



RTS Connection

2020 Year in Review
Volume 35 • Number 3

a newsletter from

Resolve Through Sharing®

BEREAVEMENT EDUCATION SINCE 1981

2020 Recap

RTS Embraces Virtual Training Events

For nearly 40 years, Resolve Through Sharing has brought relationship- and evidence-based bereavement training to healthcare professionals around the world. This year, we began a new journey—out of necessity and innovation, we embraced a virtual training experience. After canceling multiple courses in the spring and working ceaselessly and passionately to adapt our in-person training content to a new platform, in August, RTS held its first virtual event—RTS Bereavement Training: Adult Death and RTS Coordinator Training. The event proved to be a success and was shortly followed by online offerings of RTS Bereavement Training: Neonatal and Pediatric Death and RTS Bereavement Training: Perinatal Death.

In addition to adapting core RTS trainings, the team also virtually offered commemorative events and a workshop for genetic counseling students.

In 2021, our program will continue delivering relationship-based training through a platform that offers new challenges but also gives new meaning to its standard. We welcome your companionship on this journey.

Training Schedule

Winter 2021 Virtual Training Events

RTS Bereavement Training: Perinatal Death and RTS Coordinator Training

January 11-13, 2021 Hosted by Gundersen Health System

February 8-10, 2021 Hosted in partnership with Hope After Loss

RTS Bereavement Training: Neonatal and Pediatric Death

January 25-26, 2021 Hosted by Gundersen Health System

Stay tuned in the months to come as we release more dates on our 2021 training schedule!

<https://www.gundersenhealth.org/resolve-through-sharing/bereavement-training/>

RTS Is Now on LinkedIn!

Connect with us on LinkedIn to learn about new trainings, exhibits, products, and publications as they are happening.

What can you expect when you attend RTS virtual training?

- Live presentation of bereavement topics, including theoretical frameworks of grief, communication with the bereaved, end-of-life care specific to patient populations and circumstances surrounding death, meaning-making and memory-making, and self-care strategies for care providers
- Large group discussion guided by RTS training specialists
- Small group interaction with fellow healthcare professionals
- Individual reflection activities
- Goal setting to ensure attendee training objectives are identified and met
- Delivery of training materials and resources to your home or office
- A guide to your RTS Zoom training experience

For your convenience, back issues of RTS Connection are archived.
Go to www.ResolveThroughSharing.org and click on Resources, RTS Connection Newsletter.

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BereavementServices/Resolve Through Sharing

RTS Lead Educator Marie Walter Retires

Marie began her career at Gundersen Health System in 1981. For 35 years, she served as a clinical nurse specialist in the obstetrics department, caring for women experiencing high-risk pregnancies. Marie expertly and compassionately helped her patients navigate uncertain and difficult moments, providing relationship, comfort, assurance, and expert care.

In 2016, Marie assumed the full-time role of lead educator for the Resolve Through Sharing (RTS) program. Over the course of 4 years, her prolific RTS

tenure included the review, update, development, implementation, and delivery of numerous courses, practices, presentations, and publications. In 2018, Marie received the GHS Nurse Excellence Award in Education for her profound contributions to bereavement education in our community and across the nation.

Gundersen Health System and Resolve Through Sharing thank Marie Walter for her years of dedicated service!



Pictured is former RTS Lead Educator Marie Walter and RTS Director Emerita Dr. Rana Limbo.



Pictured is RTS Director Mary Beth Hensel, former RTS Lead Educator Marie Walter, and RTS Nursing Systems Specialist Seth Barna.

Self-Care in the Time of COVID-19

These are not ordinary times. We in healthcare are being pushed to our limits, both individually and organizationally. Any recommendation for self-care could feel like just one more demand being placed upon us to carve out time that we don't have, to do some cliché activity that is somehow supposed to balance the state of crisis in which we are being called to work.

