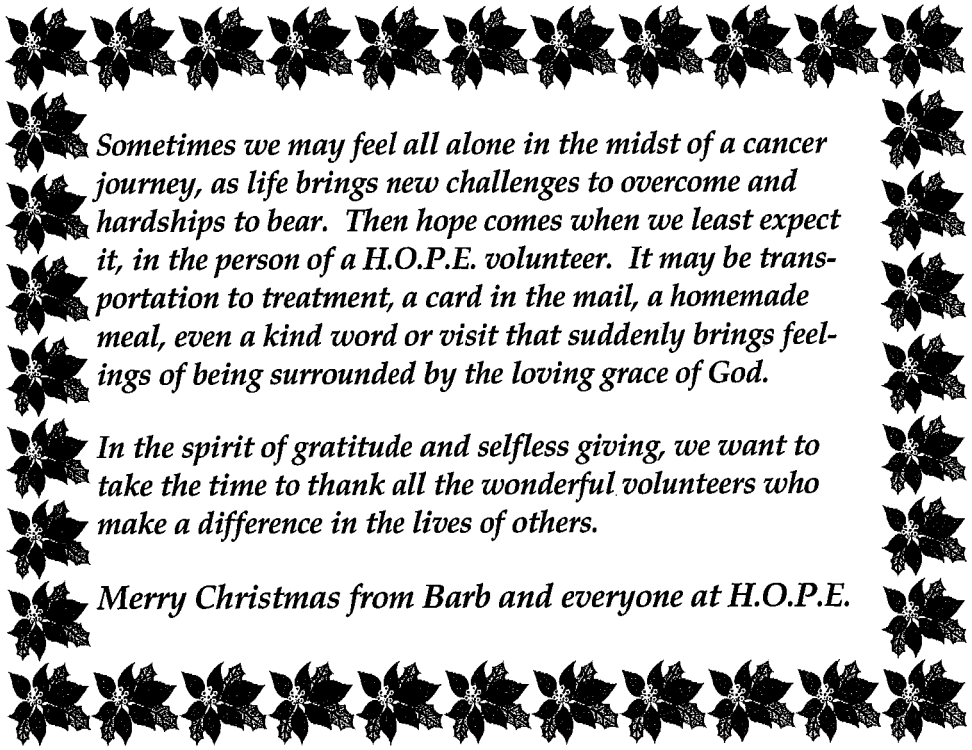
H.O.P.E.  
P.O. Box 175  
Shrewsbury, PA 17361

H.O.P.E. (Help for Oncology Problems & Emotional Support) is an all volunteer cancer support network that provides free assistance to cancer patients and their families facing the challenges of cancer. H.O.P.E. is a 501 (C)(3) non-profit funded through donations with offices on the second floor of the New Freedom Community Center at  
150 East Main Street, New Freedom, PA 17349

The official registration and financial information of Help for Oncology Problems and Emotional Support may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1 (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

H.O.P.E. does not receive funding and is not affiliated with the American Cancer Society. Funding comes from donations made by private individuals and the civic/business community.

Phone: (717) 227-2824



*Sometimes we may feel all alone in the midst of a cancer journey, as life brings new challenges to overcome and hardships to bear. Then hope comes when we least expect it, in the person of a H.O.P.E. volunteer. It may be transportation to treatment, a card in the mail, a homemade meal, even a kind word or visit that suddenly brings feelings of being surrounded by the loving grace of God.*

*In the spirit of gratitude and selfless giving, we want to take the time to thank all the wonderful volunteers who make a difference in the lives of others.*

*Merry Christmas from Barb and everyone at H.O.P.E.*

## Support Group Meeting

Our next Support Group Meeting will be Wednesday, January 10, at 7 p.m. in the H.O.P.E. Serenity Room.

We at H.O.P.E. wish you a safe, healthy, and happy Christmas and hope to celebrate with you at our Christmas party.

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H.O.P.E.'s Office Hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00—3. Please call in advance to set up an appointment for:

- Intake
- Wigs/hats/scarves
- Pantry

Please direct all calls to the H.O.P.E. office at 717-227-2824.

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

What—Christmas is just around the corner? Marty the H.O.P.E. Christmas Elf knows this all too well. (She's reminded periodically by Barb starting in January of the Christmas countdown.) The Serenity Room is anything but serene, with wrapped and unwrapped gifts piled high on tables and volunteers bustling about matching presents with their children. Fifty families and 117 children will be enjoying a Christmas they might only have dreamed of due to the generosity of all our Santas, from individuals, to families, to churches and other organizations.

