

“What a Long, Strange Year It’s Been,” with apologies to the Grateful Dead!

by Lisa Staudinger

Dear Friends,

It has been a long, strange year, weighing on us all in so many ways and affecting our sense of well-being. I’ve noticed my short-term memory is unusually lousy (even for me!) and I just want to hunker down instead of running errands. Little things get to me more than normal. I hear from others that they’re experiencing the same types of little “malfunctions.”

I wonder how many of you are also feeling stressed out these days? Probably everyone! **You are not alone!**¹ And it’s actually not a malfunction, but a normal reaction to an abnormal situation—and a very protracted one, at that. Your brain is in survival mode, doing its job to keep you alive.

I’ve been researching ways to han-

“... remember that you’re more resilient than you think. You will get through this with your wisdom from experience and people who love you to help you through.”

dle this “pandemic-induced anxiety/stress,” constructively, and here’s what I’ve learned:

1. **Don’t Fall In(ward): Reaching out**² is the number one stress reliever. But it can be really hard to call someone and

say “I’m stressed out. Help!” A way to make it easier is to check in with the other person and ask how they’re doing. However you contact them, the person you contact will really be glad you did, I promise.

2. **Get Out!** It’s important to stay active, especially outdoors. Physical activity can not only pleasantly distract us, but also discharge some of that built-up anxious energy.

3. **Laugh it up!** Laughter is excellent for us. It oxygenates us, discharges built-up tension, changes our blood chemistry, and exercises our core! To beat a blue mood, try a favorite comedian on YouTube or a funny show on TV, or even look up jokes online.

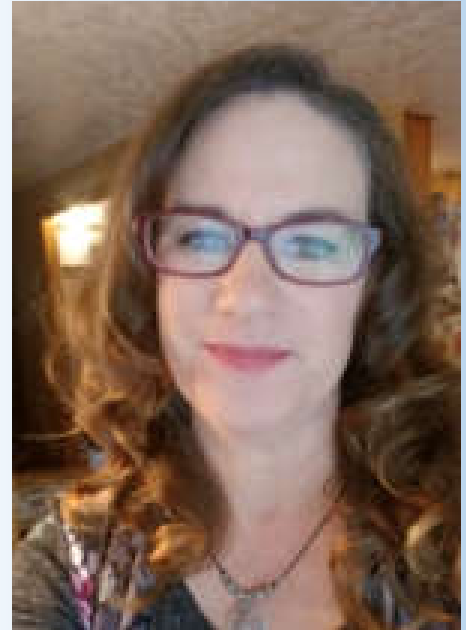
Some other things to try are:

- **Bin it!**¹ Write down your worry list during the day, and especially before sleeping.

- **Keep a gratitude list**, too—it reminds us of what’s right when we’re consumed with what’s wrong. Include your accomplishments so you don’t worry too much about what you’re not getting to. You’re not a superhero, you’re a human being! And you *are* enough.

- Make a list of things that bring you joy. Taking a walk. Photography. Painting. Singing. Cooking something

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Spring Fund Drive Outcome

Our Spring Fund Drive brought in \$10,416.52! On behalf of the Board, staff, guests (future and present), and graduates of Family Promise of Cowlitz County, thank you for your support of our work to help families in crisis back onto their feet.

Did you miss the Spring Fund Drive? It's never too late to support Family Promise!

If you'd still like to make a gift to help families experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, you can go to our website and donate anytime. You can also choose whether to become a sustaining donor by selecting "Monthly" where the "Give One Time" text appears, and you can leave us a note or comment as well (for example, in honor of or in memory of someone, etc.). When you support these special fundraisers—especially in addition to your regular giving—you make the work of Family Promise possible.

Linda Boswell	John Gross	Vernon Pickett
Diane Cantwell	Gail Groth	Eugene Pistorese
Emmanuel	H. Rex Hansen	Carl Reisig
Lutheran Church	Myrna Hustoft	George Robertson
Bill Coonan	Allison Hutchinson	Steve and Patty Sheridan
Karen Cooper	Janet Jacobs	dan
Colleen D Walker	James Keller	Claudia Sobczuk
Evalyn Dietz	Ronald Kimmel	Lisa Staudinger
Ilene Faling	Thomas Kirwan	Anik St-Martin
Dan Frei	Marc Melcher	Andrew Sufak
Connie Gray	Irene Olason	Dennis Wallace

(continued from page 1)

- Make a list of **things that bring you joy**. Taking a walk. Photography. Painting. Singing. Cooking something special. Dancing. Anything that lifts your heart! Then try one when you're in a knot.
- **Create a sense of normalcy** to the extent you can. One of the American survivors of the 1979 Iranian Revolution kidnapping (who was in solitary confinement under brutal conditions for 4.5 years) credited his mental survival to developing a daily routine. A routine "creates" normal, and if we can't be in our usual "normal," we have to create a new one.
- **Acts of service**—which many of you practice with Family Promise and other organizations—can be very healing. It brings you in touch with others, reminds you that you're not alone, and gets you out of your head.