I asked my friend Sharon, a chaplain who went to New Orleans to help out after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, if she could think of any kind of self-care that wouldn't be a burden or ridiculously trivial in the face of such suffering and death. I wasn't expecting Sharon's reply: "Find a place of rest in the middle of things." This is one of five invitations extended by Frank Ostaseski, a pioneer in the field of contemplative end-of-life care. Ostaseski points to the calm, equanimity, and peace that contemplative traditions find at the heart of experience. This is the rest of which he speaks.

Sharon pointed to a source of rest for her: noticing simple moments. Like when someone smiles and looks you in the eyes, transmitting welcome. Or the moment you glance out the window and see two eagles gliding on currents. Or when a baby suddenly sees you and lights up as if they had been waiting just for you. Or when your coworker notices how stressed you are and places a steadying arm on your shoulder. Ordinary moments

are easy to miss as we feel pushed to rush here, rush there, digging deeper into our reserves. But if we set our intention to notice such moments, they deposit points of rest into our frenzied day. And you could, if you wanted to, pause before going to sleep to bring those moments to mind once more.

It occurs to me as I write that we might find ourselves extending moments of rest to others—through our crinkly eye-smile, a kind word, a knowing glance, sharing the eagles with the other person in the room.

This is not a panacea. It's not PPE against burnout. A simple moment noticed can bring you into the present, the place of rest. And a string of random moments, noticed and acknowledged, disrupts the momentum of the crisis; even if the disruption is only for a moment, it helps.

*Written by RTS
Bereavement Coordinator
Ann Tyndall, MDiv,
BCC, CPLC*



RTS Creates Self-Care Pro-Pack for Healthcare Professionals

While practicing self-care is helpful for the normal ups and downs of life it becomes especially important during extreme, repeated, and/or prolonged exposure to trauma (e.g., supporting a family whose baby died, working in an ICU or for an ambulance service, providing care through the course of a pandemic). In these situations and during these times, additional measures to achieve a balanced physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual state may be required.

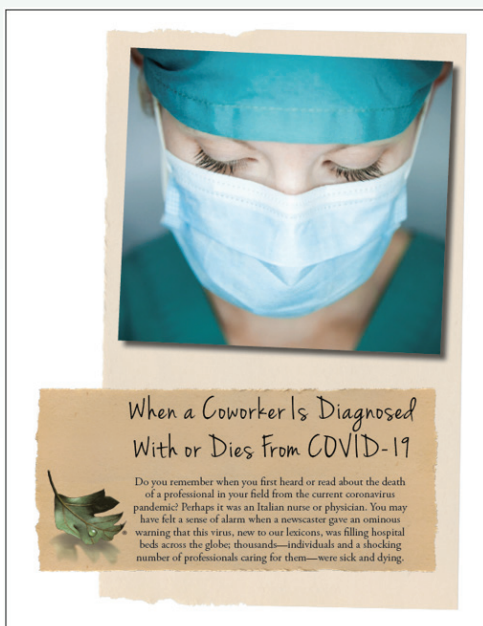
Resolve Through Sharing has created a pro-pack that includes “**A Guide to Self-Care: Practices for Professionals Who Support Those Grieving**” (informational booklet) and “**As I Support Those Who Grieve: Thoughts and Reflections**” (companion journal). The guide explores a deep, rich perspective on self-care through evidence-based principles and practices. Topics include daily routines, mindfulness, self-compassion, personal sharing, and ritual. The companion journal provides prompts for thoughtful reflection and a safe place where the writer can unpack struggles and find meaning.

Visit the online store.

<https://resolvethroughsharing.dcopy.net/product/RTS-3000>



RTS Develops Free COVID-19 Resources for Healthcare Professionals



As frontline workers across the globe strive selflessly to keep communities safe amidst the coronavirus crisis, it is important that they are cared for as well. To support healthcare professionals during this unprecedented time, RTS developed COVID-19-specific resources. Resolve Through Sharing offers the following two new products—free of charge.

