

REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN



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
7:00pm to 8:30pm
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

Remembering Our Children

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

February 19, 2010
March 19, 2010

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
7:30pm to 8:30pm
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

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

February 3, 2010
March 3, 2010

February/March 2010

VALENTINE MESSAGE

*I send this message to my child,
Who no longer walks this planet.
A message filled with love,
Yet also filled with pain.
My heart continues to skip a beat.
When I ponder your early death.
As I think of times we'll never share
I must stop to catch my breath.
Valentine's Day is for those who love.
And for those who receive love, too.
For a parent the perfect love in life
Is the love I've given you.
I'm thinking of you this day, my child.
With a sadness that is unspoken.
As I mark another Valentine' Day
With a heart that is forever broken.*

By Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of son, Todd Mennen
TCF, TX



NEVER GOODBYE

They tell me I must say Good-bye.
That life goes on,
That death comes to us all,
That you're in a better place
But they haven't lost a child.
I tell them I must keep you with me.
Remember your faults,
Remember the joy you brought,
Because I was, and I am your Mother.
I tell them I will give you life,
I'll keep your memory fresh,
My life is more full because
You live on in me.
I am a better person because of you.
I shall never say Good-bye until I can
Say Hello!

By Gwen Brown
Winnipeg, MB, Canada

ANGEL GIRL

Eyes shimmering brightly
A smile like a pearl.
You may be gone now,
But you're still are Angel Girl

We watched you lying quietly,
Memorizing your face.
Complete with such innocence,
Filled with such grace.

We need not be afraid
As to where you might be
Someday we'll be together,
Just wait, and you'll see.

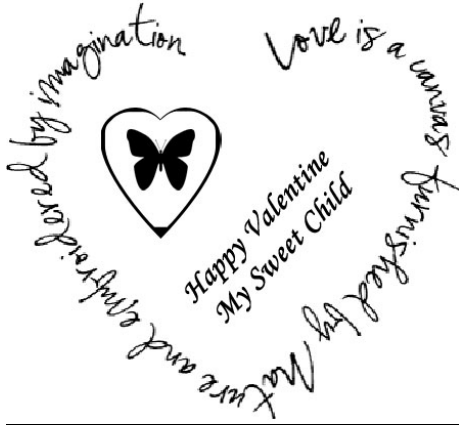
So tiny and small you were,
So soft to the touch.
Fly to the gates of Heaven,
We'll miss you very much.

We know you're shining down on us
From the heavens above.
You are Michaela Ann
We'll never forget, but always love.

By Gina Fabrizia, Michaela's sister
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WHEN I MUST LEAVE YOU

When I must leave you for a little while;
Please do not grieve and shed wild tears
And hug your sorrow to you
through the years.
But start out bravely with a gallant smile;
And for my sake and in my name
Live on and do all things the same.
Feed not your loneliness on empty days,
But fill each waking hour in useful ways,
Reach out your hand in comfort and in cheer
And I in turn will comfort you
And hold you near;
And never, never be afraid to die,
For I am waiting for you in the sky!
- Anonymous



UPCOMING EVENTS

The ABC's of Healthy Grieving
By Harold Ivan Smith

This is a seminar that will take place to offer simple, realistic advice on how to live with grief day to day.

Harold's words of comfort, practical support and wise spiritual guidance for body and soul will encourage healthy grieving and new ways of being in the world after experiencing a loss.

As a gifted story teller, Smith is also a teacher, author and grief counselor from Kansas City, Missouri, where he leads "Grief Gatherings" at the St. Luke's Hospital.

This event is co-sponsored by the Mourning Hope Grief Center and Bryan LGH Community Education.

Pre-registration is required
Call 402-481-8355 or visit
www.bryanLGH.org *click 55 Plus*

Event to take place on
Tuesday, February 2, 2010
7:00pm – 8:30pm
At the Bryan LGH Medical Plaza
Conference Center (East campus)

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNUAL REMEMBRANCES

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

FFBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- PHOEBE FRERICHS** **02-01-2007**
- JENNA HENKE** **02-24-19**
- GAGE LEE HALE** **02-09-2009**

FEBRUARY ANNUAL REMEMBRANCES

- PHOEBE FRERICHS** **02-01-2007**
- GAGE LEE HALE** **02-09-2009**

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- TIERGAN BRUCE** **03-17-2008**
- BENJAMIN CHLOUPEK** **03-05-1993**
- KATHLEEN HOWELL** **03-22-2007**
- JASON GOTTNER** **03-14-1980**

MARCH ANNUAL REMEMBRANCES

- TIERGAN BRUCE** **03-17-2008**
- "EM" EMILY HERTING** **03-12-2004**
- DAWN SCHUSTER** **03-06-1996**
- KENDRA SEMMLER** **03-05-1999**

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



THE LANGUAGE OF GRIEF

It's cold outside. Winter's icy fingers have wrapped themselves around my being and I sometimes wonder if there will ever be another spring. The days are too short and the nights too long in winter. It's dark in winter, and I seem to be slipping backwards sometimes, backwards into the despair that I thought I had left long ago.

Sometimes the sun drifts through the frosted pane and casts icy sparkles across the room and for a moment or two, I feel alive and okay. Sometimes I feel like running through the drifts of snow and making snow angels or building a snow fort. But, mostly, I feel trapped by the grayness of the dawn and burdened by the weight of winter's coat.