All that said, it's important to know when things are past the point of a cupcake and a comedy helping. Sometimes things just get too heavy to bear alone. If it seems like your stress is getting destructive in some way, your clergy, online counseling, or hotlines can help. One hotline is 800-273-8255 (TALK).

Finally, remember that you're more resilient than you think. You will get through this with your wisdom from experience and people who love you to help you through.

We so look forward to returning to rotation so we can be in each other's company again! And we are working toward that. Meanwhile, we want you to know we pray for you. We carry you in our hearts. And we are so grateful for all you do to make our guests feel welcome, safe, and hopeful. (Watch for our Return to Rotation survey coming soon!) If you ever want to just give us a jingle and chat, or maybe even meet for coffee somewhere, please don't hesitate! We love seeing you—and maybe we need a lift, too!

Most of all, thank you for all that you are. We love and admire you. You are the power behind Family Promise and you make a beautiful difference.

Sources for this article:

[1/ www.uhealth.org/today/dealing-with-pandemic-stress-you-are-not-alone/](http://www.uhealth.org/today/dealing-with-pandemic-stress-you-are-not-alone/)



[2/ www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/mind-matters-menninger/202003/5-ways-deal-pandemic-induced-stress](http://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/mind-matters-menninger/202003/5-ways-deal-pandemic-induced-stress)



Who's in the House?

by Sara Wallace

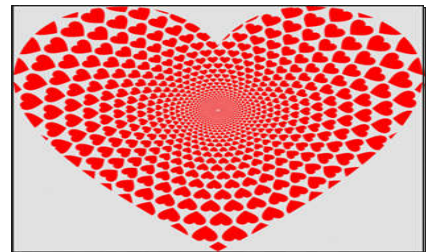
We currently have two guest families and one recent graduate family: Heather and Frank are here at the Day Center in the small guest room; Alyssa and Sarilia occupy the living room guest area; and Kaylee and Riley have graduated with their two-year-old, Anieya, and 10-month-old, Kysen! Riley is a roofer; Kaylee is looking forward to going back to school and is determined to have her social work degree by 2025. Anieya is a little firecracker who has opinions on everything and the conversational skills to convey them and Kysen is a mild-mannered sweetie who adores his older sister.

Congratulations to Kaylee & Riley and their kids on graduating into their own rental—and achieving that in just 28 days! As we do for all graduates, we will walk beside them for at least the next year as they continue working to build stability in their lives.

We expect to have a new family joining us later this week—stay tuned for more in the next edition!

Stabilization: Surrounding our Graduates with Love So They Can Thrive

by Lisa Staudinger



At the end of January, we learned that our beloved graduate Hilary had been extremely sick with Covid for two weeks already. And the end was not in sight.

Hilary is a single mom with three children at home, so avoiding hospitalization was supremely important—but things were not going well and we were all very worried.

We reached out to our partner congregations to ask for prayers, cards, and hot dinners for Hilary and the family, and they came through with such grace and love. As we provided a little advice, case management and a lot of wonderful hot dinners, Hilary finally turned the corner in late February. She is now back at work, despite having some aftereffects from Covid. Please continue your prayers for her. As for the rest of the family, they are doing well. Corbin graduates high school in June, Jeniah becomes a junior, and Wisdom, who came to us as a new one-year-old, is going to be 3 years old this summer! Like big brother

Corbin, Wisdom is going to be a TALL boy—he's already 3-foot-3! His latest favorite saying is when he tastes something he likes a lot: "That's bomb!"

I'm so grateful to all the congregations for their help with meals and to the people that sent cards and prayed.

— Hilary, FP graduate

During a recent check-in, Hilary wrote, "Thank you so much! It was super helpful. I couldn't have done it without you all. I'm so grateful to all the congregations for their help with meals and to the people that sent cards and prayed."

