



ASSOCIATION OF
WOMEN
FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Strengthening the Presence of Women in Funeral Service

AWFD Connections

December 1, 2009

If you know someone who'd enjoy seeing this newsletter, please forward them your copy, or send them to the AWFD Web site to [subscribe](#). And if you know a woman in funeral service who would benefit from becoming a member of our supportive network, why not ask her to join? It's easy to do, either via debit or credit card (through PayPal), or by check. Send them to <http://www.wfdconnect.com/join-now/>.

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From the Executive Director

I'm so pleased with the responses I've received to the events, newsletters, and our membership has grown steadily during this last quarter of 2009. But I know we can do more – and would love your views on what you want for the AWFD in 2010. Please write me at kim@wfdconnect.com with your best thinking. So far, it's been suggested that we:

- Sponsor a live event at the NFDA convention next year
- Sponsor two attendees to the NFDA professional women's conference: one student and one licensed professional
- Expand our membership to include funeral assistants and female funeral home support staff members.
- Develop a product line: coffee mugs, T-shirts, and bumper stickers
- Provide members with an AWFD Logo to include on their Web sites

So, what say you, dear friends? Any of those ideas resonate with you? Any other suggestions? If so, send them my way!



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December's Tele-Event: Meditation Time with Sally Taylor



I'm pleased to bring the news that Sally and I have rescheduled our AWFDF meditation session.

The purpose of meditation is to make our mind calm and peaceful. If our mind is peaceful, we will be free from worries and mental discomfort, and so we will experience true happiness; but if our mind is not peaceful, we will find it very difficult to be happy, even if we are living in the very best conditions. When we train in meditation, our mind becomes gradually more and more peaceful, and we will experience a purer and purer form of happiness.

Eventually, we will be able to stay happy all the time, even in the most difficult circumstances.

Usually we find it difficult to control our mind. If things go well, our mind is happy, but if they go badly, it immediately becomes unhappy.

By training in meditation, we create an inner space and clarity that enables us to control our mind regardless of the external circumstances. Gradually we develop mental equilibrium, a balanced mind that is happy all the time, rather than an unbalanced mind that oscillates between the extremes of excitement and despondency.

Sally will be leading us in an end-of-year meditation to release 2009, and set our spiritual sights on 2010. This is a unique way to use meditation, designed to help us 'let go' of what has been, for many of us personally, and certainly for the country as a whole, a difficult, challenging year. Let's get together for 60 minutes, to set the stage for a brilliant 2010! All you need is a quiet space, and your telephone. (I recommend using a headset, if you have one; so you can relax more completely.)

Date: December 8th, 2009

Time: 11:00am PT/ 12:00 Noon MT/1:00 pm CT/ 2:00pm ET

Phone Access Information: (712) 432-0111

Participant Access Code: 675234#



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Begin Here: Helping Survivors Manage



Recently I was contacted by the author of a wonderful book, and it's high time that everyone knew about it. Kat Reed, of www.helpingsurvivorsmanage.com, was very candid about the origins of this volume – and as many women entrepreneurs working to lighten the load of grief and loss – her book was born from personal experience. Her mother died in 2007, and just one year later, her father died – leaving Kat with a double dose of grief and paperwork.

As you know, grieving families are usually overwhelmed with the hundreds of details that need their attention. Where to begin? Here! Kat has created a tool for everyone in this uncomfortable and confusing time. The volume is compact, has pockets for important papers, and has tabbed chapters covering:

- Decedent Vital Statistics
- Support System Guidelines
- Residential, Financial, and Legal Tasks

The regular single copy online purchase price is \$24.99, but Kat offers a deep discount for businesses starting at \$11.99 per book for a purchase of 5-50; \$10.99 per book for 51-450; and \$10.00 for those orders exceeding 500 copies. Customization, with your business/logo/artwork on the cover, is available for orders over 500 volumes – what a great way to keep your firm top-of-mind! Even if you choose not to customize the cover, with the addition of a gold seal embossed with “A Gift from *Your Firm Name*” would make this a perfect bonus for your client families. Here's an inexpensive vendor for such stickers: <http://www.sticker.com/foil-seals.html>. It's less than \$10.00 for a roll of 100. (Just think of all the uses!)

I can't say enough about the value of this book – and would like to suggest that you follow the lead of Watson Funeral Home in Galesburg, Illinois (www.watsonfh.net). Providing this book to your clients would be a wonderful way to support them after the funeral.