On the next page is an essay that gives some wonderful suggestions on coping with the loss of a loved one during the holiday season. The writer has herself "been through this emotional roller coaster several times" and is sharing what she has found to be most helpful.

Below are some other tips for cancer patients on how to get the most from this holiday.

- Communication is key. Regardless of the situation, let family members and friends know what is going on with your health and what you can and cannot do.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help with shopping, gift wrapping, meal preparation, or any other activity associated with the holiday.
- If big events have always taken place at your house, consider asking someone else to host them. Consider even bowing out of some of the celebrations.
- Don't feel obligated to be the life of the party, and don't be afraid to remind family that holidays are not a vacation from the challenges of living with cancer.
- Talk to your health care team or a counselor about how to handle well-meaning questions.
- Finally, try to focus on the present moment and enjoy your celebration in whatever form it takes.



*"Christmas is most truly Christmas when we celebrate it by giving the light of love to those who need it most."*

– Ruth Carter Stapleton

## ON A POSITIVE NOTE

Clinical trials are not just for cancer patients who have run out of treatment options. Nor are they available only at the recommendation of the patient's doctors. According to Dina G. Lansley of the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center, new forms of immunotherapy are being tested in many types of cancer, and not just at late stages. Nearly half of the referrals to the National Cancer Institute for clinical trials come from patients themselves now.

Here are some names and numbers patients can try:

- A web page of the **National Cancer Institute** – [ccr.cancer.gov](http://ccr.cancer.gov) (or its toll-free number 888-624-1937 that connects to a referral coordinator).
- **Leukemia & Lymphoma Society** website; go to the tab labeled patients and caregivers and you'll find a clinical trials site. Or call 800-955-4572.
- **The Cancer Research Institute** website ([cancerresearch.org](http://cancerresearch.org)) or 855-216-0127.
- **The American Cancer Society** website ([www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)) or 800-303-5691.
- **EmergingMed.com** or 877-601-8601.

## H.O.P.E.'S ANGEL CORNER

BY BARB TITANISH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CO-FOUNDER H.O.P.E.



This month we'd like to thank all the people who made our fall events so successful. The **Bon Air Country Club** raised over \$9,000 for H.O.P.E. through both its golf tournament and happy hour and vendor show. Bon Air has long helped us and we're very grateful for their continued, wonderful support.

October was the month of our Craft and Vendor Show. Shoppers could browse the merchandise of nearly 50 vendors. Thanks go out to **Barb Spurlock** and **Carol Nelson** for their organization and oversight of the entire event.

Autumn wouldn't be complete without our fall bingo, and effusive thanks go to **Chris Waltemyer** for setting it all up and our **volunteers** who created the beautiful prize baskets, as well as all those who donated baked goods.

*We love helping all of you, and we ask your help as well. Please refrain from dropping by the office at lunchtime, from 12 to 1, as we will be unable to provide assistance at that time. It's best for all if you call in advance for an appointment. Thank you.*

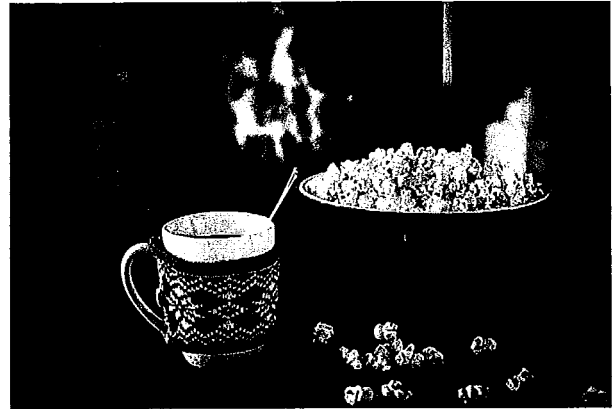
# Making The Most Of The Holiday Season Even When You're Grieving

By Lucille Rosetti

Many people look forward to the holiday season all year long; it can be a time to relax after a long and stressful year, and for some, it's the only time they get to see family members who live far away. But what happens when you've just lost a loved one? The holidays can turn into a time of sadness or even depression, and it's difficult to see your way through when everyone else seems so happy.

