



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Families After a Child Dies



## South Bay/L.A. Chapter



A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND FAMILIES

FEBRUARY 2013 ISSUE

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### OUR NEXT MEETING

will be February 6th, the first Wednesday  
of the month at 7:00 P.M.

#### LOCATION:

The Neighborhood Church  
415 Paseo Del Mar  
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274  
(South of Torrance Beach)

"This newsletter is sponsored  
by an anonymous family in  
memory of our children".

DIRECTIONS: Pacific Coast Hwy. to Palos Verdes Blvd. → Palos Verdes Blvd. becomes Palos Verdes Drive West. Veer Right. → Go to Via Corta (stop sign just past Malaga Cove Plaza). Turn right. → Go down hill to Arroyo (stop sign). Turn right. → Continue down hill to end of street. → Turn left on Paseo Del Mar. → Meetings are held at the west end of the church.

**--Please remember to park in the church parking lot and not on the street.--**

#### WHO ARE WE...

The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization which offers support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Only a person who has experienced the trauma of losing a child can fully understand the pain and suffering involved.

We gather to listen, to share, and to support each other in the resolution of our grief. You need not walk alone, we are The Compassionate Friends.

**February 6th...** This month's topic will start with "How men and women grieve differently".

For a **Picture Button** of your child, call Ken at (310) 544-6690.

**TCF Lunch Group** meets for lunch at Mimi's Café every Friday at 1:00. (Crenshaw and PCH). All members are invited.

**The TCF National Conference** will be July 5 - 7<sup>th</sup> in Boston, MA

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**February 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting ...** This month's topic will start by discussing "How men and women grieve differently". We will share advice on how to avoid some of the common problems that grieving differences can create within a family, and how to better understand how we all grieve differently.

Often we are so caught up with the pain we are experiencing that we don't fully understand how someone else who suffered the same loss is feeling. Pain and suffering, expressing, feelings, denying grief, and the many variables in between, are all different ways of expressing a loss. This month we will be sharing different mourning traits, and ways to deal with others who are mourning the loss of a child differently than you do.

## Why We Grieve Differently



Each of us is unique with our own personality, life experience and ways we respond to the stress and events that happen throughout our lifetime. Therefore, it's not surprising that our grieving styles are different and no two of us will ever grieve the same way. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to feel or grieve after a loved one dies. As bereaved parents, siblings, and/or grandparents, we are inundated with well-meaning and well-intended advice about how we should grieve and are even given imposed "rules" of grief. We are often blamed if we are too "strong and stoic" and likewise judged if we continue to grieve beyond someone's arbitrary time frame. People grieve with different intensities over varying duration's of time. Some people are more expressive with their grief and find it more helpful to talk and intrinsically "better" than another - they're simply different.

Despite the fact that we grieve differently, people generally experience some fairly normal and predictable reactions and stages to traumatic loss.

Initially, shock and denial are typical responses to emotional trauma and serve as a protective response to the reality of what has just occurred. You may feel as though you are walking around in a daze or feeling numb as if disconnected from your life, this usually gives way to overwhelming and intense feelings. Experiencing physical symptoms such

as stomach cramps and feeling as though you can't breathe are common reactions. You may have a sense that your heart has broken into a million pieces. Many people experience a sensation of a knot in the center of their being and have a feeling as though they will never be whole again.

You may experience intense anger and rage. Thoughts and behavior may change. You may experience repeated and vivid memories and flashbacks of the event which can lead to reactions such as a rapid heartbeat or anxious feelings. Often people find it difficult to concentrate or make decisions. It is very common for sleeping and eating patterns to be disrupted for awhile.

As time goes by, you may experience recurring emotional reactions to trigger such as something you see or hear, something someone says or simply the day of the week or month in which the loss occurred. When the reality of the loss begins to settle, you may sink into a deep sorrow and depression and feel your life is over. Usually with time, this gives way to a coming to terms with the reality and a discovery of ways to move beyond your suffering, integrating the loss into who you are now with a renewed sense of hope and meaning for the future.

