



Flashes of Inspiration

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A Newsletter for Inspiration Hospice Volunteers

July 2010

Smile, it's Contagious!

Have you ever woken up in a great mood and gone about your daily activities, only to be confronted with an unhappy checker at the grocery store or teller at the bank? Do you find yourself deflated after these encounters? It is as if they suck the happiness right out of you and put you in a bad mood, bringing you down to their level. I have found it helpful to simply smile. A friend of mine once said, *"Be kinder than necessary, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle."* Often giving others a simple smile or a kind word could be all they need to help them through their day. A smiling person brings happiness with them. We don't know what obstacles others may have in their lives or what trials they may be facing. By simply smiling at them we can show that we care.

Studies have shown that smiling releases endorphins, natural pain killers, and serotonin. Together these three make us feel good. Smiling is a natural drug. Smiling can also trick the body into changing your mood.

We can also share a smile when dealing with our patients. We can't possibly imagine what our patients are feeling at this point in their lives, but by offering a warm smile we can brighten their day in some small way.

Smiling is contagious, spread it around! May you always have love to share, health to spare and friends who make you smile.

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Rachel Greymountain

Compiled by Brittany Horsley

Describe your type of volunteer assignment(s): I go and visit my

patient giving his daughter time to go out and run some errands. We mostly watch sports on television mainly golf and baseball. I am learning quite a bit about these sports by watching them. I am there for companionship and care giver relief.

Personal background (where you grew up, etc.):

I was basically raised in Utah. I have lived in the same house for about 21 years. I was taught to respect others especially my elders. I have always been an easy going person. I have a lot of my Grandma's personality; she and I were very close. I have always had an open heart and mind and I do not judge people by looks alone. I like to listen to what people have to say about many subjects. Once I have heard their views, I can make a decision on whether to care about this person or not. I am currently enrolled at Salt Lake Community College for general education right now. As soon as I finish up my general education I plan on going into International Law and Politics. I figured this career will give me the chance to visit other places and hopefully meet the people who live there. It would be a great experience.



Why I decided to be a volunteer: I heard about a co-worker's experiences here at Inspiration. I also took care of my Grandma when she needed hospice. My mom told me that she was so grateful to have me there to take the night shift for her. I really enjoyed spending time with my Grandma even when she was getting closer to the end.

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Meet the Staff:

Hilarie Blackburn Administrative Assistant

Compiled by Brittany Horsley

Describe your role: : A little bit of everything! I cover the receptionist area, phone transfers, accounts payables, data entry, payroll, and anything else I can do to help out in the office.



Personal background: I grew up in Taylorsville, UT but spent a year traveling the U.S with my family. I graduated from Taylorsville High School and am currently attending Salt Lake Community College.

One thing I love about my job: It's such a positive atmosphere. I can do my work with a big smile on my face.

Best things about working for Inspiration: I love all of the people I work with. Everyone is so willing to help each other; it makes coming to work something to look forward to.

Best advice I've ever been given: My great-grandma always told us, "If you don't have time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over?!?" I've tried to live by that.

People who have influenced my life: My parents and my husband have been the biggest influence on me. My mom accomplishes everything she does with style and my dad is a solid rock I know I can always lean on. My husband has been my biggest fan and support know matter what I attempt to do.

Favorite place in the world: Paris, France. Though I've never been there I imagine it being somewhere where there is endless romance, great food, and wonders to see.

Favorite Song: Probably a tie between Bonnie Tyler's *I Need a Hero* and Moulin Rouge's *Come What May*

Favorite Movie: The A&E version of *Pride & Prejudice*. (Yes, the 6 hour version.)

Favorite Food: American Chinese Food. YUM!

What talent do you wish you had been born with: The ability to understand what others are thinking and feeling.♥

Our Newest Volunteers



Back row, left to right: Gene, Kim, Launnee, Laura, Marianne, Terri, Silvia, Shandi, Chris, Chris
Front row, left to right: Catherine, Sariah, Neysi, Shiwani, Joshua, Jean, Brandey
Not pictured: Brittney, Nicole

I have also always enjoyed talking or listening to people talk about their experiences in life. It's one of the many ways I expand my knowledge. It also makes me feel good to see the joy in someone's eyes as they tell a story to someone who actually listens to them. I know sometimes people forget about others especially when they get past a certain age. The younger generations need to know that we can gain knowledge and insight just by listening to our elders and not just family but strangers as well.

One thing I love about volunteering: Knowing that I am helping someone out who is already doing so much for someone else. Also gaining knowledge through listening to what others have to say.

Best things about volunteering with Inspiration: Knowing that Inspiration Hospice ensures every patient is receiving the best possible care. Every patient is treated as a person and not just a name in a file or an ailment that needs to be treated. Everyone who works and volunteers at Inspiration is very friendly and believes that you should treat every human being with the same respect you would like to receive.

