

Reflections and Hope Newsletter

A quarterly newsletter honoring organ and tissue donors and their families.

Through the days ahead, my new sense of hope, now nearly an extinguished spark, will grow brighter and larger, and it will warm my life as it has the lives of countless other survivors before me.

~Carol Staudacher



We welcome stories, poems, pictures or ideas for future editions. It is essential to us that this newsletter grows from the hearts and minds of our donor families. Please submit your contribution by mail or email to the address listed on the last page.

Thank you for your participation. Your thoughts may play a vital role in another family's grief journey.

New Beginnings

Spring is around the corner which can bring new life and new hope for many. But for those who have experienced the loss of a loved one, the new beginnings of spring can be difficult to embrace.

While many of those around us experience spring as joyful and renewing, those who have experienced a loss can be deep in the trenches of grief and find it difficult and even painful to take part in the celebration of spring.

We at Donor Alliance hope that if you presently struggle with the impending change from winter to spring, then one day you will find comfort through the transition of seasons and soon will be able to welcome spring and the hope it can offer. In the meantime, be gentle and patient with yourself. We hope that you can find relief through your family and friends and find comfort in the knowledge of the new beginning your loved one was able to give to others through their precious gift of life.



Donor Memorial

There is an area dedicated to organ and tissue donors and their families in Hudson Gardens located in Littleton, Colorado. Here families can gather in the beautiful gardens to reflect upon their loved one and honor the gifts of life they gave.



Grief Literature and Community Resources

Some families have found community support groups helpful following the loss of a loved one.

Families are at any time welcome to contact the Aftercare Coordinator who can provide a list of community organizations. The list covers organizations throughout Colorado, and most of Wyoming, and details the individual programs offered, fees, and contact information for each organization. Many grief groups and counseling services are offered to the public free of charge. In addition to support groups and counseling, organizations throughout the community frequently offer remembrance celebrations, grief related education and workshops for the entire family, as well as holiday celebrations.

Grief literature can also offer comfort, guidance and education to bereaved families. Grief literature, written by Dr. Alan Wolfelt, who founded the Center for Loss in Fort Collins, Colorado, can be found on Donor Alliance's website at the following address;

<http://www.donoralliance.org/donor-families/local-grief-support/>

We hope Dr. Wolfelt's words can offer you and your family comfort and provide ways to help yourself and your family find your way through your grief. Families are welcome to request additional grief related materials from the Aftercare Coordinator such as books, pamphlets, and workbooks for children. Families may also request more by using the contact information in the green box, on the last page of the newsletter.

Keeping a Grief Journal

Some people find writing in a journal specifically for grief consoling.

Writing in a journal may allow you to keep track of the intensity of your grief from day to day. In your grief journal, it may be helpful to note what you feel to be the typical level of grief you experience each day, as well as its highest and lowest intensity.

Monitoring your grief can be therapeutic, helping you to focus on your feelings and fluctuations in the level of grief you are feeling throughout the day and throughout the week. It can also help to identify activities that may allow you to set aside your grief for some time.

In addition, it may aid in recognizing specific activities, situations, or people that offer relief and those that may magnify your grief. A grief journal is also a way to focus on yourself and your emotions, allowing you to have a space in which you can devote to yourself.



Donor Alliance

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Address Change

If you have changed your address please contact our Aftercare Coordinator to be sure that you receive all Donor Alliance correspondence including recipient correspondence, invitations to upcoming events, and other mailings.

If you would no longer like to receive Donor Alliance correspondence you are welcome to contact the Aftercare Coordinator at any time who will remove you from our mailing list.

Seasons of Grief

By Belinda Stotler

*Shall I wither and fall like an autumn leaf,
From this deep sorrow – from this painful grief?*

*How can I go on or find a way to be strong?
Will I ever again enjoy life's sweet song?*

*Sometimes a warm memory sheds light in the dark
And eases the pain like the song of a Meadow Lark,
Then it flits away on silent wings and I'm alone;
Hungering for more of the light it had shone.*

*Shall grief's bitter cold sadness consume me,
Like a winter storm on the vast angry sea?
How can I fill the void and deep desperate need
To replant my heart with hope's lovely seed?*

*Then I look at a photo of your playful smiling face
And for a moment I escape to a serene happy place;
Remembering the laughter and all you would do,
Cherishing the honest, caring, loving spirit of you.*

*Shall spring's cheerful flowers bring life anew
And allow me to forget the agony of missing you?
Will spring's burst of new life bring fresh hope
And teach my grieving soul how to cope?*

*Sometimes I'll read a treasured card you had given me
And each word's special meaning makes me see,*

*The precious gift of love I was fortunate to receive,
And I realize you'd never want to see me grieve.*

*Shall summer's warm brilliant sun bring new light,
And free my anguished mind of its terrible plight?
Will its gentle breezes chase grief's dark clouds away,
And show me a clear path towards a better day?*

*When I visit the grave where you lie in eternal peace,
I know that death and heaven brought you release;
I try to envision your joy on that shore across the sea,
And, until I join you, that'll have to be enough for me.*

*For all the remaining seasons of my life on earth,
There'll be days I'll miss your merriment and mirth,
And sometimes I'll sadly long for all the yesterdays;
Missing our chats and your gentle understanding ways.*

*Yet, the lessons of kindness and love you taught me,
And the good things in life you've helped me to see;
Linger as lasting gifts that comfort and will sustain,
Until I journey to that peaceful shore and see you again.*

