



Location

Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital
5401 South Street, Lincoln, NE
(Lancaster Room)

Date & Time of Meetings:

Meetings are held on the
Third Thursday of each month
7:00 pm to 8:30 pm
There is no fee for attendance

Supported by:

Bryan LGH Medical Center
St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center
Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital

For information about the meetings
Call: 402-477-0857

Community Friends

A support group for bereaved parents.
This group offers support & networking
to promote healthy grieving and healing for
those who have experienced
the death of a child.

Future Meeting Schedule

August 20, 2009
September 17, 2009

Location

Bryan Medical Plaza • (East)
1500 S. 48th Street
Lincoln, NE

Date & Time of Meetings:

Meetings are held on the
First Wednesday of each month
7:30 pm to 8:30 pm
There is no fee for attendance

Supported by:

Bryan LGH Medical Center
St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center
Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital

For information about the meeting
Call: 402-477-0857

H.O.P.E

(Helping Other Parents Endure)
A support group for those who have
experienced the loss of a baby due to
miscarriage, stillbirth, or newborn death.
Promoting healthy grieving & healing.

Future Meeting Schedule

August 5, 2009
September 2, 2009

2009 AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

A NEW SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS

School opens for another year. There is a flurry of activity to end the summer: clothes to buy; notebooks, pencils and pens to gather; decisions to make on rulers and odd-shaped erasers. The family plans and almost plunges into the final weekend, the Labor Day splurge that ends summer and starts the fall.

For many, there will be no flurry. Clothing, notebooks, erasers, and all those other things become simply notes of hollowness in a fragmented life. For these, the last summer weekend may pass unnoticed. It is a time to consume silence in the land of bereavement.

When the school doors open, when the buses roll once more, communities across this nation visibly proclaim the hope we all invest in our children. Bereaved parents, having no immunity to these desires and aspirations for our kids, find themselves even more highly sensitized to that never-again kiss of parting, that vigorous waving as the school bus pulls away. Perhaps for some, an empty desk, an unoccupied chair, will form the elements of a new vision that proclaims again emptiness forever a part of life.

I teach. I know that school's reopening will remind me, even six years into bereavement, of the bittersweet capability of this time. And, I admit with some sorrow, I am never totally free of it, for often do I consciously hope that death will not again shadow a door that is mine, even the door to a classroom! School is opening. For some among us this is a period of deep, unuttered hurt. Only the pain of the holidays may be deeper.

As these doors open once again, and as the opening weeks pass, let us

remember and reach out to those for whom the school bell is an endless tolling. Let us all offer the assuring hope that today's dreadful tolling will instead, someday, become an evoker of memories – remembered images that will dance upon the heart, forming an anchor of love one which dealing may poise itself to soar, to bring darkness of pain to light.

*By Don Hackett, MA
In memory of his son, Olin
TCF Newsletter, KC Region, September 2002*

“Sorrow is neither a problem to be solved nor a difficulty to overcome. It is a sacred expression of love – a sacred sorrow.”

By Gerald May M.D.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNUAL

REMEMBRANCES – can be difficult days for bereaved parents and their siblings. Perhaps you would like to lift these families up in thought and prayer as these difficult days approach for them.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

AUGUST REMEMBRANCES DATES

CHANDRA BLOOD 08-25-02

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

CORINA MARIE KRIESER 09-29-79

JESSICA MARIE LUHRING 09-11-90

SEPTEMBER REMEMBRANCES DATES

JESSICA MARIE LUHRING 09-11-90

In remembering our precious children, there may be errors or omissions for which I am deeply sorry. If there are any errors, please contact Trish Schuster at 402-673-5395 or trish_schuster@yahoo.com

“Tears are emotions turned liquid.”

By Rev. Stanley P. Cornils

On Seeing May Orange-Colored Butterflies in September

*Time between summer and winter
Time under changing skies –
muted and heavy with foresight,
or endless blue, smiling at butterflies*

*Time between summer and winter
Time between laughter and tear –
harvest of beauty remembered,
and voices (where are you?) to hear.*

*Time between summer and winter,
thoughtful and painful and wise –
muted and heavy with losing,
but also – smiling at butterflies.*

By Sascha Wagner
TCF Newsletter, KC Region, Sept. 2002

REACH OUT FOR HELP

When someone you love dies, you must mourn if you are ever to renew your capacity for love. In other words, mourning brings healing. But healing also requires the support and understanding of those around you as you embrace the pain of your loss.

I've said the wilderness of your grief is your wilderness and that it's up to you to find your way through it. That's true. But paradoxically you also need companionship from time to time as you journey. You need people who will walk beside you and provide you with "divine momentum" – affirmations that what you are doing is right and necessary for you and will lead to your eventual healing. You do not need people who want to walk in front of you and lead you down the path they think is right, nor do you need people who want to walk behind you and not be present to your pain.

You've heard me urge you over and over again to seek out the support of people in

your life who are naturally good helpers. A few solid shoulders to cry on and a handful of pairs of listening ears can make all the difference in the world. For something so difficult, it's fundamentally simple, this journey to healing.

Sharing your pain with others won't make it disappear, but it will, over time, make it more bearable. Reaching out for help also connects you to other people and strengthens the bonds of love that make life worth living again.

