



Widow & Widowers Group - Holy Family Parish
2515 Palatine Rd - Inverness, IL 60067

To Be Joyful Again

March and April 2014

Dear Joyful Again Members,

Would you like to be happy again? Most people would. Interesting recent studies indicate that one major problem in finding happiness is actually searching for happiness. The greater the value we place on “finding” happiness, the more lonely and depressed we will feel. This is especially true if we define happiness as intense positive emotions like jubilation or excitement, because then we evaluate our experiences against a high standard and come away disappointed. In other words, avoid comparing your life to the happiest things you remember from the past. It never measures up.

According to the studies, happy people aren’t looking to be ecstatic. They gain joy from frequent small experiences, even things like finding a good parking spot or running into a friend. They don’t try to evaluate their lives to “figure out” whether they are happy. Evaluation keeps us from being in the moment, getting caught up in the “flow”, and just experiencing life as it comes. Besides, when we evaluate we tend to judge daily activities as less enjoyable and then ruminate about why they’re not fun or why our lives are empty, which only makes things worse.

Another problem: Happiness is an individual state, so when we look for it, it’s only natural to focus on ourselves. Yet evidence shows that focusing on or being absorbed in ourselves undermines happiness and causes depression. When we look beyond ourselves, help others, and look for the happiness we can bring rather than the happiness we can get, we actually become happier.

Overall, in order to regain joy and meaning, concentrate less on finding joy and meaning and more on activities, projects, and relationships that bring them as byproducts.

Of course, grief complicates all of this. It is natural to be self-absorbed in the depths of grief. We can’t help but evaluate our present state unfavorably compared to what we had before. It is hard at first to find any joy at all, even in those little things that used to make us smile. But happiness is not gone, and we are here to help you regain it. Join us for an activity or meeting soon. Try especially to join us for our Spring Fling party! We are here for you.

May God bless you

Amy Florian

Calendar of Joyful Events

To check weather cancellations, call Holy Family at 847-359-0042.

**Thursday
March 6**

7:00 Come to talk, and to get the advice and support you need. We break at approximately 8:00 for conversation and refreshments provided by our hospitality team. Everyone is welcome.

**Thursday
March 20**

7:00 Support group
8:00 General meeting
Everyone wants a deal, especially in these economic times. But how do you find them or even know where to look? Come tonight to find out. Beverly Levy's presentation is titled "Freebies, Steals, and Deals." She will feature places, products and services that are either free or have low cost or exceptional value. Come get information from someone "in the know," so you are equipped to save in ways you didn't expect.

**Sunday
March 30**

Come join us for Sunday brunch at the Knight's Café. Enter the Holy Family gym door between 11:45 and 12:15. Elaine and Judy greet you by the register and direct you to our reserved tables. For only \$7, you get waffles, eggs, sausage, bacon, pastries, - PLUS ice cream, cookies and desserts. And it's all you can eat. There's no better bargain or cause, and no better way to have fun on a Sunday. Join us on the last Sunday every month for a wonderful meal with friends.

**Thursday
April 3**

7:00 Come to talk, and to get the advice and support you need. We break at approximately 8:00 for conversation and refreshments provided by our hospitality team. Everyone is welcome.

**Sunday
April 6**



3:00 SPRING FLING!!

Come join us for our party to welcome the warm weather of spring – FINALLY!! Meet at the home of Jo Stuprich. We will provide the main course plus soda and water. Please bring a small dish or dessert to share, and any other beverage you wish to enjoy.

Kindly **call Jo at 847-358-5932** to let her know you are coming, so we can order the proper amount of food and coordinate the side dishes. This is always a fun and relaxing gathering. **Family members and friends are welcome too.** We'll see you there!

**Thursday
April 17**

Normally we would have our support session tonight. However, this is Holy Thursday and there are no meetings at the church except for the Holy Thursday services. We hold all of our members in prayer for the Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter services that celebrate God's ultimate victory over death. Call us if you need to talk this week.

