



The Compassionate Friends Greater Omaha Chapter

11825 Dorcas Street Omaha, NE 68144-2948 website: www.tcfomaha.org
(402) 571-4011 email: tcfomaha@hotmail.com

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The Mission of the Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

Mar-Apr 2007

March 22 -- Hospice Foundation of America Teleconference on "Living with Grief: Before and After Death."

Co-sponsored by The Compassionate Friends.

HFA's 14th Annual National Bereavement Teleconference will focus on "Living With Grief: Before and After the Death." This educational program, moderated by Frank Sesno, Professor of Media and Public Affairs at The George Washington University and Special Correspondent with CNN, will be broadcast live via-satellite and webcast, **Thursday, March 22, from 12:30pm to 3:00pm.** This program will provide an educational forum in which a multidisciplinary panel of experts will explore the most current theoretical perspectives on loss and grief as experienced by persons throughout a life-limiting illness and by survivors after the death. The panel will focus on areas where understandings of grief have been challenged.

[Address Service Requested](#)

Call to register

Blair --- dsaville@unl.edu 402-426-9455 (Washington Co Extension)

Omaha --- jolson@alegent.org 402-572-2753 (Immanuel Medical Center)

More locations 1-800-854-3402

<http://www.hospicefoundation.org/teleconference/sitelisting.asp?stateID=NE>

Ongoing help is needed to send remembrance cards, make follow up calls to newly bereaved families, bring snacks or drinks to meetings, meeting setup and closing, mailings, answer voicemail. Please contact us if you would like to lend a hand for a month or two. 571-4011.

Forgive Until Forever

by Don Hackett, Hingham, MA

Reprinted from Bereaved Parents USA -St. Louis

Grieving is a fierce and overwhelming expression of love thrust upon us by a deep and hurtful loss. Grieving is an entanglement of feelings and ultimately, forgiveness must be an integral part of our grief and our healing. For what is love if forgiveness is silent within us?

We learn to forgive our children for dying, ourselves for not preventing it. We begin to forgive our God or the fate we see ruling our universe. We start to forgive others for abandoning us in their own bewilderment over the onslaught of emotions they sense in our words and behavior.

I believe we must be open to the balm of forgiveness, through its expression in our lives. Whether through thought, word, or deed, we find small ways to seek life once more. Deep within us, forgiveness is capable of treading the wasteland of our souls to help us feel again the love that has not died.

It begins release from the pain, not from the hurt of missing, but from lacking the fullness of the love we shared with our child. That love lives with the strength inside ourselves, and yet our beings are so entrapped in a whirling vortex of anger, despair, frustration, abandonment and depression that we often feel it only lightly.

Let us all heed the quiet message heard so softly in the maelstrom of the spirit. Forgive, forgive, and forgive until forever; let love enfold our anguish, helping us to grow and to give beyond this hour to a rich tomorrow.

PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS & ADULT SIBLINGS

MEETINGS

7:00 p.m. 1st Wednesday of the month

New Cassel Retirement Center

900 N. 90th Street —Auditorium Level 2

Additional parking & entrance in back

Wed, March 7—Guest speaker pending (psychiatrist)

Wed, April 4— Men & Women Grieve Differently

Wed., May 2—Memorabilia/Gardens/Memorials

Wed, June 6—Spirituality Panel (pending)

Wed, July 11—Meeting 1 week later due to holiday

July 20-22—National Conference, Oklahoma City

Wed, August 1—**Memorial Program-Butterfly Release**

LUNCH GROUP

Noon—3rd Tuesday of the month

Tues, Mar 20 Godfathers Buffet, 122 & Center

Tues, Apr 17 Godfathers Buffet, 122 & Center



National Office: The Compassionate Friends P.O.Box 3696 Oak Brook IL 60522-3696 (877) 969-0010 www.compassionatefriends.org

Nebraska Regional Coordinator: Pat Langford 402-933-6017

♥ Love Gifts ♥

Your love gifts help spread the message of hope and healing.

TCF is a 501c3 organization and funded only by donations.

Chapter expenses are printing, postage, library, voicemail, memorial programs.