One of the best ways to cope with the loss of a loved one during the holidays is to find ways to look forward to the season rather than dreading it. This can be achieved in a number of ways; the key is to think about the times that made you happiest and try to recreate them.

It's also important to practice self-care during this time and remember that the holidays are a great time to relax, in part because you may have time off work. Read on for a few tips on the best ways to make the most of the holidays even when you're grieving.



## Remembrance is good

Keep in mind that remembering your loved one is the best way to feel closer to them this holiday season. While the process of grief is very complicated and can exhaust you physically, mentally, and emotionally, thinking about the good times you shared with the one you're missing can help you feel better. Get out some old photographs or videos of those times and share them with your friends or family members. It may be an emotional experience, but remembering that your loved one got to share those moments with you might help you reach a better place within your grief.

## Do something fun

For many people, the holidays mean snow and cold weather, so take advantage of it and do something fun to take your mind off everything you've been through. If you enjoyed sledding as a kid, take your own children out for the day and don't worry about anything other than having a good time. When you get home, get everyone into warm, dry clothes and make some hot chocolate. Not only will the day help you cope with your feelings, you'll also be making some wonderful memories with your own kids (or grandkids).

## Relax

Because the grieving process is so complex and takes so much out of you, it's a great idea to use the holidays to relax and let yourself heal. When the weather turns cold and the snow starts piling up, snuggle down on the couch with a blanket and some treats and have a holiday movie marathon with your family, or build a fire in the fireplace and settle back with a mug of something warm to look at the lights and decorations you've put up around your home.

## Take the pressure off

When the holidays roll around, many people feel pressured to make everything perfect, or to host the perfect party. Take the pressure off yourself by remembering that not everything will always go according to plan. Also, if you usually host family members at your home but aren't feeling up to it this year, ask if someone else can take over this year. Now is the time to take care of yourself, and, according to Familyshare.com, guilt should play no part in how you choose to spend your holidays.

Making the most of the holidays can be tricky when you've been dealing with difficult emotions and aren't sure how to cope. Reach out—to a friend, family member, or therapist—if you need to talk, and research coping methods for your grief.



*“Maybe Christmas doesn’t come from a store. Maybe Christmas means a little bit more.”*

– Dr. Seuss

## Important Questions to Ask Your Oncologist

Dr. Prateek Mendiratta of the Duke Cancer Center published this information for the American Society of Clinical Oncology last year. These are eight important questions he feels his patients should ask their oncologist. For a more detailed explanation of each of these visit [cancer.net](http://cancer.net), Blog, “What I Want My Patients to Know Before They Leave My Office.” (And make sure you record your conversation.)

- What type of cancer do I have?
- Where is the cancer located currently and what is the extent of the disease?
- What special testing needs to be done to better characterize my tumor?
- What is the role of surgery, radiation therapy, and chemotherapy in my treatment?
- Are there genetic implications with the new cancer diagnosis?
- Are clinical trials available?
- Is there a possibility to discuss my case in a multidisciplinary tumor board? (Done at cancer centers.)
- What is the proposed treatment plan and next steps?

And here are some further questions and suggestions offered by cancer survivor Chris Wark. If you would like to read the entire 28-page document go to <https://www.chrisbeatcancer.com/20-questions-for-your-oncologist/>.

- Is this a fast-growing or slow-growing cancer?
- What treatment do you recommend?
- What are the drugs you are going to treat me with?
- Are there any other drugs that I might have to take during the course of treatment?
- What are the short- and long-term side effects of these drugs?
- What other treatment options are available?
- Would you do this treatment if you had the same diagnosis as me?
- May I have copies of the material safety data sheets on all the drugs I’ll be taking?
- What do you recommend I eat while undergoing treatment?
- What’s the best anti-cancer diet?

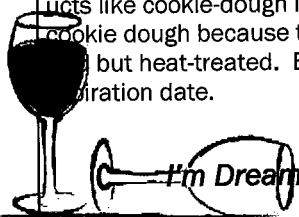
Another question Wark suggests the patient ask is “What do you think caused my cancer?” Followed up by “Do you think an unhealthy diet, or pollution, or stress have anything to do with this?” Wark contrasts cancer rates in the U.S. with those in other countries, particularly countries whose populations eat very different diets and live different lifestyles. He reminds us that 70% of premature deaths in the U.S. are attributed to three factors: poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and tobacco use. The number one cause of cancer is smoking tobacco, and the number two is obesity. Wark says the oncologist’s response to these questions about cause is important. “If they start talking about diet and lifestyle, and they’re passionate about the fact that it is a cause of cancer, and that stress is a factor, then you know you’ve got someone that is really in tune, and really cares about prevention and getting to the root causes. If you have a doctor that just blows all that off and just says, ‘We don’t know what caused it. It’s probably genetics or you’re just unlucky,’ then that’s a doctor you might think twice about working with.”

