



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS GREATER OMAHA CHAPTER

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

P.O. Box 540852, Omaha, NE 68154 www.tcfomaha.org

mail@tcfomaha.org (English) or correo@tcfomaha.org (Spanish)

402-571-4011

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Omaha, NE
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September/October 2011

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.

Please send stories, poems or love gifts by
October 15, 2011
newsletter@tcfomaha.org

[Address Service Requested](#)

MEETINGS/REUNIONES

PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS & ADULT SIBLINGS

7:00 p.m. — 1st Thursday of the month

New Cassel Retirement Center

900 N. 90th Street — Auditorium Level 2, Omaha, NE

REUNION EN ESPAÑOL/MEETING IN SPANISH

7:00 pm-3er miércoles de cada mes/3rd Wed. of every month

One World Community Health Center Conference Room

4920 S. 30th Street, Omaha NE

Kelly 712-326-4308

Spanish Facebook Page <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#%21/LACUSA>

DAYTIME MEETING

3rd Tuesday of the month at noon. Join us for

lunch at Tish's restaurant.

1115 S 35 Street, Council Bluffs



UPCOMING EVENTS

September 1 - Omaha Meeting. Until We Meet Again - Dreams, Psychics, Beliefs. No guest speaker. Separate discussion groups for each topic. Bring a linking object .

September 6- Alan Pedersen Concert Gibbon, NE

September 7 - Alan Pedersen Concert, CB, Iowa

September 8 - Fremont Meeting

September 9-10-11 Chapter Leadership Training

September 20 - Noon LUNCH at Tish's

September 21 - Spanish Meeting

September 25 - Angel of Hope 2 pm. Dedication for bricks added this year.

September 27 - Steering Committee Meeting

October 6 - Omaha Meeting. Wolfelt Touchstone

3 - Embrace the Uniqueness of Your Grief

October 13 - Fremont Meeting

Miércoles/Wednesday - 20 July/Julio

Miércoles/Wednesday - 17 August/Agosto

Miércoles/Wednesday - 21 September/Septiembre

Thank you to the following businesses and professionals who have generously assisted us in our mission

New Cassel Retirement Center · One World Community Health Center · Ted E Bear Hollow · Centering Corporation

Love Gifts · Address Change · Authorization To Print Name & Dates

Mail to: The Compassionate Friends , PO Box 540852, Omaha, NE 68154

Your Name _____

Address _____ Email _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Date _____ Gift of \$ _____ **DIRECT MY GIFT TOWARD:**

- Angel of Hope Project Memorial Programs
- General Fund (90% local/10% national) Outreach -printing, postage, phone, web

In Memory of _____

Message: _____

I GIVE MY PERMISSION TO PRINT MY CHILD'S NAME, BIRTH & DEATH MONTH/DAY IN THE NEWSLETTER

Child's Name _____

Birth Date _____ Death Date _____ Your Relationship _____

SIGNATURE REQUIRED _____ **DATE** _____

You will no longer receive the newsletter if 2 years have passed since our last contact with you. You may be added back to the mailing list at your request. 2011

Steering Committee



These members are veterans of the organization who work together as a team to take care of the business of the chapter. Giving back is another stage of healing. They will have name tags to identifying them as steering committee, so you can seek them out at meetings for questions or suggestions, or a listening ear.

The steering committee meets every other month to handle the business of the chapter. New officers have started a leadership transition period and some of the steering committee will attend the leadership training program provided by the national office in September. We still have openings to fill if you would like to join our team to further your healing and honor your child by working as a team and make a difference for many families.

Leader - Kelly Kleckner-Silva

Co-Leader - Barbara Schwede

Treasurer - Doug Hartmann

Angel of Hope Coordinator - Kelly Pelster

Corporate Gifts - Sandra Massie

Facilitator - Joyce Schlosser

Spanish Facilitator - Kelly Kleckner-Silva

Secretary - Pending (Linda Sorgenfrei & Becky Smith)

Newsletter Editor - Kate Spinks

Webmaster - Pending

JoAnn Smith - Librarian

Provisional Members: Beth Pribil, Mary Jo Fike

Outreach Coordinators - Omaha (Open), Council Bluffs - Shirley Ashcraft

Publicity/Speakers Bureau - (Open)

SAVE THE DATE! The Worldwide Candle Lighting will be



SAVE THE DATE! The Worldwide Candle Lighting will be held December 11, at the Westside Community Conference Center, 3534 S 108th Street in Omaha.