- ♥ In memory of Jack Meyer by Darin & Rhonda Meyer. "We love you and miss you."
- ♥ In memory of Michele Audra Anderson by Jean & Dick Anderson. "We love you and miss you so much."
- ♥ In memory of David Joesting by Darlene Joesting. "Much love."
- ♥ In memory of Jackie Kline by Pearl Heydenreich. "I will always love you Jackie & you will always be in my heart. You are a very kind and loving daughter."
- ♥ In memory of Michael Andrew Epstein by Arnold & Helen Epstein. "Happy Birthday. We miss you very much."

Time is a wonderful gift. Thank you for sending remembrance cards:

Tammy O'Neill -November & December

Sandi Massie-January

Kelly Pelster-February



Compassionate Friends was selected as a 2006 Samaritan beneficiary by the Gleoma Arbor #731, Gleaner Life Insurance Company, and was presented a check at their awards reception. Thank you to the family of Aaron vonKnorring (1985-2004) for nominating Compassionate Friends. Three TCF members were on hand to accept the award and say a few words about the organization.



Thank You to our Candle Lighting Sponsors

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 Gleoma Arbor #731, Gleaner
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Thank you to the following businesses and professionals who have generously assisted us in our mission to offer hope

to bereaved families.

New Cassel Retirement Center
 Centering Corporation

Due to mailing and printing costs, you will no longer receive the newsletter if 2 years have passed since our last contact with you. You can be added back to the list at your request. If you would like to send a "Love Gift", list your child in "Our Children Remembered", or have an address change, please clip & mail to:

The Compassionate Friends , 11825 Dorcas Street, Omaha, NE 68144-2948

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Email _____

Child's Name _____ Your Relationship _____

Birth Date _____ Death Date _____ Telephone _____

Donation: () Love Gift of \$ _____ in Memory of _____

Message: _____

I GIVE MY PERMISSION TO PRINT BIRTH & DEATH DATES IN THE NEWSLETTER .

SIGNATURE REQUIRED _____

Does your employer have a matching gift program? _____ 2007

Submit poems, memories or love gifts for the May-June Newsletter by Apr 15

**Daren Michael Bashor,
Happy 19th Birthday on April 19, 2007.**

This would have been your "Golden Year". I wonder what you would be doing., where would you be, and what would your life be like? Your family has some very special memories of you.

Daren was our middle child.

He was Corey and Shinead's brother.

Daren always had a smile on his face and liked to tell knock-knock jokes. One of his favorites was: Knock-Knock. Who's there. Who who and he would say, What—Are you an owl? And then he would laugh. Daren loved to dance to music, especially Billy Joel and Rod Stewart.

Daren always liked the sad song from Eric Clapton, "Tears from Heaven".

He loved to play with cars and trucks.

He loved to go in the car with his Daddy to pick up Corey from pre-school. Daddy always teased him about the small bus. Daddy called it "the baby bus". Daddy would say "a baby is driving the bus" and Daren would say "a baby doesn't drive buses" and laugh.

Daren nicknamed his sister Shinead, "Nae-Nae" and some of her cousins still call her that.

Daren loved babies and had a funny laugh.

Daren & Corey always played outside in the backyard, with their scooter, big wheels, Tyke cars and liked digging for treasures with twigs.

Our Family loved to go to different parks.

Daren would always tell Corey "it's okay" when Corey was upset and he always made Corey feel better by putting his arm around him.

Shinead looks at the pictures of Corey & Daren and sees how they were best friends.

That is the same way with Corey & Shinead now.

Shinead still wishes she could remember you, as she was only 20 months old. But most of all, Daren loved Corey, and they were inseparable.

You will always be in our hearts, now and forever.

We love and miss you Daren (1988-1992)

Dad, Mom, Corey & Shinead



In Memory

*Not a day goes by we don't think of you.
Never a night goes by we don't hold you.
Never a season changes we don't love you.
As long as we live we will remember you*

By Mary Steighner, TCF Northeast Ohio

To All Parents ~ Author Unknown

I'll lend you for a little time, a child of mine, Christ said. For you to love while she lives and to morn for when she's dead.

It may be thirty or forty years, or only two or three, but will you, til I call her back, take care of her for me? She'll bring her charms to gladden you, but should her stay be brief, you'll have sweet memories of her as solace in your grief.

I cannot promise she will stay, since all from earth return, but there are lessons taught down there that I want this child to learn.