The grief journey isn't necessarily a linear process. Sometimes you may find yourself revisiting a stage you thought you had left behind and think you're not making progress. Moving back and forth between stages is a normal part of the grieving process. Over time, symptoms of an emotional trauma generally subside to a manageable level and normal functioning gradually returns. If you find yourself resorting to destructive means of coping with the loss or having difficulty moving forward, you should seek professional help. However people respond to a traumatic loss, it is important to recognize that we are unique individuals with unique styles, intensities of our emotions and timetables. We will all respond differently to the loss of a loved one. When we honor this truth, we can then accept our own manner of grieving and be sensitive and respectful to another's response to loss. We all have our unique personal journey back to wholeness and healing.

--Pamela Leonhardt, PsyD and bereaved mother to Michael, 12/02/76 - 7/14/98

## Each Grief is Unique

Excerpts from an article by  
Barbara L. Wiseman, MD.



One of the most surprising and confusing aspects of grief is how differently we each grieve. Each person's grief is unique, and we express it and work it through in different ways. If a couple has a child who dies it is easy for them to assume that they will both experience the same grief. They believe this because they have lost the same child together.

But if they assume they will react and respond in the same ways, they can greatly disappoint each other. Their own personal past histories and experiences with loss will differ. Their relationships with the child will differ. Their roles in the family will differ.

Two particular "patterns" of grieving that are markedly different are those that have been most commonly ascribed to men versus women. These patterns are not exclusive to men or women, just more common. It is also notable that in any couple the partners are usually the opposite patterns.

The feminine pattern for grieving is the expression of emotion by talking and crying. In the first few years after the death of my son, I had an incredible urgency, a compulsion, to talk about the experience of his death over and over. It seemed to me that I practically got to the point where when I met someone, I would say, "Hi, nice to meet you. I'm Barb Wiseman and I had a baby who died." Talking seemed to give some relief to the intense buildup of emotions inside. It also validated the memories of my son. While this was very valuable, that form of grieving is so accepted that many people believe it is the only way to grieve. They think that if someone is not talking or crying, they are not recognized as truly grieving.

In contrast to this is the masculine pattern. The male carries the role of provider and protector, but at this time, he can no longer provide what the other needs to heal or protect her from what hurts. Men more commonly will withdraw to think alone rather than talk in a community. They are also more likely to express their grief with physical activity or action. They want to support their families and the ones they love, but talking about it seems to

just "drag it all back up again."

Jogging, lifting weights, or fishing may give a man a quiet time away to think and remember that person. A man may create something, and the time of creating is a time of remembering and honoring the person.

Men in our society have been conditioned to express anger more readily than grief or fear, so their grief itself is more likely to express itself in an angry form. Women have been taught that sadness is a "safer" emotion than anger, and they may end up crying when they are in fact angry.

Men are more likely to delay grieving. In a family while the woman is grieving intensely and deeply, the man may be trying to hold the family together, and his grief is therefore delayed until he feels she will survive. When finally expressed, the man's delayed emotion may be frightening in its intensity of sadness, anger, and guilt. Couples may almost appear to take turns.

Since we grieve so differently, it is critical to be aware of differing styles or we may come to believe the other person doesn't grieve. One person feels the need to talk all the time and looks at the other. "He's not grieving like I'm grieving. He doesn't even want to talk about it anymore. Maybe he doesn't care. Maybe he's forgotten."

While at the same time, the other person may be thinking, "Why does she constantly have to talk about it? It only makes it hurt all over again. Why drag it up over and over when I can't change it? It can't be fixed."

By compassionate appreciation of our difference, we can avoid this conversation. Some areas of grief work where people differ are prime setups for conflict:

- Expressing feelings - those who need to talk, versus those who find talking too painful.
- Those who find comfort in work and activity, versus those who are overwhelmed and unable to work.
- Those who want to surround themselves with pictures and belongings, versus those who find these things too painful and want them all away.
- Those who turn to their religion, versus those who turn away from their religious training to other spirituality.

