



*Expanding life's possibilities.™*

## Team member spotlight: Pastoral Care Coordinator Nancy Burke

Throughout life, people have a deep need to feel valued, find meaning in their lives, and make rich connections with others. They turn to beliefs and ethical principles as a compass to navigate the ups and downs of life.

At White Horse Village, a variety of activities overlap this emotional and spiritual side of life—from physical wellness programs that promote a healthy mental state to community activities providing a forum to connect with others. One team member with a specific focus on spiritual and emotional wellness is Nancy Burke, the pastoral care coordinator at White Horse Village.



Nancy recognizes the important role religion plays in many people's lives, but emphasizes she's not a pastor and she works to support nonreligious people as well. She'll meet them where they're at on life's journey, addressing their own unique spirituality, such as family relationships, music, art, life's mission and purpose, experiences in nature, and religious faith too. She sees it as a way to care for the whole person, not just their physical health.

To do that, Nancy leads a number of support groups and workshops. For example, she put together a group to read and share from the book *The 12 Keys to Spiritual Vitality: Powerful Lessons on Living Agelessly*, covering topics like accepting your true self, making your feelings work for you, celebrating faith, and achieving balance in life.

An ongoing program is the Grief and Loss Support Group, which takes place each spring and fall for those who have lost a loved one. Participants talk about understanding the grief experience, dealing with change, self-care, navigating the holidays, and more.

"It's really valuable, because I think they get a lot out of sharing with each other," Nancy says. "They learn from each other's experiences and feel like they're not alone."

The Caregiver Support Group is another regular feature, offering a chance for people whose loved ones are suffering from dementia to share their experiences, what they've found helpful, and simply get a listening ear from others who are going through the same thing.

In early 2024, Nancy hopes to lead a group in what's called a life review workshop, writing important stories from their lives that focus on arenas like school, career, and family throughout the decades. It's a form of autobiography that sees life as "a tapestry, beautifully and uniquely woven."

Nancy has spent decades working with seniors and says she loves her vocation.

"I love the relationships that you establish with people, getting to know their life stories, and helping them bring peace to their lives in different circumstances."