I've looked the wide world over, in search of teachers true, and from the throngs that crowd life's lane, I have chosen you.

Now will you give her all your love, nor think the labor vain—nor hate me when I come to take her back again?

I fancied that I heard them say, "Dear Lord, Thy will be done, for all the joy thy child shall bring, the risk of grief we'll run.

We'll shelter her with tenderness, we'll love her while we may, and for the happiness we've known, forever grateful stay.

But shall the angels call for her, much sooner than we planned, we'll brave the bitter grief that comes, and try to understand.

We have this on our wall in the living room, and thought maybe others would enjoy it. It helps me to read it when I'm feeling sad.

Submitted by Alvin & Glenda Halley, In memory of Cindy (1956-1961) and Mary (1961-2003)

TCF Omaha

Loving Listeners and Remembering Friends

If waiting until the next meeting is too long and you want to talk, the following people may be contacted. They are willing to "listen". They care.

Adult Siblings— Rod Colvin 330-2162

Cancer— Pat Langford 933-6017

Grandparents—

Auto Accident— Sandi Massie 480-1515

sandramassie@hotmail.com

Young children— Kelly Pelster pelsters@cox.net

Infant—

Fathers—

Suicide—

Sudden death— Barb Falk Schwede 298-7178

Multiple Loss— Colleen Blanchard 455-7949

If you cannot reach anyone on this list, call our 24 hour voicemail at 571-4011, and a volunteer will call you back. Let us know if you would like to be listed here to help others.

Your child is gone.
 What do you want most?
**YOUR CHILD
 REMEMBERED!**



The Greater Omaha Chapter of The Compassionate Friends Is Proud to Announce
The New 2007 Nebraska Remembers Banner

- An opportunity to memorialize your child.
- An occasion see your child's name written once again.
- A chance to lovingly touch your child's name and remember a life too short.

Upon your request, your child's name will lovingly be added to the "2007 Nebraska Remembers" banner. There, you and countless others will have the opportunity to see your child's name newly written. This touching banner will be unveiled this summer and displayed throughout the year at functions where our members are present. In 2004, the banner project was created so that our children's names could be carried in the national "Walk to Remember" in Los Angeles. The 2007 Walk to Remember will be held in Oklahoma City, and we would like the names of all our children to be carried in the walk and displayed all year. Past banners can be viewed on our website, www.tcfomaha.org/scrapbook. Pictured above is the 2006 banner.

The purpose of the banner is two-fold: an opportunity to help heal your heart, and to raise funds to support the programs and services offered to the community by Compassionate Friends-Omaha. The Omaha Chapter reaches out to more than 400 families locally, through the newsletter, support group, and memorial programs.

Even if your child was listed on our previous banners, everyone must recommit to the 2007 Nebraska Remembers Banner by completing the form below. The form is also available on our website, www.tcfomaha.org.

Yes, I would like to have my child/sibling/grandchild included on the "2007 Nebraska Remembers" banner.

Remember...You do not walk alone. If you cannot donate at this time, please just send us your child's name.

Name(s) for the "2007 Nebraska Remembers" banner (Please print clearly.)

1. _____ 2. _____
 3. _____ 4. _____

Yes, I would like to support the work of The Compassionate Fiends Omaha Chapter with a donation of:

\$_____ (\$10.00, \$25.00, \$50.00 or other amount)

Deadline June 1, 2007 Please mail this completed form and contribution payable to:

The Compassionate Friends
 1334 N Hickory Street
 Wahoo, NE 68066

Thank you for your support!

Remember, we need not walk alone!



GRIEF AND TIME

By Michael Woodford

I guess I've finally reached the status of "experienced" or "seasoned" griever. I'm not sure exactly when the transition happened, but it seems to have crept upon me unawares. At the last TCF National Conference I was amazed at the number of those whose losses were less than five years past and found myself looking back, somewhat nostalgically, at my own pathway through grief. I saw in the eyes of those newly bereaved the same ache and pain that I often saw staring back at me in the mirror after Andrew, and then four years later Brittany, died.

I often pause and wonder what has happened over the years that have passed to make my thoughts nostalgic rather than ache-filled torment. Maybe time has become an ally instead of an enemy. In the months after each of my children's deaths, I remember the dread with which I faced waking each morning, knowing that the oblivion of sleep would end and the pain would begin again. Time could not go fast enough. My wife would often say, "Why can't it be ten years from now?" Today, mornings are not an experience to be feared, but a wonderful occasion to face a new opportunity for growth.