Stories like these demonstrate why Stabilization is so important. Our Shelter program helps families to their feet; our Stabilization program helps keep them there when things go wobbly. Your love and generosity toward our graduates helps them through difficult events so things don't snowball and threaten them with disaster. We are so grateful to all of you who prayed, cooked, delivered dinners, and sent cards, groceries and gift cards to Hilary and family during their time of need.

You are Family Promise. You are a blessing!



Prayer and donations are like oxygen and blood to us. A very special thanks to our very special supporters.



We operate almost entirely on your donations. We are not a “fee-for-service” organization and don’t have government funding for our programs. Your support makes everything possible for our guests and clients!

Business Donors

In the last year, these businesses and organizations have supported us and the community through their donations. Please support them and thank them for their support.

Cascadia

Community Foundation for SW WA

Davis & Associates, CPAs, PS

High Cascades Agency

Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of the NW Community

Giving Campaign

Kroger

Longview Century Club

Luggage of Love

Mike Burchett, Media Consultation

Minuteman Press

Network for Good

PEO Sisterhood Chapter IL

Performance Sheet Metal, Inc.

Redwood Toxicology, Inc

Sign Masters Awards

Financial Donors

These donors' gifts in March & April offer families facing homelessness the promise of home. Family Promise is the leading national nonprofit addressing family homelessness, providing homelessness prevention, emergency shelter, workforce development, education, financial capability, health and wellness, and so much more.

Jon Andrews

Jackie Keller

Patricia Baker

Longview Presbyterian

Karla Bean

Church

Mariya Kalinin Beldin

Donna MacKenzie

Daryl Berg

Pr. Dave Martin

Marjorie Berry

Rev. Vonda McFadden

Arthur Birkmeyer

Ron Naff

Frances Crosby

Network for Good

Barbara Davis

New Song Worship Center

East Hills Alliance Church

Northlake Church

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Eugene Pistorese

Bob Erickson

Doug Radke

Greg Filer

Renewal City Church

First Baptist Church

Karl Salzsieder

of Longview

Cheryl Scrichfield

Kris Forte

Autumn Sheridan

Dan Frei

Claudia Sobczuk

John Gross

Patricia Tracy

Brian Hamilton

Danielle Trimble

In-Kind Donors

By donating everyday items to Family Promise, these donors made a difference in the lives of families experiencing homelessness who are working hard to regain sustainable independence.

Boyd Burns

Erik & Mamrisa Gravrock

Jamie Craig

Leslie Hanson

Jennifer DesArmo

Rayna Hicks

Marlys Ericksen

Karen Mueller

Angela Erickson

Laura Powers

Bob & Kathy Erickson

Debra Shuren



enter and monitor. If interested, contact Jamie Craig at 360-703-3131.

Fundraising: *Approximately 6 hours per month; varies with activities.* Help plan and execute one or more of our four main fundraisers each year: two events (currently virtual) and two letter campaigns. We also have PR events to reach out to our volunteers and to the public.

Grant Preparation and Writing: *Occasional; time commitment varies.* We have examples of previous grants we've written, data about our organization and the local needs, and other information to support the drafting of grants. We also have (and need) editors for these applications.

Board Members: *Approximately 8-10 hours per month (one meeting, reading, tasks, and planning time).* The Board of Directors governs the Affiliate and sets vision and strategy. The Board meets each month, and its members have tasks and assignments outside of the meeting, such as reading and webinars, and interactions in the local and Family Promise National communities, and in some cases, membership on a committee (each committee has a Board liaison).

Finance Team: *Approximately 2 hours per month; quarterly meetings (more in early fall).* Under leadership of the Treasurer, help set Affiliate budget, approve special spending projects, review financial statements. Formulate financial strategy: consider financial aspects of Affiliate goals—what will cost be; where will money come from, etc.).

Graphic Designer: Create posters, display ads, and other graphic items freehand or using Canva, Photoshop, Paint, or any software you enjoy.

Open Positions (contact Day Center if interested)

Move-out crew members: *Approximately 2 hours per occasion.*

When a guest family graduates, we need **two people to help move** their household items to their new digs and **two people who can help clean up** at the Day Center.

Writers: *Approximately 2-6 hours per month*

Newsletter articles, press releases, website content, fundraising letters, virtual fundraising website content, postcards, etc.

