



Amanda, working away (probably @ Heart Soundings!).

Act as if what you do makes a difference.

It does.

~William James

Understanding BHV and all YOU Do

Being a Brave Heart Volunteer is so important; there are so many isolated individuals bursting with a lifetime worth of knowledge—not to mention hilarious tales from their past that I am sure they would love to share. Many elderly individuals here in Sitka, especially at the Pioneers Home, do not have close family right here in town; they would benefit enormously from a visitor's smiling face and a great pair of listening ears. Volunteers (like you!) have made Brave Heart Volunteers (BHV) what it is today: You are the link to BHV's success and will only grow as more and more community members join our ranks. BHV has three types of volunteers: 1. The General Volunteer, 2. The End of Life Volunteer, and 3. The Event Volunteer. Let me break this down for you:

Key Terms:

Caregiver: the main person(s) taking care of an individual who is of old age, suffering from a chronic illness, or at end of life.

Care-Receiver: an individual receiving BHV companionship, respite, or end of life services—a volunteer visitor, respite, assistance with errands, etc.

End of Life: a care-receiver/individual who is actively dying.

1. **The General Volunteer (GV)**: someone who is interested in reaching out to isolated community members and assist in making a difference in somebody's life. A GV carries out companionship visiting and respite care (for primary caregivers)—who would otherwise have limited contact to the community due to their lack in ability to drive, walk on their own, etc. A GV provides (on average) an hour or two per week, volunteering with at least one care-receiver.

To qualify, a GV has been through our General Volunteer Training (either in a group setting or independently with a BHV staff member); the training is described below.

2. **The End of Life Volunteer (EOLV):** someone who provides support to family caregivers, health care professionals, and BHV care-receivers (CR) when they are at end of life. An EOLV offers comfort and a helping hand to the family, health care professionals and most importantly, the CR assuring security as the individual passes away.

An EOLV usually (but not always) visits a CR('s) on a weekly basis, but is a part of a chain of calls made when an end of life situation arises. Of course, you only are to help if your schedule allows, but a certain amount of flexibility would be best.

To qualify, an EOLV MUST complete BHV's yearly End of Life Training. Becoming an EOLV is not required after completion of the General Volunteer Training, but is an essential part to BHV's mission and vision in providing the support and care needed in our community.

3. **The Event Volunteer:** someone who supports BHV's mission and vision, but is not able to provide hours per week visiting a CR. They are called upon for special projects and to help at our numerous fundraisers and events throughout the year.

No special training is required, however it is suggested you attend a GV Training as to become familiar with BHV, our programs, and services provided.

General Volunteer Training: Offered as needed throughout the year (an independent option is available). This training provides an insight into the presence of BHV in our community. Communication is a huge part of this training. A volunteer panel is provided to share their experiences as a volunteer as well as their struggles, concerns and how they got past these;

they also are available for questioning. The GV Training prepares an individual for visiting someone who is isolated, without family, in need of companionship, or families who are in need of respite. After attending the training, you will be through an interview process (to find out your strengths, your personal concerns, your interests (in BHV and hobbies), as well as your expectations from BHV staff. Following this, you will be matched with a care-receiver and expected to visit your said person as is set up.

End of Life Training: An extensive 16 hour training, required to volunteer with any CR that is at end of life. The curriculum is based on materials from the Hospice of the Suncoast in Florida—the largest hospice care center in the United States—modified to fit the needs of Sitka. Once a year, approximately 30 *local professionals* donate their time sharing personal stories and their expertise on end of life. Networks of religious individuals also compile our *Spirituality Panel*, sharing their different belief systems and outlooks on death and dying. A *Volunteer Panel*, made up of BH EOL Volunteers share the personal experiences they've had with BHV care-receivers actively dying. They are available for questioning from the EOL trainees.

Overall, the EOL training enhances your ability to comfort someone and end of life while allowing you to confront your own ideas about death and dying. The training focuses on preparing a General BH Volunteer for a more intense experience and allows for Sitka to have a network of Health care options to create a Hospice Care network for those who need help with a loved one at end of life.

****If you have any more questions about roles of volunteers and what kind of services are provided, please don't hesitate to ask—call or email!**

ATTENTION—THIS JUST IN!