What has occurred to create this change? It would be fair to say that it has been time and the effort that has been put forth in directing the changes that are inexorably tied to dealing with personal tragedy.

The deaths that we have experienced have helped define who we are. We cannot help that. They happened and have had a significant influence in who we are and what we are becoming. Change is an inevitable result, but we must make a conscious choice to direct that change, especially in the long term. Inactivity, as the laws of thermodynamics assure, leads to disorder and chaos. In our case, it leads to increasing personal entropy. In the context of culture, spiritual beliefs, upbringing, customs, and other factors that influence who we are, we must choose the effects that those experiences have on us. We must do as Shimon Peres said: "If a problem has no solution, it may not be a problem, but a fact . . . not to be solved, but to be coped with over time."

Thankfully, for me, the human soul has the ability to recover from trauma and the human mind the ability to shed the penetrating pain of recent tragedy yet retain the invaluable and ultimately more satisfying remembrances of our loved ones' lives. The pain then becomes an echo of sorrow

remembered distantly through the more joyful memories of experiences shared with our loved ones.

Regardless of the time that has passed, we must be careful not to fall into the trap of escapism, but rather we must direct the changes that are inevitably before us. Humans tend to find the things that will remove the immediate source of discomfort regardless of the long-term effects. Many of us find those few things that help us feel comfortable and help us from dwelling on the negatives, and we stick to them. We get comfortable in our routine and character patterns and refuse to move on or heal a little more, because of the fear of facing the pain again.

In his book *Man's Search for Meaning*, Dr. Viktor Frankl, Holocaust survivor and world-renowned psychologist, wrote: "Man . . . Determines himself whether to give in to conditions or stand up to them. In other words, man is ultimately self-determining. Man does not simply exist, but always decides what his existence will be, what he will become in the next moment" (pg 206).

I would like to suggest five tools that can be effectively used by both the newly bereaved and by the more seasoned grievers to move forward with positive changes in our lives.

FIRST, we need to set goals that are realistic and achievable. Record these goals and make sure that you have some type of process for measuring your progress. It will help prevent the emotionally impulsive behavior so often observed in those who are unable to cope with loss effectively. After you set your goals, review them with a friend or family member to make sure that they are reasonable and also to enlist them in helping to keep you on track. They can also be a help in keeping yourself accountable.

SECOND, help and serve others. It is strange how personally satisfying the act of serving others is for the individual. Often we see it as a boon for the one being served; however it is always more beneficial for the person who is doing the service. This is always a win-win situation.

THIRD, keep a journal. There are three reasons for this.

1. There are things associated with death that can be, and usually are, unique for the individuals involved. These can take the form of communications and insights from the person who is dying; feelings, thoughts, dreams or audible words prior to, shortly after, or at the time of death. There are also insights, revelations, and non-coincidental coincidences. These things are usually sacred or special and are not easily shared. It is important to capture these things so that you can review them when you feel the need for some comfort and hope.

2. Keep track of your thoughts and feelings as you go through trials, grief, challenges, etc. Often we don't see the progress we are making as the changes come slowly over time. Reviewing past journal entries can help us to see that we are indeed progressing and moving forward.

(continued on page 6)

(Grief and time, continued from page 5)

3. Write down your goals along with your successes and failures. Remember that a goal not written is just a wish. Progress and backslides need to be recorded so that we can learn from our mistakes and take pride in our successes. These entries can also be helpful to recall what we did when we have the opportunity to counsel others.

