



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

Non-Profit
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PAID
Omaha, NE
Permit #1300

January / February 2012

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
February 15, 2012
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

January 5 - Omaha Chapter Meeting

January 18 - Spanish Meeting

February 3 - Omaha Chapter Meeting

February 16 - Spanish Meeting

February 17—Start of Regional Conference in Overland Kansas

Miércoles/Wednesday - 18 Enero/January

Miércoles/Wednesday - 16 Febrero/February

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
 Boys Town • Edward Jones Investments • Blue Cross & Blue Shield Nebraska • Omaha Visitors Bureau • Union Pacific Company Store
 Eye Essentials • AARP • Centering Corporation • Ted E Bear Hollow • Heafey Heafey Hoffman Dworak & Cutler Funeral Chapels
 Fremont Area Medical Center • Tish's Restaurant • Diversified Financial Services • Fremont National Bank • Holstein's Harley Davidson
 Whole Foods • Braman Mortuary • Jane Dugan Counseling • Dugan Chapel • Strategic Planning Partners • Brown Floral & Creations
 Nebraska Medical Center • HyVee • XI Alpha Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi X131 • American Express Gift Match • Meredith Corporation Gift
 Match • Union Pacific Fund for Effective Government Gift Match • Perkins Restaurant

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 _____

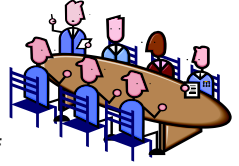
SIGNATURE REQUIRED _____ **DATE** _____

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.

Questions? Email us at mail@tcfomaha.org

2012

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 have attended 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.



2012 MEETING TOPICS- guest speakers are pending

Jan	Touchstone 4 - Explore Your Feelings of Loss	Feelings Activity	Wolfelt	Guest Elaine Cisneros
Feb	Love, Laughter & Gratitude	Make Memory Box	Beyond Tears	
Mar	Wolfelt Touchstone #5 - Recognize you are not crazy		Wolfelt	Guest Jane Dugan
Apr	Holidays - Birthdays - Anniversaries	Memory Book	Beyond Tears	Scrapbookers lead groups
May	Creating Memorials	Garden Plant exchange	SHARE MEMORIALS	Guest Janet Todd
Jun	Mothers/Fathers Speak	House diagram/memories	Beyond Tears	
Jul	Vacationing Without Your Child			Ormandy/Hartmanns
Aug	Guilt and Anger		Beyond Tears	
Sep	Where we are Now	TIMELINE of life	Beyond Tears	Veteran Panel
Oct	Unresolved Grief	How to Survive the Loss	How to Survive the Loss	
Nov	How we Cope	linking object	Beyond Tears/YOGA	Guest JoAnn Smith
Dec	Wolfelt Touchstone 6 - Six Needs of Mourning	Wolfelt		

The Omaha Chapter Newsletter is going green!

The chapter newsletter postage and printing is approximately \$1 per issue. In order to maximize the services we can provide we are attempting to reduce costs associated with the newsletter. The January-February newsletter will be mailed to 239 families actively involved in TCF in the last 2 years, who have not opted for an email newsletter. Of these 239, all but 65 are also on our email list. The email list includes 392 families, 14 Nebraska chapter leaders, 14 Nebraska chapter newsletter editors, National Office, 275 local counselors and professionals, 18 Funeral Directors.

We are excited to be able to publish newsletters that are shareable, easily viewable, downloadable and printable. Share it on Facebook, or by email, the newsletter can be sent to your family and friends. Starting with the March-April newsletter, those members that currently receive a printed newsletter that are also on our email list, will no longer receive a printed version on the newsletter.

Be sure to add mail@tcfomaha.org to your address book so that our emails are not going to your spam or junk mail folder because of the large number on our mailing list. If you have not been receiving emails from mail@tcfomaha.org, please contact us on facebook, via email at mail@tcfomaha.org, or visit the chapter website at www.tcfomaha.org.