Best advice I've ever been given: "Always look on the bright side of life." – Eric Idle in *Monty Python's the Life of Brian*

People who have influenced my life: My family has had the most influence in my life. My family gave me the values I have now, and has encouraged me to follow the path I have chosen. I am also influenced by people who are trying to make a positive change in the world and who are willing to suffer the consequences of their actions. Whether it is criticism or death, they are out there trying to make a difference in their communities or even countries. They lead by example, and hopefully others are taking notice and will join in the fight for equality and peace in the world.

Favorite place in the world: Anywhere with the people I care about most is my favorite place to be.

Favorite song: I have many favorites. I can give you the first few songs that come to mind. "Imagine" – John Lennon, "Crazy" – Patsy Cline, "The Air That I Breathe" – All That Remains, "I'm Broken" – Pantera, "Empty Walls" – Serj Tankian, "Separate Ways (Worlds Apart)" – Journey, "Holiday in Cambodia" – Dead Kennedys; the list goes on. These are just a few of the songs that

came to mind while I was thinking about favorite songs.

Favorite movie: I also have many favorite movies. I own a vast collection of movies so I will list some of my favorite ones: *American History X*, *Fight Club*, *Finding Neverland*, *300*, *Secondhand Lions*, *Doom*, *Grumpy Old Men*, *Out To Sea*, *3:10 To Yuma* (2008), *Holiday Inn*, and *To Kill A Mockingbird* just to name a few.

Favorite food: My mom's home-made chili and Fry bread would have to be my favorite. Best meal ever! ♥

BRITTANY'S CORNER

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Upcoming Volunteer Training: Upcoming Volunteer Training will be held in our Murray office on AUGUST 9, 11, 16 AND 18 FROM 5 TO 9 IN THE EVENINGS. Please share these dates with your family and friends who may be interested in having amazing volunteer experiences.

Reminder: We have a large library of VHS films which are available for patient and volunteer use. Please feel free to stop in the Murray office anytime to pick one up to share with your patients.

Afghans and slippers: Volunteers have generously donated afghans and slippers for our patients. If you feel your patient would benefit from these they can be picked up at our Murray office.

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-SARAH BAN BREATHNACH.

ABC's of Inspired Volunteers

By Lorelee Kurzius

July 2010

M is for Mercy:

My parents attended a funeral recently and one by one, the children of the deceased got up and talked about what a terrible father this man had been. My parents were dismayed. When they opened the floor for others to speak, my Dad took the opportunity. I believe he saved the day by offering a touch of mercy. He could not deny the many faults of the deceased, but he could get up and remind everyone of some of his good traits and share a fun, heartwarming story or two.



What is Mercy? It is compassionate treatment, the act of sparing, relief from distress or the giving of grace to those that seemingly don't deserve it. To be merciful is to have a disposition that is kind and forgiving.

I believe that at the end of life, everyone, no matter their belief system, desires mercy. Some desire it from their higher power, others from loved ones, and some from both. This is why chaplains are such an integral part of the hospice program. They are trained to help people of any or no religion find this peace. If you have a patient or their family member that is struggling, let the hospice team know so that they can respond.

In our work as volunteers, and in our lives, we will meet many people working through many things as they face either their own mortality or that of a family member. Most people have some relationship or other that could use some repair and reconciliation. Once again, helping a patient record their life story is very therapeutic in helping them examine the past, celebrate the good and to also identify old hurts and let them go or fix them before it is too late. It is sad to see a patient who is physically ready to pass, but mentally holds on in an agitated state because of unfinished business. It is important that issues are faced and dealt with while communication is still possible if a peaceful passing is to occur.

When I do 11th Hour shifts and a lone family member slips into the room in the middle of the night, it is inevitably the

self-professed black sheep of the family. You may find yourself being a listening ear as these people seek mercy from the one about to pass.

Like my Dad, we may find ourselves helping children make sense of a parent that was neglectful or even abusive. The way I see it, we each have an emotional inheritance. Some of it is good. Some of it is bad. For some people, their childhoods may have been so rough that it would appear that they inherited only the bad. We can help them find a few good things though, a few gems that they can keep while letting the rest go. This often allows them to forgive and move on and even to celebrate certain parts of the life of the one who wasn't the perfect parent.

A few years back, I found a scripture that really hit home for me. I recorded it thinking that it was what I want read at my funeral and later, I put it into a poem so that I could share it with those who may not be open to scripture:

Condemn me not for my imperfections,

But be thankful and let it remind,

That you see clearer than I ever did,

So each generation becomes more refined.

Hopefully, we can help a struggling person see that instead of anger toward a less-than-ideal parent, they can be grateful that they were blessed to be more wise, then search for the good things they learned from that parent and hold tight to those while throwing away the negative.

President Abraham Lincoln said, "I have always found that mercy bears richer fruits than strict justice."

This is true for the one receiving mercy, but even more so for the one extending it. Forgiveness sets the *forgiver* free.

Hospice is about so much more than caring for the physical needs of the dying. It's about helping them along this whole physical, psychological and spiritual journey so that they can receive and extend the mercy they need in order to make a peaceful transition. That's Inspiration! ♥

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