Candles will be lit at 7 pm sharp! More information to follow.

The committee welcomes your input to make this event meaningful for everyone.

Sandi Massie, Colleen Sorben, Joann & John Smith, Linda Sorgenfrei, Melanie Petty.

♥ Gifts of Love ♥

Our activities support the grief work of many families. We also work to educate members of our community about the grief process and how they can support bereaved parents. Please help us help others by making a LOVE GIFT today. TCF is a 501c3 organization and funded only by donations. Monetary gifts in any amount are deeply appreciated and we gratefully accept these gifts knowing our children are warmly remembered. Chapter expenses include printing, postage, library, yellow pages, and memorial programs. Use the form above to send a tax deductible gift.

General fund Gifts received



COMING TO US IN SEPTEMBER!

Tues, September 6 7-9 pm Faith United Methodist Church, Gibbon, NE

Wed, September 7 7-9 pm Tish's Restaurant, 1207 S 35th St, Council Bluffs, IA

Thurs, September 8 7-9 pm Dugan Chapel, 751 N Lincoln Avenue, Fremont, NE

Angels Across the USA Tour 2011

The Angels Across the USA Tour 2011 is a series of concert/events featuring the music and message of Alan Pedersen. Alan uses his gentle mix of humor and straightfrom-the-heart talk wrapped around powerful songs about love, loss and healing to make for a unique experience you will not soon forget. The program requires an environment free of interruption and is not suitable for small children. Music, T-shirts and gift items are available for purchase, and donations are appreciated to fund this

ministry.

<http://www.facebook.com/AngelsAcrossTheUSA>

www.angelsacrosstheusa.com



The Compassionate Friends—Greater Omaha Chapter cordially invites you to the *Angel of Hope Children's Memorial Annual brick dedication*, Sunday, September 25th, 2011. 2:00 pm ~ Boys Town

You are invited to bring a white flower in remembrance of a child who has died, to lay at the base of the statue during the ceremony (bring blankets or lawn chairs)

Visit the Omaha TCF chapter website (<http://www.tcfomaha.org>) for more information on the dedication.

Outreach

Interest of Starting a TCF Chapter in Oakland, IA

Two mom's who have lost children are interested in starting a TCF Chapter in rural southwest Iowa. Natalie Karas has attended the regional and national TCF conferences this year. Natalie has a background in therapy and counseling. Currently, Natalie is working on her masters in marriage, family, and couples therapy from Capella University. Natalie has lost her middle child, Elijah, shortly after his birth 22 months ago. He was born with a rare condition where his kidneys did not develop. Amber Johnson attended the regional TCF conference this year. She lost her son, Jackson, 4 years ago shortly after birth due to complications during delivery. These two mom's will be hosting a World Wide Candle lighting service at Oakland Christian Church program will start at 6:30PM, in hopes to begin monthly meetings in January, on Tuesday the 30th at 7 pm. We will plan on having meetings on the last Tuesday of each month at Oakland Christian Church. If you are interested in more information, please contact Natalie at Natalie.e.karas@gmail.com or Amber at ambular26@yahoo.com. Thank You very Much for your help and support as we start the process to charter a new Compassionate Friends Chapter in southwest Iowa.



Publicity/Speakers – TCF Omaha provided a breakout session at a National Conference for GFPD in Omaha on August 1. Families and their children attended the first scientific conference for the foundation. Lisa Epperson, author of *Flowers on a Child's Grave*, led the session, followed by a panel of TCF parents.

Her Magazine

Look for the full page spotlight on The Greater Omaha Chapter in the September issue of

HER Magazine. On news stands now!