Where to Turn for Help

"There is strength in numbers," one saying goes. Another echoes, "United we stand, divided we fall." If you are grieving, you may indeed find strength and a sense of stability if you draw on an entire support system for help. Friends and family members can often form the core of your support system. Seek out people who encourage you to be yourself and who acknowledge your many thoughts and feelings about the death. What you need most now are caring, non-judgmental listeners.

You may also find comfort in talking to a minister or other church leader. When someone loved dies, it is natural for you to feel ambivalent about your faith and question the very meaning of life. A clergy member who responds not with criticism but with empathy to all your feelings can be a valuable resource.

A professional counselor may also be a very helpful addition to your support system. In fact, a good counselor can be something friends and family can't: an objective listener. A counselor's office can be a safe haven where you can "let go" of those feelings you're afraid to express elsewhere. What's more a good counselor will then help you constructively channel those emotions.

For many grieving people, support groups are one of the best helping resources. In a group, you can connect with others who have experienced similar thoughts and feelings. You will be allowed and gently encouraged to talk about the person who died as much and as often as you like.

Remember, help comes in different forms for different people. The trick is to find the combination that works best for you and then make use of it.

The Rule of Thirds

In my own grief journeys and in the lives of the mourners I have been privileged to counsel, I have discovered that in general, you can take all the people in your life and divide them into thirds when it comes to grief support.

One third of the people in your life will turn out to be truly empathetic helpers. They will have a desire to understand you and your unique thoughts and feelings about the death. They will demonstrate a willingness to be taught by you and recognition that you, not them, are the expert of your experience. They will be willing to be involved in your pain and suffering without feeling the need to take it away from you. They will believe in your capacity to heal.

Another third of the people in your life will turn out to be neutral in response to your grief. They will neither help nor hinder you in your journey.

And the final third of people in your life will turn out to be harmful to you in your efforts to mourn and heal. While they are usually not setting out intentionally to harm you, they will judge you, they will try to take your grief away from you, and they will pull you off the path to healing.

Seek out your friends and family members who fall into the first group. They will be your confidants and

momentum-givers on your journey.

When you are actively mourning, try to avoid the last group, for they will trip you and cause you to fall.

How Others Can Help You

While there are a multitude of ways that people who care about you might reach out to help you, here are three important and fundamental helping goals.

Effective helpers will help you:

Embrace Hope

These are the people around you who help you sustain the presence of hope as you feel separated from those things that make life worth living. They can be present to you in your loss, yet bring a sense of trust in yourself that you can and will heal.

Encounter the Presence of Your Loss

These are the people who understand the need for you to revisit and recount the pain of your loss. They help you “tell your story” and provide a safe place for you to openly mourn. Essentially, they give you an invitation to take the grief that is inside you and share it outside yourself.

Have “Companions” In Your Journey

These people serve as companions though whom your suffering can be affirmed. They are able to break through their separation from you and truly companion you where you are at this moment in time. They know that real compassion comes out of “walking with” you, not ahead of you or behind you. The word grieve means “to bear a heavy burden.” Those who companion you in your grief realize that as they help bear your burden of sorrow, they give you hope that something will be born of it.

If your feelings of grief are so overwhelming that you’re afraid your life or the life of someone in your care is in

danger, you are in crisis and should seek help immediately.

Signs of a crisis include:

*Thinking about, planning or attempting suicide.

*Failing to care for yourself (eating, bathing or dressing)

*Abusing alcohol or drugs

If any of these warning signs apply to you, call one of the helping resources below without delay.

- 911
- Your local Crisis Hotline. Call information or look in the yellow pages
- Your family physician
- Your local hospital
- Your community mental health center. Check your phone book' county government listings.

By Alan Wolfelt

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Centering Corporation, Omaha, NE
402-553-1200*

UPCOMING EVENTS

BUTTERFLY RELEASE

Sunday, August 16, 2009
Madonna Rehab Hospital
5400 South Street
Lincoln, NE
Sheridan Room for Potluck
@ 1:00 pm
Butterfly Release
2:00 pm
Chapel at Madonna

If you are able to attend the Potluck before the Butterfly Release please feel free to bring a picture of your child to set out on the table.

WALK TO REMEMBER

October 4, 2009

1:00 PM
Lincoln Memorial Park
Lincoln, NE

WHY BUTTERFLIES?

Since the early centuries of the Christian Church, the butterfly has symbolized the resurrection and life after death. The caterpillar signifies life here on earth; the cocoon, death; and the butterfly, the emergence of the dead into a new, beautiful and freer existence.

Frequently, the butterfly is seen with the "Nika", which means victory. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross movingly tells of butterflies drawn all over the walls of the children's dormitories in the World War II concentration camps. Since Elisabeth believed in the innate intuitiveness of children, she concluded that these children knew their fate and were leaving us a message.

The Compassionate Friends has adopted the butterfly as one of its symbols – a sign of hope to us that our children are living in another dimension with greater beauty and freedom – a comforting thought to many.

*TCF Newsletter of Enid, OK
July 2008*

*The loss of a child is bitter
But the memory of that child is sweet
Hold on to the memory
Experience the sweetness
For that child
Is forever your child.*

*By Joanne Cacciatore
TCF Newsletter of Enid, OK
July 2008*

**HOPE TO SEE
YOU
at the
BUTTERFLY RELEASE
Sunday, August 16, 2009**