Grief seems especially hard to bear in winter's pale light and early night. Even the words we speak seem bleak and without hope. When will grief's winter leave me, or am I doomed to live forever in winter's despair?

I want new words to speak. I want a more hopeful way of thinking and talking and being. I want to know that spring will surely return...someday. I want to dream of daisy hills and rippling brooks, bathed in spring's new light. I want to think of living again, not merely surviving. I want a new way of thinking about grief. I want a new language to tell of my journey.

The language of grief...what words is there that will bring comfort to the broken places within a soul? What songs can we sing that will heal the hurt? What pictures can we draw or mountain path can we walk that will bring peace to an aching heart? How can we speak of *hope* in the midst of despair? What threads can be woven to create the safety nets that will hold us in our hopelessness?

Can you create a dance for me that will ease my aching body? Can you write a poem that will speak to my empty heart? Can you hold me for a moment while I shiver with the pain?

We need to create a new language for grief...a language that speaks honestly of winter's dim light and crushing despair. We need a language that speaks honestly of the painful promise and of the hope that is cast by the sun, as it appears on a winter's day. We need to create a language of *hope*, not a language of grief. Perhaps we can create a language where denial is merely a river in Egypt and not a statement of despair or criticism. Denial is such a harsh and inaccurate word. It does not belong in the language of *hope*. Denial is a winter word.

When we are faced with difficult steps on our journey, we sometimes wish to postpone our progress. We want to sidestep the painful step. Perhaps we are not yet ready to deal with reality or perhaps we feel afraid, unsupported, unskilled or unprepared to face the unfolding of a new life. "I WON'T deal with it!" "I CAN'T cope with it!" "I DON'T WANT TO face it." These are words that each of us has echoed again and again as we travel the path of grief.

And so, instead of facing "IT" (whatever "IT" may be), we wish to move it to the side, placing it out of our line of sight, slightly out of focus. For a time, sometimes, a long time, we can keep whatever we do not wish to deal with, out of focus. We can postpone reality for a little while. It is easier to pretend that my child is away at camp or my spouse is on a long business trip instead of facing the bitter reality of death. And yet, I know what it is that I am pretending. How could I ever forget?

I would like to replace the word *denial* with the word *postponement*. It is a more honest word. It accurately describes exactly what we do with a reality we are not quite ready to experience. We simply move that reality to the side, keeping it slightly out of focus, holding it there until we are no longer able to keep it there, or until we feel "ready" to tackle the new reality.

Before you can deny anything, you first you to acknowledge it, you can postpone it until you are ready or able to cope. It takes a lot of energy to keep things out of focus for very long and so eventually most of us

run out of energy to keep things in fantasyland. Slowly, we bring whatever painful reality we must face back into focus and we begin the healing task of coping.

Denial is a river in Egypt. It is not a lack of coping, but rather an accurate and creative way of **postponing**, until I feel more secure, more skilled, more supported. Spring does follow winter and just as the daffodils rise to greet a new season, I, too, will move postponement to acknowledgment and then to action. I, too, will, face my despair and my grief, in my own time.

So, as we exchange the word **denial** for the word **postponement**, let's forever ban the word **lost**. We use that word to describe everything that changes. "I **lost** my child." "I **lost** my job." I **lost** my spouse, my car – everything!" We **lose** things: car keys, houses, jobs, but never do we **lose** people! They **die** or **leave**, but we do not **lose** them or the love we shared. Our loved ones have **died**, but they are forever and always a living and loving part of who we are! We **cannot lose** their love!

As long as we are changing the language, let's think about replacing **acceptance** with **acknowledgment**. Acceptance, to me, means **agree with** and I will never agree with what has happened to me! But I can work towards **acknowledgment** of what has happened. As I begin to feel safer, more supported, more knowledgeable about the grief process and feel more skilled at grieving, I can allow whatever I have cast into **postponement** to resurface and begin then to resolve my grief.

We can change the words we use. Let's make up a new language...a language of **hope**! Move away from acceptance and run toward **acknowledgment**!

Then perhaps we can change one more word in the language of grief. Can we get rid of the word **recovery** and use **healing** instead. **Recovery** is a medical model word, designed to describe broken bones, not broken hearts! We recover from a broken arm or chicken pox. We don't **get over** the death of someone we love. We get **through it**, one moment, one hour, one day, one hurt

at a time. **Healing** is a hopeful word. **Healing** is a **spring** word!

Yes, in this winter of despair, we do need a new language. We are diminished by grief, replenished by love, held by hope. I want a language that reflects that hope, a language that reminds me of the coming spring and of the waiting dawn. I want a language that speaks to me of **joy remembered, of love given and received, of life lived**, not lost.

In winter, we need a language that speaks of warmth, life and love. Join me in creating a new language that more accurately portrays the journey of grief towards healing and hope. Try thinking and not saying, "My loved one **died**," not "I **lost** my loved one." People **die**, but we do **not lose them**. They are forever threads in our fabric, memories in our heart, and love in our being. They are now and always will be a living and loving part of who we are!

Healing doesn't happen at all once not does a language get changed quickly. Just as winter ebbs and flows and just as the other seasons rise and fall on the tides of our emotions, the words we speak will continue to dictate our journey. Yet, it seems more hopeful to speak of postponement instead of denial acknowledgment instead of acceptance and healing instead of recovery.

Let's try out this new language of **hope** and see if winter's dim light can lead us into an early spring.

With **hope**,

Darcie

By Darcie Sims, Ph. D.,
Darice is the mother of Big A
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