For more information on how you can add *Begin Here*, to your marketing/aftercare/outreach programs, contact Kat Reed at www.helpingsurvivorsmanage.com, or by phone at 612-293-6407, or via email at kat@helpingsurvivorsmanage.com.



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Why the Lotus?



Many women I've spoken with have asked me about the AWFd logo: "Is it a lotus flower?"...followed quickly by that one word question we hear from our children as they grow..."Why?"

Here is my most elaborate answer:

The lotus flower has a unique characteristic in that it blooms and sheds its seeds at the same time. In the context of Buddhism, the theory of karma says that, just like the lotus flower, our

life is made up of cause and effect. Every cause — be it action, word or thought — will imprint an effect that can be seen in this lifetime or in future lives.

In Buddhist paintings and sculpture, the Buddha is often seated on a lotus flower. The lotus produces a beautiful flower even with its roots in the dirtiest water. The symbolism is that a person can rise above being rooted in the ugliness and suffering of this world, and should try to be pure and help others with the beauty of the spirit.

Seated there, the Buddha is the symbol of the awakened Mind, which is self-existent, independent, and self-regenerating.

The lotus flower too, is a symbol of "self-regeneration," as it is believed to be able to reproduce from its own matrix. I thought it to be the perfect symbols for our organization...don't you?

If you're currently not a member, and you resonate with the image and underlying concepts, why not take a moment to join us? You can do so quickly by visiting the [Join Now](#) page. It's easy to become a member — I've even made it possible to do so by check, for those of you who elect not to use a debit or credit card online.



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Keeping Up with Funeral Service News

Keeping current with what's going on in the field can be challenging. One of my favorite fellows, Ryan Thogmartin – a big supporter of the AWFd, by the way – has the Web site, *Connecting Directors* (www.connectingdirectors.com). It's **free** to join, and Ryan sends out a daily email newsletter to keep you current; but there's more. With CD, you have a social networking site for funeral service professionals – you can keep in touch with those you know, build your network, and meet new colleagues from around the world.



Another great way to really stay current is *Funeral Ticker* (www.funeralticker.com). Currently, you can download the **free**, easily-installed software, and you'll have all the news streaming across the top of your computer screen. If you want to read more, just click on the related story and you'll be taken directly to additional content via your browser. *Sweet!* Tom created the beautiful button to the left; just click on that, and you'll be able to easily download the software from the site. *Please note: the ticker doesn't work on Apple computers.*



Then we've got the newly-launched, *Memorial Business Journal*. It's a *weekly* resource for funeral directors, cemeterians and cremationists. The editor is Edward J. Defort, who used to be one of "my" editors at Kates-Boylston when I had the honor of writing for their publications. I know the quality of his work firsthand, and that's why I'm pleased to introduce you to him, and his new publication. You can learn more about it all on the Web site, at: <http://memorialbusinessjournal.wordpress.com>.



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I've taken the liberty of posting the October pre-launch issue on the AWFD site, which you can access [here](#). If you'd like a complimentary copy of November's issue, you can download it from [their site](#) quickly and easily, from the link on the right-hand sidebar. While you're there you can take advantage of his special launch offer: \$50.00 off the regular subscription price. That means you'll be paying only \$149 for the first year - which amounts to less than \$3.00 per issue (remember it's a weekly publication).

Here at AWFD, it's not my intention to bring you all the news in the field – after all, I'd only be duplicating the other remarkable efforts to do so (and probably not as well)! The AWFD exists to support you professionally, and personally, by giving you resources you may not be aware of. Such as our teleseminar with Brad Yates on EFT; or December's meditation event with Sally Taylor; and new tele-events are being scheduled for 2010 – so stay current with the [AWFD blog!](#)

Looking Forward to 2010

I'm really excited about the growth we've undergone in the past few months, and know that the Association for Women Funeral Directors will continue to expand with new members, new services, and perhaps a new product line. This is in response to some of our younger members who would enjoy seeing a selection of T-Shirts, coffee mugs, or bumper stickers – trendy ways to promote their involvement with the organization. If you've got ideas for bumper sticker phrases, please send them to me at kim@wfdconnect.com. Any other ideas are also welcome!

Wishing you and yours a splendid December – and don't forget to join Sally and me on the 8th of this month for our end-of-the-year meditation session. Here's to the future! It's looking great so far.

Love, joy and deep appreciation,

Kim Stacey



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