Outreach: *Approximately 4-6 hours per month*

We need to reach out to the faith community, local government, civic organizations, and local businesses to publicize our mission and request specific support.

Office helpers: *Approximately 3-4 hours per shift (pick your own regular interval).* We have phone calls, visitors and deliveries at the Day Center, mailings to go out, and lots of data to

VOTE FOR A NAME FOR THIS NEWSLETTER!



Go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NameFPCnewsletter> and help us choose a name for our newsletter.

- The Journey
- The Companion
- The Haven
- Home Base
- Your Idea Here



Thank You, Boyd!

Very special thanks to **Boyd Burns** for providing storage space for Family Promise at his Pacific Door & Window building! We have had our excess beds, toys, linens and dividers, our holiday items, and the furniture people have held for us stored in many crevices of the Day Center, in other people's garages, and even in the middle of the worship space of a congregation that worships in Laurie Hall!

Finally, we're getting out of everyone's hair and the Day Center has room to breathe again. Thank you, Boyd, for allowing us to use the space until you can rent it commercially.

We are still seeking a permanent space about the size of a two-car garage. If you are aware of any space that size or larger that is affordable or whose owner might donate the space, please call us at the Day Center: 360-703-3131.

Financial Update

2021 Annual Budget: **\$167,976**

Average monthly contributions needed to reach budget: **\$13,998**

First quarter contributions: **\$22,673.15**

First quarter average monthly contributions: **\$7,557.72**

Thank you for your support of our work for families enduring homelessness. Their path home is paved by your kindness.

DONATE TODAY!



Our Awesome Partner Congregations

Abundant Life Church of the Nazarene

Bethany Lutheran Church

East Hills/The Grove Alliance Church

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Evangel Christian Fellowship

Exodus Christian Fellowship

First Christian Church of Longview

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

Grace Bible Fellowship

Immaculate Heart Roman Catholic Church

Kalama Ward of the Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Kelso First Baptist Church

Kelso United Methodist Presbyterian Church

Kelso Ward of the Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Lake Sacajawea Ward of the Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Longview Church of the Nazarene

Longview Presbyterian Church

Longview United Methodist Church

Mint Valley Ward of the Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

New Song Worship Center

Northlake Church

Renewal City Church

Rose Valley Friends Church

St. Paul Lutheran Church

St. Rose Roman Catholic Church

Trinity Lutheran Church



MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.” – Paul, 1 Cor 12:4-6

Family Promise is a complex operation, and our community is full of many types of talent. We need YOUR God-given gift to help us carry out our mission.

- Do you like to write? We would love for people to help us write articles for the newsletter!
- Are you a good proofreader or editor? Everyone likes a second pair of eyes on what they write before it gets published!
- Do you like to tinker and incite others to tinker too? We need a small group to help us maintain our facilities (minor repairs, arranging for major ones, helping us when we need to move stuff around, etc.). If you're interested, please contact the Day Center.



Cowlitz AmeriCorps Closing Doors

by Lisa Staudinger

Cowlitz AmeriCorps is closing its doors after 23 years serving Cowlitz County. Myriad AmeriCorps members have benefitted both their own educations and the nonprofits where they were assigned over the decades and the impact of this closure will be felt throughout the community. This organization will be sorely missed.

Our own Sara Wallace is an AmeriCorps member in her second term. We are so fortunate to have gotten Sara here; her talent has enriched our program immensely. We are working on figuring out how to keep her; a full-time direct-hired Case Manager was not in the budget for this year.



EXTRA! EXTRA!

Want to hear about something specific in this newsletter? Drop us a line — or a whole draft!

Email to:

Editor@FamilyPromiseofCowlitzCo.org
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At Your Service

Board of Directors

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Linda Davis	Treasurer
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Pr. Dave Martin	At-Large
Ron Naff	At-Large
Leticia Casarez	At-Large
Pam Torgerson	At-Large

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Lisa Staudinger	Executive Director
Sarah Wallace	Guest Support Assistant
Jamie Craig	Administrative Assistant

Email Newsletter Editor: [Steve Sheridan](#)
Print Newsletter Editor: [Richard Shuren](#)

Day Center Address

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Day Center Hours

8 a.m. — 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

Day Center Office Phone

360-703-3131

Visit our website at:

www.fpcowlitz.org (Cowlitz County)

www.familypromise.org (National Organization)

Or on Facebook at:

www.FaceBook.com/FamilyPromiseCowlitzCounty

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