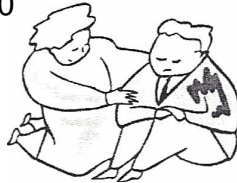
One other area of conflict for men and

women involves sex at this time. Sex can mean the comfort of touching and being alive, but it also opens up the vulnerability of feelings. Avoidance of sex can be misinterpreted as rejection.

We need to recognize that in all these forms, this is unique grief. All these patterns express the pain, hurt, loneliness, and sadness of this experience. Only then can we support and comfort each other in the long process of healing.

-- Bereavement Magazine 5125 Union Bl. Suite #4, Colorado Springs, Co 80920

## **Guidelines for Grieving Couples**



Realize the death of your child-will hurt more than you imagined. It will rearrange your life and world view. Your relationship with your partner will be stretched. There are some things you can do to reduce strain on your relationship.

You and your partner will grieve differently. Let go of the assumption that you "ought" to do it alike. Respectfully make room for each other's style. Realize you cannot meet all your partner's needs. You have limits. You are both overextended. Do seek appropriate outside support when you need it. Focus on what you need. Let go of trying to get your partner to do something different about his or her own grief.

Grief takes its time and is not very predictable. Let go of trying to conform to anybody else's idea of how you ought to be doing.

Women, if you don't see "Dad" grieving in ways you recognize, stay clear of the trap of deciding this means he doesn't care about the baby (or you) very much. Ask him what he does with his sadness and sense of helplessness. Remember, you both hurt. You will both feel it and show it in different ways.

Men, if your partner needs to talk about the baby and her grief is more than you can absorb, encourage her to find additional places to talk. Show her you care in other ways. Keep clear of the trap of thinking you aren't doing it "right". Let go of trying to get her "through it" easier or faster.

Remember other parents have survived this much pain. Life will be meaningful again. Keep

remembering, life will become meaningful again.

--from "Coping with infant or fetal loss: The Couple's Healing Process" by Gilbert and Smart

## **In Time**

When we grieve and hurt, we seem to be more aware of everyone's shortcomings, mistakes, and limitations.

When we grieve and hurt, we seem to be less capable of forgiveness and understanding.

When we grieve and hurt, we must try to realize that feelings of anger and bitter frustration are natural.

We must also recognize that most of this angry sensitivity is temporary.

In time, we will rediscover our ability to understand and forgive many people, not only others in the world around us, but also ourselves.

The important words here are "IN TIME."  
-Sacha Wagner, from *The Sorrow and the Light*

## **For My Compassionate Friends**

This is my love letter to you on Valentine's Day. When Sarah died I thought my heart would never again feel anything except pain. I was so overwhelmed with grief. My thoughts and feelings were only of my own tragedy. And then I met you.

You shared your sorrow and your tears with me. I learned of your loss, your life, your child now gone. And my heart was broken for you - my weary heart, that I thought would never care about anyone else ever again. When you shared the hurting, vulnerable, intimate core of yourself with me, my heart was revived. When you trusted me to know your precious child and your bruised love for this one who was the delight of your heart, my exhausted soul was encouraged.

Your words comfort me. Your hugs strengthen me. Your tears quench my thirst. As I see you heal, I know that I'll also become whole again. When I hear you laugh, I trust that lightness will one day return to my heart. Thank you for being my compassionate friend. I love you.

--Lindy McClean    TCF, Medford, OR



## The Valentines of Yesterday



In my lifetime I have received many valentines. Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, school friends, good friends, boyfriends, acquaintances and my husband have showered me over the years with lovely valentines which I have so appreciated. The tradition of declaring friendship and love on Valentine's Day is a very fond memory.

However, the sweetest valentines I have ever received are from my son. From the first days in nursery school when my son made a hand plaque and a drawing on construction paper to the final valentine in 2002, I cherished these gifts of love from my only child.