**Sunday
April 27**

Come join us for Sunday brunch at the Knight's Café. Enter the Holy Family gym door between 11:45 and 12:15. Elaine and Debbie greet you by the register and direct you to our reserved tables. For only \$7, you get waffles, eggs, sausage, bacon, pastries, - PLUS ice cream, cookies and desserts. And it's all you can eat. There's no better bargain or cause, and no better way to have fun on a Sunday. Join us on the last Sunday every month for a wonderful meal with friends

Interesting Tools for Discussing Final Wishes

A number of resources are becoming available to guide people as they have discussions about advance directives, comfort wishes, funeral service desires, and the legacy they'd like to pass on. These discussions are particularly important when you are widowed, because someone else needs to know what you want. If they don't, you have virtually no chance of getting it. Here are just two of the many options available.

First, Pulitzer-Prize-winning columnist Ellen Goodman retired from writing and formed a non-profit organization called The Conversation Project. It is aimed at helping people formulate and distribute their wishes, so that as much as possible, people can live as they choose and die where and how they choose.

Their tool is free and very user-friendly, asking thoughtful questions that you can answer however you wish. Many questions are accompanied by a brief well-done video, so you can really think through different situations and make good decisions. You can log in and have the web site remember your answers, or just go through it without having them save it for you. All answers are secure and unavailable to anyone who doesn't have your user name and password. Go ahead and try it. Find the tool at www.theconversationproject.com. You have nothing to lose and possibly lots to gain.

If you want to involve your family in the discussions (which is a very good idea), there is a family-friendly card game available. Each card in the game has interesting questions to think about, including many things you may not consider otherwise. It is not free, yet the reviews on it are very good and you may want to order a game for yourself. You can find out more at www.mygiftofgrace.com.

Regardless of how you do it, if you want to maintain the greatest control over your treatment when you are sick or dying, if you want to leave messages, hopes, and legacy wishes for your loved ones, and if you want to increase the family bond, find a way to have these vital discussions.

Many of us learned through hard experience how difficult it can be to make decisions when you're unsure. Some of us also learned a great deal about what we want (or don't want) by seeing what happened with our spouses. You may want things that are either similar or totally different than what your spouse had.

Talk to family about it. Make sure they know. Remember: The ultimate goal is to live as fully as possible until you take your last breath.

TBJA Handy List – Help Us Keep It Updated

Do you know whom to call when you need handiwork or repairs? Is it awkward just looking in the yellow pages? We serve each other with a “Handy List”.

Please: If a person or company does a good job for you, ***call and give us the name.*** Then when you need repairs or maintenance call first and get someone you can trust.

Joyful Again Retreat Weekends

March 8 – 9 Our Lady of the Angels, Lemont, IL
March 29-30 Holy Family Medical Center, Des Plaines, IL
June 28 & 29 St. Julie’s Parish, Tinley Pk., IL
July 26-27 Holy Family Parish, Inverness, IL
August 2 -3 Mary Queen of Heaven, Elmhurst, IL
Nov. 14-15 Our Lady of the Angels, Lemont, IL

Joyful Again retreat weekends are two-day programs for widowed people who want to resolve their grief and begin to live again. The weekend includes video presentations, time for reflection, and small group sharing with trained facilitators who have also been widowed. Participants talk about how they feel, listen to others, support one another, and heal.

Many members of our group have attended, and report that they were helped tremendously. It’s best to wait at least four months after the death, but you are encouraged to attend any time after that, even if it’s been years.

Saturday’s session runs 8:30 am to 8:00 p.m. You go home to sleep (unless overnights are available), and return on Sunday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. The cost is \$75, which includes 5 meals, refreshments, supplies, and anything else you need. Register: Charlotte Hrubes at 708-354-7211 or e-mail joyfulagain7211@gmail.com.

Can You Serve Lunch for the Retreats?

The Joyful Again retreats are always in real need of volunteers to serve lunch to participants. Don’t bring anything except a willingness to serve. Call Charlotte at 708-354-7211 if you can help. Remember two retreats a year are held right here at Holy Family, so it’s easy to volunteer for those.

Thoughts for the Day

*The old ways are dissolving and the new has not yet shown itself.
If this is true then we must engage with one another differently, as
explorers and discoverers.*

- Margaret J. Wheatley
Speaker, Writer, Consultant & President of The Berkana Institute

*Consult not your fears but your hopes and dreams.
Think not about your frustrations but about your unfulfilled
potential.*

*Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in,
but with what is still possible for you to do.*

- Pope John XXIII