## 'Tis the Season to be Careful

### Burned Cookies? Maybe Not So Bad.

Here is another reason not to eat raw cookie dough. In addition to the risk of raw eggs, researchers from the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control warn against tasting uncooked foods made with flour because of the presence of a type of E. coli bacteria. This includes homemade playdough.

A study that was published last month in The New England Journal of Medicine reported that more than 10 million pounds of flour were recalled in the summer of 2016 after an outbreak of E. coli in 24 states sickened 56 people and led to kidney failure in one patient. The culprit was traced to a General Mills facility in Kansas City, MO, and a massive recall ensued. However, fear not, you can still enjoy commercial products like cookie-dough ice cream and packaged refrigerated cookie dough because these ingredients are not only pasteurized but heat-treated. But don't use cake mixes beyond their expiration date.



### I'm Dreaming of a Dry Christmas?

The American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), which represents many of the nation's top cancer doctors, is calling attention to the ties between alcohol and cancer. In a statement published last month the group cites evidence that even light drinking can slightly raise a woman's risk of breast cancer and increase a common type of esophageal cancer.

Heavy drinkers face much higher risks of mouth and throat cancer, cancer of the voice box, liver cancer, and to a lesser extent, colorectal cancers. ASCO researchers reviewed earlier published studies and concluded that 5.5 percent of all new cancers and 5.8 percent of all cancer deaths worldwide could be attributed to alcohol. One way alcohol may lead to cancer is because the body metabolizes it into acetaldehyde when it comes in contact with bacteria in the mouth, which causes mutations in DNA, according to Dr. Susan Gapstur, vice president for epidemiology at the American Cancer Society.

Even those who drink moderately, defined as one daily drink for women and two for men, face nearly a doubling of the risk for mouth and throat cancer and more than double the risk for cancer of the esophagus. Moderate drinkers also face elevated risks for cancers of the voice box, female breast cancer, and colorectal cancers.



Buy Your Gifts Online at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and Amazon donates back to H.O.P.E!

To support H.O.P.E. and shop for the holidays or anytime, go to <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-2765683>

## H.O.P.E. Has Partnered With Community Aid (Neighbors Helping Neighbors) to Collect Clothing.

We Need Your Clothing, Shoes, Bedding, Curtains, and Drapes.

These Items Will Benefit H.O.P.E. With Every Pound You Donate!

(No Small Appliances or Furniture, Please.)

The Container Is In the H.O.P.E. Parking Lot. Other containers can now be found at:

- Stewartstown Presbyterian Church
- Old Mill Shopping Center in Fawn Grove
- Hametown Park
- The "Coop" in New Freedom



**Panera Helps H.O.P.E.**  
 Shrewsbury Location, 98 Sofia Drive  
 Tuesday, December 5  
 4—8 p.m.

Ordering online for Rapid Pick-up or Delivery?

Enter FUND as the promo code.

Dining there? Go to our website, [hopeforcancerfamilies.org](http://hopeforcancerfamilies.org), and look for Panera night in our fundraising pull-down menu.

Bring printed-out flyer or download to electronic device.

**It's Pasta Time!**  
 What better way to fight the cold than with friends in a cozy restaurant?

Join us at the New Freedom Restaurant and Coffee Shop and support H.O.P.E.

Monday, February 26, from 4 to 9 p.m.

Enjoy your favorite pasta, sauce, garlic bread, salad, and soda or BYOB.



Visit Us on the Web

<http://www.hopeforcancerfamilies.org>

"Like" Us on Facebook:

H.O.P.E. (Help for Oncology Problems and Emotional Support)

## Upcoming Events

H.O.P.E.'s Support Group Meeting  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month at 7pm

H.O.P.E.'s Serenity Room in the New Freedom Community Center  
150 East Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor (Elevator Available)

Everyone is Welcome!

(Cancer patients, care givers, families and friends)

Call 717-227-2824



*"Of all the forces that make for a better world, none is so powerful as hope. With hope, one can think, one can work, one can dream. If you have hope, you have everything."*

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