Seven Ways To Increase "Hope"

BE KIND TO YOURSELF

Think about what you need most, and then do it. Is it a cup of tea, a brisk walk, some downtime, quiet music, a little rest, or reading inspirational literature? Whatever it is, grant yourself permission to do it, even for just a few minutes. If you're at work, take a "care-break" where you take care of you for a brief moment. These small moments accumulate and transform the texture of our days.

CREATE A DAILY 5-MINUTE SILENCE RITUAL

Light a candle and pray, meditate or reflect. You don't have to believe in any particular deity to make this work. Just silently reflecting in front of a lit candle is extremely nurturing and healing. This may be the one time of the day when you feel connected to your own soul, and perhaps even something larger. Don't skip this step— it's very powerful.

CURTAIN YOUR INTAKE OF NEWS

Oversaturation with news right now is detrimental to emotional health. If you read the newspaper in the morning, let that be enough. You don't need to turn on the TV or radio too, especially before bed. Consider putting a complete moratorium on news at least once a week. Anything you missed will be there tomorrow. Drastically curtail any news you let your children watch.

TREAT EACH DAY LIKE A PRECIOUS GIFT

Be vigilant in looking for things and people to appreciate. What if today was the last day of your life? How would you want to live it? Ask yourself this question throughout the day. It will help you let go of the countless petty annoyances that tend to throw most of us off balance.

Shift your gaze to appreciation. Who and what are you grateful for? Make a list each day and add to it.

TAKE A BREAK

Every morning, afternoon and night, take a 30-second break to look at the sky, breathe deeply and offer thanks.

Even though the world has it's problems, the sun still rises in the sky each morning, and we're awake and alive when we get out of bed. Let the sky be a touchstone to hope. Think of other people around the world as you look at the sky, and know that we all share this planet together. Among all of us, we have the ability to create solutions to the problems that now exist.

Trust that this is so.

EXPRESS LOVE TANGIBLY

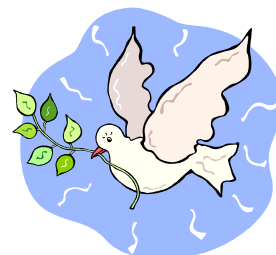
Hugs, words, notes, acts of kindness—be indiscriminately generous with all of them. Surprise a friend with a hug. Hug and kiss your kids longer and with deeper feeling. If you like how a clerk treated you in the store, thank her. Leave your partner small notes expressing gratitude for kind acts. Doing all of this adds warmth and positive energy to our lives and the lives of people around us. It's also very comforting both to the giver and receiver of each loving act.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Reach out beyond your normal scope. This is your opportunity to live your greatest promise, highest self. Don't wait. Each time we make a difference in the lives of others, we create hope in ourselves. Be reaching out to someone in need, be it your neighbor, a Guatemalan orphan, or people in a homeless shelter, we add little more peace and hope to the world. Our accumulated gestures of care and compassion will ultimately transform our lives and the lives of other. We are each the source of that transformation. Knowing this gives me hope.

This information can be found on

www.beliefnet.com



From Our Members



Poems I wrote about our senses. In memory of my son, Randy, who died in 2007, and my husband Ray, who died in 1992. Judy Rose.

I Look

I look for you at our favorite fishing hole where we caught all those fish, you are not there. I look for you on the porch where we loved to spend the afternoons together swinging in the wing, you are not there. I look for you at the end of the road by the river where we watched the waves splash against the shore, you are not there. I look for you in your lounge chair where you loved to nap, you are not there. I look for you in your bed where I watched you sleep, you are not there. When I thought I had looked for you everywhere and could not find you, I then looked into my heart and soul and there you were.

I SEE

I see the shadow of you in the corner of my eye, but you do not stay. I see the man in the moon, but it is not you. I see the sun slowly rise from behind the lake, but you are not beside me. I see the fish jumping high out of the lake, but you are not there to catch them. I see the dewberries growing wild along an Oklahoma country road, but you are not there to help me pick them. I see the sun sink silently beyond the horizon, without you. I see the years of my life quickly pass by, again without you. I see you in my dreams waiting to take my hand and spend an eternity together. I see you my love, do you see me?

Think Before You Speak Dear Friend, today you broke my heart, In a place that was unbroken. You did it with your thoughtless words That should not have been spoken.