As of March 5th Brave Heart Volunteers has received \$3950.00 in donations with Pick.Click.Give for 2012. Thank you so much for all of those who have donated, your support means so much to us. We have until *March 31st* to reach our goal of \$5000.00 for 2012's **Pick.Click.Give**. We are so close. If you haven't done so, please consider us when filing your 2012 PFD, **Pick.Click.Give** is a great way to donate to a great cause.

Pick.Click.Give

In BHV News:

END OF LIFE TRAINING

1. **It's here!** Saturday, March 10 @ 9am, BHV's 2012 End of Life Training begins. Space is still available for anyone interested in learning more about End of Life; caregivers and health care professionals are encouraged to join. Please call BHV for more information (747-4600).

C:ARE LUNCHEON

2. Our next C:ARE Luncheon will be Wednesday, March 21st @ NOON in the Pioneer Home Manager's House. This meeting will be the **Community Luncheon**; those who attend will have the opportunity to *vote on topics* for the year to come. If you would like to share your ideas on topics for next year's meetings, but are unable to attend, please give us a call and we will take your thoughts into consideration. 747-4600

HAPPY BIRTHDAY BHV!

3. Brave Heart Volunteers will be celebrating their 11th year of services to Sitka this April. Join us **April 13 for a Birthday Extravaganza** to welcome the beginning of another great year! It's going to be a day of fun activities, mark your calendars—keep your eyes and ears open as we reveal more about the big day in weeks to come.

ACTIVE @ ANY AGE

4. To stay healthy, you have to keep moving! This is a lesson that is never too late to learn and never too late to practice.

Join the Active @ Any Age class at Hames on Monday and Wednesday mornings, at 10:00am. The majority of our time is spent walking together, finishing with some strengthening exercises and stretching.

If you would like more information, please contact Amanda at BHV (747-4600).

Up Your Donation:

1. **SPREAD THE WORD! FUNDRAISE FOR BHV WHILE SHOPPING FOR LOVED ONES FOR THE HOLIDAYS OR ANY OCCASION!**

GoodSearch.com, an incredible search engine that donates money to a cause of your choice every time you hit the search button, absolutely no cost to you! Specify **BHV as your charity** of choice and search away!

GoodShop.com (a sister site to GoodSearch) provides coupons from Amazon, health food stores, and just about anywhere! A donation is made to BHV (your cause of choice) when you purchase items from Amazon through GoodShop!

Using GoodSearch/GoodShop is simple and allows you to dedicate money to BHV in support for our cause in this community. The more you use it, the more money will be donated ensuring our continued presence in Sitka. Other organizations have made over \$30,000 annually from their supporters regularly using GoodSearch; imagine how many more people could benefit from our services.

www.GoodSearch.com or www.GoodShop.com

BHV's Caregiver Tip of the Week: *Silence is Harmful*

Depression is a common and dangerous occurrence among past and present caregivers—especially women, and more often after the death of a spouse who had suffered from Alzheimer's or some form of dementia. Even the most capable of people can be affected by depression; the pressure put on a caregiver emotionally, physically, and mentally—is at times unbearable leaving one feeling angry, anxious, sad, isolated, and exhausted—followed with guilt for having felt this way (the cycle just keeps turning).

Depression is most commonly viewed as a sign of weakness when in fact it is your body's way of telling you something is

seriously wrong and is not to be ignored. Depression affects everyone differently; below are a list of symptoms that if experienced for more than two consecutive weeks, might suggest you are suffering from depression:

1. A change in eating habits, resulting in weight gain or loss
2. A change in sleeping patterns (too much, not enough)
3. Feeling tired all the time
4. The loss of interest in people and/or activities that you once enjoyed
5. Becoming easily agitated or angered
6. Feeling that nothing you do is good enough
7. Thoughts of death or suicide, or attempting suicide
8. Ongoing physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders, and chronic pain.

Recognition of these symptoms early on will decrease the chance of reaching severe depression over time. The National Institute of Mental Health suggests the following to help recovery of depression:

1. Set realistic goals in light of depression and assume reasonable amount of responsibility.
2. Break large tasks into small ones, set some priorities and do what you can as you can.
3. Try to be with other people and to confide in someone; it is usually better than being alone and secretive.
4. Participate in activities that may make you feel better, such as mild exercise (Yay! Endorphins!), going to a movie or sports game, or attending a religious, social or community event. (Sitka has LOTS of these, and I bet you can always find a date.)