STEPPING STONE

Jason's Psalm

Written the evening of
August 5, 2011



So we sat together watching the sunrise:
The beginnings we share are a tiny reminder
Of the great beginnings our hearts radiated,
The light of our kindled fire.
It was like this really thought,
Lost in the dark,
The sun has risen,
Allowing me to find her.
The bond we formed rivals none other.
We can talk about nothing and everything.
We stay locked and intertwined ones,
Hearts in the others.
The love story we began to write
Will continue to be written
everlasting.
Just as there was only night,
Before we knew the light.

For Jason Daniel Weihs,
Beloved son of Kathe and Ed Weihs
TCF Omaha



There stood a man in the absence of space
For his son had passed in the strangest way.

He laid his head into his hands
Hating this moment and
Remembering their plans.

All alone, he wept and mourned

The son he bore, loved and had fought for
Would never more come and knock on his door.

Crying out what could have been,
He cursed his God and left his friends.
He drove and drove and tried to find
A little hope and peace of mind.

Then at the edge of earth he stood
Nowhere else to run and hide,
Nothing more he could do.

He fell down on his knees
And cried out "I'll always remember you."

Then looking up he saw a bird
And realized Spirit had drawn near.
A perfect peace come over him...

...a new journey here.

A warmth grew deep inside of him...

And all was finally clear.

Standing up, the man took heed of miracles and mystery.

How wonderful life could be if everyone could see

That life is just a stepping-stone

And not our destiny.

Traci Stricklan in memory of Avery Colton's son TCF



Sunflowers of Hope Regional Conference of The Compassionate Friends.

February 17th and 18th, 2012. The website is www.jocotcf.org.

Keynote Speakers: Alan Wolfelt, Darcie Sims, Alan Pederson and Kris Munsch

Location: TheDoubleTree Hotel, US Highway 69 and College Blvd, Overland Park, Kansas.

Accommodations: A block of rooms have been reserved for February 17 and 18, the special conference rate is available for 3 days before and 3 days after. The rate includes complimentary breakfast and internet service.

Single – \$79 Double – \$79 Triple – \$89 Quad – \$99

Conference Schedule:

Thursday 7pm-9pm – Early conference registration

Friday 7am-7pm – Conference registration

Friday 8:00am – 11:00am – Professional morning with Dr. Alan Wolfelt – “Companioning” vs “Treating” the Mourner: Exploring the Tenants of Compassionate

Caregiving.

Lunch on your own

Friday 12:30pm – 2:00pm – Opening: Alan Wolfelt, “Touchstones of Hope and

Healing: Grieving the death of a child”

Friday 2:15 - 3:30pm

1-1 Helping children and Teens cope with grief, Dr. Alan Wolfelt

1-2 “They cried too!” Grief and the White House Families , Harold Ivan Smith

1-3 What is Grief? Grief 101, Alan Pedersen

1-4 Finding the Gifts and Treasures, Marcia Alig

Friday 3:45 – 5:00pm

2-1 Yoga of Deep Rest: Letting go of the mundane, the worry and the past,

Suzette Scholtes

2-2 Tissues and Tears: Exploring the Myths and Mysteries of Crying as part of the

Grieving Process, Darcie Sims

2-3 Struggling to regain my faith, Dennis Apple

2-4 Poetry: Speaking the unspoken, Rebecca Pinker

2-5 Surviving Grief in a “Jerry Springer” Family: Grief and the Dysfunctioning

Family, Harold Ivan Smith

Friday 5:00pm – 7:00pm - Dinner optional: Italian buffet, \$15

Friday 6:30pm – 8:00pm - Entertainment

Friday 6:30pm – 8:00pm – SIBLINGS ONLY Hands-on Workshop – The Birdhouse Project, Kris Munsch ages 5-99 cost \$5 for any sibling not registered for the conference.