FOURTH, take time periodically to do a personal inventory. Go somewhere where you can have some peace and quiet. Take your journal and anything else you need to review your progress. In our own lives it is sometimes difficult to see changes because they happen so slowly. Rapid realizations and life changes can sometimes occur, but they are usually reserved for half-hour sitcoms. Set aside some time to take a personal inventory. Use your journal to record your thoughts and insights and to compare and contrast progress or declines in different areas. I find that if I write something down, it seems more real. It somehow solidifies the thought process, but you can do it however works best for you. First, list the areas in which you feel there has been some change, either positive or negative. Picture in your mind or recall the feelings and thought processes associated with that particular area of change in the time before and immediately after the death of your child. Then compare these with the thoughts and feelings and convictions you have now. When having trouble focusing and remembering themselves in the past, some people find it helpful to have a close friend help as a sounding board. They don't even need to know that you are using them. In casual

conversations, you can bring up a past incident or trait and ask them if they have seen any changes. Usually they will respond with examples that you may not immediately remember, but are relevant to your inventory. You need to make sure the person you talk with is someone whom you can trust and who will be honest with you. Often a spouse is not a good person to use as they tend to relate too closely and their experiences bleed over, or they are unwilling to say anything that might be construed as negative or critical.

FIFTH, be patient with yourself. Realize that you are a composite of your background, learning, experiences, and culture. This is what makes you unique and individual. Understand that being unique, you are going to have times when your loss will affect you and you will have to back up a little bit. It's OK! Know your limitations and work within them. As you grow, they will grow with you.

Reprinted from We Need Not Walk Alone 2004, Vol 27. No. 4.

"God & Time" Song Title

Recently I purchased the CD *Sheltering Tree* by Newsong (Christian artists). I purchased this CD for a particular song but I found this CD also contained the song "God & Time". On the insert of the CD they said this song was dedicated to anyone who has lost someone they loved. The song is awesome, and worth the listen. Sometimes we get gifts and I think this was one.

Submitted by Sandra Massie, (Mark 1980-1999) TCF Omaha

Our Children Remembered

If you would like your child listed here, sign & submit the form on Page 2

BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| 3/5/1949 | FENTON (PEN) KELLER |
| 3/15/1966 | SHERRI LYNN BOYER |
| 3/21/1969 | STEVE STARKS |
| 3/25/1993 | MICHAELA CECILIA KORIN OLSON |
| 3/29/1962 | MICHAEL HALL KIRK |
| 3/29/1964 | THOMAS DAVID ROSE |
| 3/31/1982 | HEIDI ANN HIRNIAK |
| 4/6/1973 | DAVID DUFFY |
| 4/8/2004 | SOPHIA MIEKO HERNANDEZ |
| 4/10/1970 | DENA JEAN SCHOLL |
| 4/13/1994 | KATELYN SCOTT CURRY-MURPHY |
| 4/18/1960 | SCOTT BLEVINS |
| 4/19/1988 | DAREN MICHAEL BASHOR |
| 4/24/1980 | TOMMY L. CRAFT |
| 4/24/1981 | MATTHEW A. SCHMILL |
| 4/27/1953 | LINDA K. SMITH |
| 4/28/1996 | ELIZABETH IRENE WESSLING |
| 4/30/1961 | JACKIE HEYDENREICH KLINE |

ANGEL DATES

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| 3/1/1998 | RAY NASTASE |
| 3/1/2003 | KARLENE PATRICE LAVON BLAKE |
| 3/1/2002 | BRENT BLANCHARD |
| 3/2/1995 | BLAKE HRBEK |
| 3/2/1998 | MATTHEW HALE KRESS |
| 3/6/1995 | LUANN MILLER |
| 3/8/1996 | DANIEL ROBERT STEPANEK |
| 3/15/1989 | DANA RAY HERREN |
| 3/19/1998 | JACKIE HEYDENREICH KLINE |
| 3/26/1995 | PHYLLIS NENEMAN BECKERS |
| 3/26/1995 | BABY MICHAEL BECKERS |
| 3/27/2004 | ELIZABETH IRENE WESSLING |
| 3/28/2005 | SASHA ALAINA CORONA |
| 3/31/1994 | JORDYN ANNE FLEISCHMAN |
| 4/6/2002 | JACOB BULL |
| 4/11/1991 | JIM LEHMAN |
| 4/12/2003 | DARIN BLANCHARD |
| 4/16/1991 | SANDY HANRAHAN |
| 4/24/2004 | MATTHEW A. SCHMILL |
| 4/27/2002 | LAUREN CHAMBERS |
| 4/29/1991 | CHAD W. HARLOW |

In our Library—

His Bright Light by Danielle Steel, recommended by Jill Dethlefs

Transcending Loss by Ashley Davis Prend-recommended by

Lynnette Suurvarik & Kelly Pelster

See our newly designed website www.tcfomaha.org