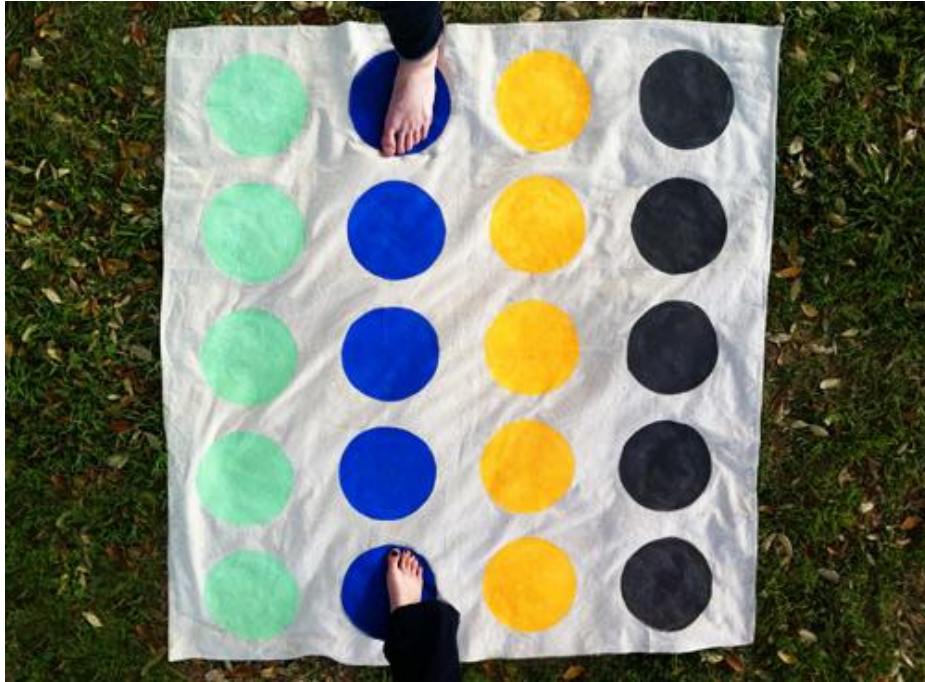
5. Expect your mood to improve gradually, not immediately. Feeling better takes time.
6. It is advisable to postpone important decisions until the depression has lifted. Before deciding to make a significant transition—change jobs, get married or divorced—discuss it with others who know you well and have a more objective view of your situation.
7. People rarely “snap out” of depression, but they can feel a little better day by day.
8. Remember, positive thinking will replace the negative thinking that is part of the depression. The negative thinking will be reduced as your depression responds to treatment.

MOST IMPORTANTLY: Let your family and friends **HELP YOU!** Most of us have a network of people close to us, that care about us, and can tell if something is not right—let them in and let them help you help yourself.

Brave Heart Volunteers provides services caregivers can utilize to (hopefully) curve away from the onset of depression. BHV offers companionship and respite visiting as well as end of life care—call us with any concerns, questions you may have and let us know how we can help you—we are here for you. Please, use our assistance so that you stay healthy and prepared for all that you have to take on.

If you are interested in learning more about this topic, please check out www.caregiver.org and click on “Caregiving Info & Advice” or feel free to come in and talk with us.

BHV's Green Tip of the Week: At Home Projects



The weather is getting nicer (ok, that might be an auto-reaction to the days getting longer . . .)—but spring is just around the corner! Create a handmade twister game, using paint (colors you like) and fabric or come up with your own fun (maybe waterproof) game. Sounds like a perfect weekend project to do with the kids and grandkids. =)

Designsponge.com

I hope everyone enjoys the happenings this weekend and has a fabulous time!

Amanda

Pick.Click.Give

Before cameras, people had their portraits painted. They were charged for these paintings based on how many limbs would 'make an appearance'—hence the saying, "It'll cost an arm and a leg."

-GRANDMA SAYS



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Brave Heart Volunteers

Mission

Transforming lives by providing seamless support and quality educational services to caregivers and individuals facing illness, isolation, end of life, or grief.

Vision

Weaving together values, tradition, and innovation to enrich each stage of the lifecycle, making Sitka an exceptional community where it is possible to face and transcend unthinkable loss.

If you would no longer like to receive Brave Heart Volunteers Heart

Soundings, please click [HERE](#) and reply “REMOVE”.