Saturday – 8:30-10:00am – Keynote - Kris Munsch, The Birdhouse Project

Saturday 10:15 – 11:30am

3-1 The role of a Professional Medium, Traci Bray

3-2 After you have given the gift of life – Organ Donation Panel – Kay Owens,

recipient family, and staff member at Midwest Transplant

3-3 Healing Guilt and Regret, Alan Pedersen

3-4 Our Children may be gone from our sight but never our hearts: Self compassion for our grieving, broken hearts, Jody Gyulay

3-5 Music and Movement to Soothe the Injured Soul, Dr. Doug and BJ Jensen

Saturday 12:00 – 2:00pm – Lunch – Keynote: Darcie Sims

Saturday 2:15 – 3:30pm

4-1 The Birdhouse Project – A tool for self discovery, Hands-on workshop, Kris

Munsch

4-2 One Fine Thread – How we are all connected, Marty and Renda Weaver

4-3 Moving Through Grief: Roadblocks, Setbacks, Hanging On and Letting Go,

Darcie Sims

4-4 Now Childless – Surviving the loss of an only child or all children, Marie Levine

4-5 Suicide Panel – Jennifer Eller, Laura Couch, Jamie Mulder

Saturday 3:45 – 5:00pm

5-1 Marriage Panel, Tom and Carol Weathered, Dennis and Buelah Apple

5-2 Death of a difficult or troubled child, Marcia Alig

5-3 Spiritual Grief, David and Elaine Howlett

5-4 Creating Memory and Meaning through the Art of Mandalas, Rebecca Pinker

5-5 “...A Time to Weep and a Time to Laugh...” Doug and BJ Jensen

Saturday 6:30pm – 9:00pm – Banquet, Keynote: Alan Pedersen, Love in Motion and Candle lighting Ceremony

January



ANOTHER YEAR

This is another year just beginning— afresh with new days, new opportunities, new challenges. It occurs to me, however, that is a very difficult task to keep from concentrating on the past years and the sadness we endure just because it is a new year and the calendar has flipped the page.

Moving on to brighter tomorrow and letting go of the pain of yesterday is a gradual process. We cross that threshold one step at a time— a small step, at first, faltering and stumbling— but somehow getting there. With patience, effort and persistence,, once again we will be able to celebrate life as the year stretches on before us, putting behind us our sadness, our guilt, our failures and our pain.

We will be able to smile again. We will be able to remember our precious children in life rather than death. We will recognize in our days many little blessings and will be able to share our joys with others

Alice Weening—TCF, Cincinnati, Ohio



Every snowflake that falls is unique and has its own individual design. There are beautiful patterns in each snowflake and even in the tiniest of flakes have their own markings. These patterns change again and again— even after the snowflake touches the ground. Each snowflake is a cause of wonder, each flake is one of a kind. No two are exactly alike. Like the snowflake, our beautiful children were each unique and special ; some we only dreamed about and some danced upon the earth. They filled our lives with wonder and transformed our world. We held them too briefly, but will hold them in our hearts forever. We shall remember them always. At this time of remembering, it may help to reflect upon how our lives have been enriched by the love we have given and the love we have received from our children. Our children leave treasures behind that time can never take away.

Denise Falzon—TCF, Lake Area, MI

In loving memory of her son , Brian Falzon

WINTER

One of the most tragic points in our life will come when the gripping reality of what it means to be bereaved crashes down around us. It may happen sooner, or later, but it will happen. Life changes so much that it is almost unrecognizable to us, like the scene from *It's a wonderful Life* where Harry runs through the town that looks so familiar, yet has been so horribly changed. The terrifying reality of loss can push us into despair that some may never find their way out of. This is the winter of our bereavement- the time when we fall down and cant find a reason to continue. Depression and illness run rampant at this time because we feel helpless and victimized. We have been stolen from, and we curse ourselves for not keeping a more vigilant watch over our precious loved one. Worse than that, however, is that in this bitter time, we tend to push away friends and loved ones who remain, simply because it is just too painful to feel. We can't handle the responsibility of loving anybody again, because the prospect also of losing them and reopening that wound is too frightening to think about. So we become an island unto ourselves in grief, with no outlet for love and care, and no ability to receive it from others,

