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Community service program
of caring for individuals and
families who are grieving the
death of someone they love.

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MORTUARIES & CREMATORY

7805 W Center Rd
Omaha, NE 68124



From The Heart

Hello again Dear Readers:

October! There's a welcome chill in the air, leaves are showing some color and, as I stroll through a familiar big-box store, an employee is unpacking...Christmas trees! What in the world?!?!

Since there is apparently no point in fighting it, we may as well have at the topic and get it out of the way. "The holidays" are looming again and the loss of a loved one can make previously joyous occasions nothing short of, I'll say it...unbearable.

If we're truthful, the holidays have always evoked a mixed bag of feelings. There are gatherings to schedule, travel arrangements to make, gifts to buy, decorations to haul out. It can be daunting to face and a relief when the new year finally rolls around. Here are just a few responses from our group members to the question "what are your plans for the season?"

"I've been invited to a couple of friends' homes. They've been so wonderful and mean well, but I really don't want to go anywhere."

"Nothing. Mom was always at the center of the holidays. They will never be the same without her and there's no point in pretending they are."

"I'll smile and go through the motions. He would have wanted me to."

"My wife decorated the house, bought and wrapped the gifts, baked and cooked for weeks. I wouldn't even know where to start."

"I'm planning a trip out of state!"

The fact is few people get through the next 8-10 weeks without at least a couple of bad days and a meltdown or two. So, let's revisit some tried and true survival tips. As always, there are no hard rules that apply to all; these are just suggestions.

- If you get an invitation, either decline graciously and say something like "Thank you so much...but I'm planning a quiet day at home. Please though – do invite me again!" OR "Thank you, I'll try to come. But I hope you'll understand if I'm not able to at the last minute."
- When you do attend a gathering, take your own vehicle and park on the street if you can. Then – if you just have to retreat – you can do so quickly and easily.
- Don't pretend that things haven't changed. Some traditions will end for sure, but you can *and will* create new ones at some point in the future.
- If this is the first or even the second season after your loss, be gentle with yourself. Lower or suspend your expectations for what you'll be able to do. Try not to be too surprised if you're suddenly tearful, angry, exhausted or out of patience.
- Remember that you will not always feel the way you do today. Next year – and the year after that – you *will* feel differently. Yes, there will always be sad days and bad days, but you will not be in the same place you are today.

Be gentle with yourselves, dear ones. And enjoy this glorious season that is Autumn!!!

Nancy Nilsson, Aftercare Director
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402-391-3900

••• Join the Lunch Bunch •••

Stop by any Wednesday for good food and friendly conversation. We meet at Tanner's Bar & Grill, 1202 South 119th Street (and Pacific), 11:15. All are welcome, no reservation needed and feel free to bring a friend! (Dutch treat)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *October*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 11:15 a.m. Lunch at Tanner's 1202 S 119th St	3	4	5
6	7	8 9:30 & 10:45 Guest Speaker: Scams & Frauds	9 11:15 a.m. Lunch at Tanner's 1202 S 119th St	10	11	12
13 4:30 pm: Here Come the Holidays 6:00 pm: The Holidays (Again)	14	15	16 11:15 a.m. Lunch at Tanner's 1202 S 119th St	17	18	19
20	21	22 9:30 & 10:45 More on Staying Safe	23 11:15 a.m. Lunch at Tanner's 1202 S 119th St	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 11:15 a.m. Lunch at Tanner's 1202 S 119th St	31		

Heafey-Hoffmann-Dworak-Cutler
7805 W Center Rd • 402-391-3900
5108 F St, Omaha • 402-731-1234

Bellevue Chapel • 2202 Hancock St, Bellevue • 402-291-5000

Cutler-O'Neill Funeral Home

Bayliss Park Chapel • 545 Willow Ave, Council Bluffs • 712-322-7779

Walnut Hill Chapel • 1350 Pierce St, Council Bluffs • 712-322-7779

**ALL SUPPORT GROUPS
meet at
Heafey Hoffmann
Dworak Cutler
7805 W Center Road, Omaha**

For more info contact
Nancy Nilsson (402) 391-3900

**Mark your
calendars for
Tuesday, October
8th when a guest
speaker will
visit our support
groups to tell us
how to recognize
the latest scams &
frauds!**

Caring Thoughts

Aftercare Support Groups

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sunday, October 13, 2024

Sojourners I • 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Topic • *Here Come the Holidays*

Sojourners II • 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Topic • *Here Come the Holidays (Again)*

(Facilitated by Nancy Nilsson, Aftercare Director, & Dr. Bert Jackson)

**All Support Groups meet at
Heafey Hoffmann Dworak Cutler, 7805 West Center Rd.**

"There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle." (Albert Einstein)

An informal group meets monthly (typically the third Monday) for a movie matinee and bite of lunch after. Interested? Contact Carol Johnson for more details at 402-452-4412 or caroljohnson@centurylink.net.

In her "From the Heart" article, Nancy describes several helpful options for getting through the holidays. An online resource I frequently use (grief.com) suggests one more:

"Cancel the holiday altogether ... If you are going through the motions and feel nothing, cancel them. Take a year off. The holidays will come around again and will always be there."
(<https://grief.com/grief-the-holidays/>)

A participant in our support groups calls this approach the "It's just another day" method. I have used it many times since my husband's death. Valentine's Day, for example, is simply February 14th. I've also applied it to significant days like his birthday and our wedding anniversary.

But the November-December holidays are different. It's not just another day. It's a **season**. Some of us may feel like Lane Moore who writes in a *Glamour* magazine article that she wishes she could "...fall asleep on November 1st and wake up sometime in March when all the holidays have come and gone." (<https://www.glamour.com/story/an-open-letter>). But, if children and teens are among the grievers, skipping many of the holiday activities is not an option, and I don't really want to go into hibernation through all of it myself.

Some things I still enjoy, like decorating my home and the Christmas tree, casual holiday get-togethers with friends, and my Washington son's annual Thanksgiving visit. On the other hand, I have never enjoyed sending Christmas cards, baking cookies, large holiday parties, or putting up outdoor decorations so I have crossed those things off my holiday 'to do' list, and I haven't found eliminating them at all sad. In fact, removing them from the list has been **freeing**. Freeing in the sense Nancy and I wrote about, and support groups talked about recently. So if you would like to skip some of the holiday activities and tasks, I hope you will allow yourself that freedom and do so without guilt. Perhaps, it will make the holidays more bearable and maybe even enjoyable at times.

Bert Jackson

Healing Thoughts

Even in the dark you have the power to whistle. •• (Frederick Buechner)

There is a supreme power and ruling force which pervades and rules the boundless universe. You are a part of this power. •• (Prentice Mulford)

Optimism doesn't mean that you are blind to the reality of the situation. It means that you remain motivated to seek a solution to whatever problems arise. •• (The Dalai Lama)

Sneak Peek: Tuesdays This Month

This support group meets the second & fourth Tuesday each month
**9:30-10:30 a.m. (newly grieving) &
10:45-11:45 a.m. (2-3+ years later)**

Oct. 8 – Guest Speaker:
The Latest in Scams
& Frauds

Oct. 22 – More on Staying
Safe

Gently tell friends and family which holidays are important to you – and which are not. You may think they know, but maybe they don't. Could be that Christmas eve is going to be harder than Christmas Day. Maybe you don't celebrate Christmas at all...and that the first night of lighting Hanukkah candles is going to be toughest. Could be you're dreading spending New Year's Day on your own. Tell them. Maybe someone can help make those occasions a bit easier.