You know that I am grieving, That my pain is deep and real. Your hurtful words pierced like a knife. How do you think I feel?

You may not suffer from my loss Or share this lonely grief, But I'm mourning my baby, Who's life was much too brief.

I'm sure you don't know how I feel, I don't expect you to. Don't ask me to get over it.... That's something I can't do.

Without grief, there's no healing It's a journey I must make. It's not the path that I would choose, but one I'm forced to take.

No matter how you choose to see What I am going through, I need compassion and support.... I'd do the same for you.

written by Gwen Flowers

We Feel

We feel the hot rays of the sun on our bodies and we wish for the cold rain.

We feel the cold rain on our faces and we wish for the hot rays of the sun.

We feel the breeze run through our hair like the fingers of the wind and we wish for the calm.

We feel the calm of a hot summer day and we wish for the wind.

We feel the icy cold snowflakes fall from the sky and we wish for the heat of summer.

We feel the crunch of snow under our feet and we wish for the rustle of the leaves falling from the trees.

We feel the rustle of the fall leaves under our feet and we wish for the blossoms of the trees in the spring.

We feel the weight of the world on our shoulders when we are young and we wish to be older.

We feel the pressures and burdens of being older and we wish we were young again.

We, the children of GOD, it seems cannot be pleased, but our Father does grant our wishes, just not always in the order we wished for them.

J

Poems submitted by Colleen Sorben Mom of Reagan 2010

I remain thankful...
For each day we could share...
But please don't say...
that time will heal...
Just tell me that you care....
♥ Carolyn Dillon Zona

Don't tell me that you understand
Don't tell me that you know,
Don't tell me that I will survive
Or how I will surely grow.

Don't tell me that this is just a test
That I am truly blessed
That I am chosen for this task
Apart from all the rest.

Don't come at me with answers
That can only come from me,
Don't tell me how my grief will pass,
That I will soon be free.

Don't stand in pious judgment
Of the bounds I must untie,
Don't tell me how to suffer
And don't tell me how to cry!

My life is filled with selfishness,
My pain is all I see,
But, I need you now,
I need your love, unconditionally.

Accept me in my ups and downs,
I need someone to share,
Just hold my hand and let me cry,
And say, "My friend, I care."

By Joannetta Hendel





OCTOBER



COPING WITH OCTOBER

The coming of autumn with the beautiful colors of the leaves and their falling will bring different emotions to different families. Maybe your family had a tradition of driving through particularly scenic areas. Maybe the child you lost was the one who raked the leaves. Perhaps all of this will simply be a reminder that winter and a barren landscape are coming.

Halloween is a favorite holiday for most children, but it can be hard for bereaved parents. This formerly innocent holiday, the year "decorated" as graveyards with markers and ghosts and skeletons, the stories of unhappy spirits that must walk the earth, all have a completely different impact on us now.

Many of us have opened the door to give out treats and been faced with a costume so similar to one our child wore for a Halloween past, that either we really want to pull aside the mask to see the face behind or we want to dream that this was one last visit from our precious child.

Some parents have surviving children who still want to join in the fun- and, oh, how hard to "trick or treat" when you feel the victim of the ultimate "trick."

Stop and think—what can you do differently? For autumn and its beauties and chores, what routines can you change? Hire someone or ask a friend who has been offering to help and asking for specific tasks. Maybe you can do it together.

For Halloween, take surviving children to a carnival (many schools and churches sponsor these). Or if a carnival was an every year event, go to the zoo or go door to door this year. If you don't have surviving children wanting to celebrate, maybe you can leave your house dark and go to a movie and skip this holiday. In any event, planning ahead will help you get through this difficult time.

By Tracy Rhein

Pregnancy & Infant Loss Rememberance Day

REMEMBERING OUR BABIES—OCTOBER 15TH

How does one measure how long it had been? By the number of sunsets or by the tears that have fallen? The sweet solitude of slumber gives way to morning -teared memories of all that used to be when I had you safe inside of me. Our time together is no more. Only God knows why you went away. Sometimes I forget you are no longer here as I lovingly whisper your name. And then I remember.... And life is not the same.



By Debbie Dickinson