Another by- product of this realization comes when grief begins to cast a harsh, ugly light onto everything around us. Suddenly everything around us is wrong, everything is a lie, and no one can be trusted. People who do not understand how plodding grief can be may not be ready to bear all of our mood or all of our moans. People grieve differently when faced with the same loss. We never know how we will react until that time comes. Some of us will be sinkers, and some of us will be swimmers. Some will cry often, others will be stunned into silence. Some will go outside of themselves for consolation, and some will pull tightly inward, away from the world. It takes the most incredible strength of courage to not just lie down and die spiritually, leaving the rest of our lives here as wasted time on earth.

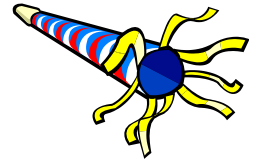
We need to cry until we cannot cry another tear, to scream until there is no more sound, and to swing our arms blindly until we are exhausted by the futility, until we reach the critical moment when we must decide to face fear again, to face feeling again, to face life again.

THE NEW YEAR

The New Year comes
When all the world is ready
For changes, resolutions -
Great beginnings.
For us, to whom
That stroke of midnight means
A missing child remembered,
For us, the New Year comes
More like another darkness.
But let us not forget
That this may be the year
When love and hop and courage
Find each other somewhere
In the darkness
To lift their voice and speak:
Let there be light.

Sascha Wagner,

TCF



February



HAND IN MY HEART

The newly bereaved parents come to our meetings. Such sadness on their faces, and yet that twinkle of hope in their eyes. The hope that we have some answers. They come with heart in hand. Can you mend it? Can you make this hurt go away?

Three years ago I was one of those Parents, and yet after three years I still have no answers and no magical words. Why do I still come? Because the people in this room all know the pain and grief of their child, sibling or grandchild dying. I can talk about my

Child here and not get strange glances. I can cry and not be made to feel I'm crazy. The sharing and caring I receive from the people in this room has made my grief a little easier to deal with.

One day I woke up and found I didn't carry my heart in my hand anymore. It's still battered and bruised, but ever so slowly the healing has begun.

Janet Bryant

TCF, South Central, KY

YOUR VALENTINE "COOKIE"



This Valentine's Day cookies won't taste as good this year. I stirred in the sugar but you weren't here. Frosting—pink on the tip of your nose. Days spun too quickly—my biggest woe. Sis the day have to come so very soon? My heart would dance and I would sing to feel you pull at my apron strings. But instead I'll toil with the rolling pin, and rely on my mind's eye for your silly grin. When the

heart shapes are baked, mine will still ache. But I will always love you—for goodness sake!

Kathy Slief

TCF, Tulsa, OK

SILK ROSES FOR SUSAN



I took silk roses to your grave today. Valentine's Day is coming and you loved red roses. I sat there awhile and remembered your last Valentine's Day. I kissed you and gave you candy with money stuck on the top. You tilted your head in that certain way you had and smiled, pleased at the

gift. Sweet daughter, I miss you so. There was still much of life to share. Nineteen is way to young for dying. I would buy fresh roses for you everyday if I could have you back. But I can't change the ending. So I took silk roses to your grave today, and cried fresh tears instead.

Ginger Elwood

TCF, Tulsa, OK

A VALENTINE WAITING FOR YOU

There's a valentine waiting for you

That's different from all the others.

It's there every month at our meetings

For father, mothers sisters and brothers. It's envelopes is made of caring The glue of understanding seals it tight.

This non-judgmental group who've been there help to take away your fear and fright. So come join with us together. Read your loving message printed clear, in not only this months valentine but all those throughout the year.

Mary Cleckley

TCF, Atlanta, GA