When a Coworker Is Diagnosed With or Dies From COVID-19

A central theme in this brochure discusses how our professional proximity to a diagnosed or deceased colleague triggers varying responses. Depending on how closely we worked with or how well we knew the team member, we may experience a range of emotions from anxiety to deep sorrow. It is even possible to collectively grieve with those we've never met. Additional topics include exploring grief, the power of meaning-making during moments, ritual, and emotions such as fear, courage, and vulnerability.

Download this resource for free.

<https://www.gundersenhealth.org/resolve-through-sharing/resources/>

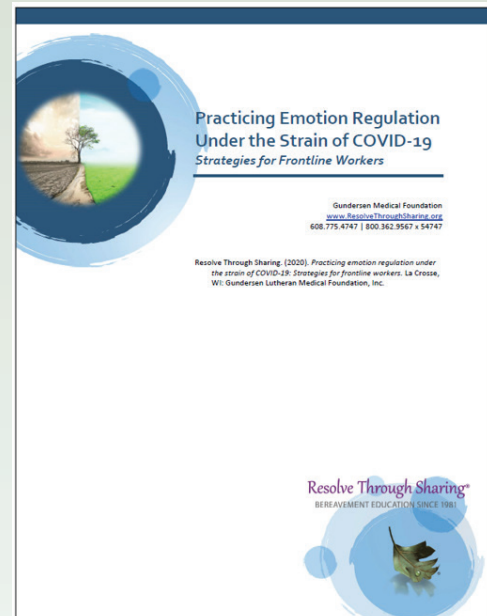
Continued on p. 5

Free COVID-19 Resources continued from p. 4

Practicing Emotion Regulation Under the Strain of COVID-19: Strategies for Frontline Workers

For those who face the healthcare realities of COVID-19 on a daily basis, this brochure offers suggestions to minimize negative emotions that can hurt one's well-being. Strategies include focusing on relationship, practicing letting go, considering taking control, and incorporating ritual.

<https://www.gundersenhealth.org/resolve-through-sharing/resources/>



What to Expect in 2021

RTS 40th Anniversary Celebration

Join us in 2021 for our 40th Anniversary! Stay tuned for more information in the upcoming months!

RTS is a sponsor of the 22nd International Perinatal Bereavement Conference

The conference will be held May 12-15, 2021 at The Drake Hotel in Chicago, IL. This year's theme is Uniting Relational Aspects of Perinatal Bereavement Care and Clinical Research. To register, visit the Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance website.

<https://www.plida.org/ipbc-2021>

A Closing Note From RTS

Dear RTS professionals,

Validation, hope, courage, gratitude. These four words come to mind as we try to wrap our heads around what this year has relentlessly demanded of us on the job and in our homes. We've been asked more of than we may have imagined was ever possible to sustain. We've been touched by countless stories across our nation demonstrating the resolve and resiliency of committed professionals like yourselves. We've sobbed and felt sorrow so deep in our bones that no measure of comfort seemed sufficient. And we've been inspired and encouraged by unwavering determination

Our RTS team has not battled the pandemic directly on the front lines as so many of you have. Still, the world as we knew it will never return. We took risks on a timetable this year that under normal circumstances would have been considered foolhardy. Our team met every challenge with hope and courage, and with a remarkable measure of grace. What we produced, we're certain, will meet the needs of our RTS colleagues—all of you—far better than we could have ever envisioned. Those of you who have taken the new virtual journey with us have attested to this time and again.

In closing, we want to thank you all for the work you do. We say this often to our RTS audience, but we mean it today more than ever. We recognize the sacrifices you make and the frightening, overwhelming conditions you continuously meet head on. We look to the end when science and the will to overcome will prevail. We carry you daily in our hearts and marvel at your courageous determination. We bow our heads and hearts in gratitude for your expertise, skill, and service. As we look to 2021, the 40th anniversary year of Resolve Through Sharing, we pledge to continue supporting your work with relationship- and evidence-based training and education for years to come.

Your friends in bereavement care,

Mary Beth Hensel, MBA
Director, Resolve Through Sharing

Rana Limbo, PhD, RN, CPLC, FAAN
Director Emerita, Resolve Through Sharing