I have kept every valentine my son ever made for me or bought for me. I have every valentine gift he ever gave me. These are the treasures that remind me how special my love for my son truly is.

There is no love to compare with the unconditional love we give our children. I think my son knew that no-body in the world would love him as much as his mother did. He also-knew that he would love his children in just this same way. This unconditional love that we give our children is the most precious love in life. It is always our hope that they, too, will find the joy of this love with their children.

When our child dies, we cling to our unconditional love as we feel the anguish of a final separation on this earthly plane and a tsunami of betrayal as the devastation of this uncomprehensible loss sweeps over us. The pain is real. It is physical, emotional, psychological, and forever embedded on our psyche. Yet without that unconditional love, there would be no pain. Who among us would trade the most infinitely rewarding love and the subsequent pain of loss for a life of lukewarm relationships?

And so, on Valentine's Day this year, I looked back at this love, at the good times, the wonderful handmade childhood valentine cards and gifts, and the carefully selected cards of adulthood that my son gave to me. His words, his love, his appreciation for all that we had shared as mother and child are reflected in these treasures.

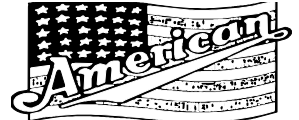
There were tears, certainly, but they were tempered with the many wonderful, sweet

memories of my son and his life. It is these sweet memories which sustain me, give me hope, and bring me gratitude for all that was given to me.

My son is forever in my heart. He is with me every day and every night, and especially; he is with me on Valentine's Day.

--Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF, Katy, TX  
In memory of her son, Todd Mennen.

## Bereaved Presidents



Did you know that twenty of our presidents and their wives were and are bereaved parents?

Our 2nd president, **John Adams**, lost his son Charles, 20, while he was president.

**Thomas Jefferson** had six children and only two lived to maturity. One daughter, May, 26, died while he was president.

**James Moore** lost a son two years of age.

**John Quincy Adams** lost a daughter in infancy; a son died while Adams was president; and another son died five years later.

**William Harrison** had ten children; six died before he became president.

**Zachary Taylor** had six children; two died as infants and a daughter died three months after her wedding.

**Millard Filmore's** daughter, Abigail died at 22.

Our 14th president, **Franklin Pierce**, lost two sons in infancy. History records his wife's grief so great that he resigned from the Senate. Two months before his inauguration to the presidency, their son, Benjamin, 11 years old, was killed in a railroad accident. Mrs. Pierce collapsed from grief and was unable to attend the inauguration. She secluded herself in an upstairs bedroom for nearly half of her husband's term in office.

Our sixteenth president, **Abraham Lincoln** lost two sons during his lifetime. Edward, four years old, while Lincoln was in office, and William, 11 years old. He wrote, "In this sad world of ours, sorrow comes to all... it comes with bitterest agony..." The president's wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, unable to cope with the assassination of her husband and the death of yet another son, Thomas, 18 years old, was confined to a sanitarium. Although she was released after a few months, she was never to

be well again.

**Rutherford B. Hayes** had eight children, three of whom died in infancy.

**James Garfield** had seven children; two died while still infants.

**Chester Alan Arthur's** eldest son died in infancy.

**Grover Cleveland's** oldest daughter, Ruth, died at 13 years of age.

Our 25th president, **William McKinley**, lost both children: Ida, four months old, and Katherine, four years old. His wife became so overwhelmed with shock and grief that she became an invalid for the remainder of her life.

**Theodore Roosevelt's** son died at 21 years of age.

**Calvin Coolidge** had a son, Calvin Jr., who died at 16 while his father was in office. Recorded in his autobiography, the president said, "When he went, the power and glory of the presidency went with him."

**Franklin Roosevelt's** son, Franklin Jr., died in infancy.

**Dwight Eisenhower's** son, Doug Dwight "Icky," 3 years old, died at Camp Mead, MD. In President Eisenhower's autobiography written in 1969 (49 years after Icky died), he stated, "With his death a pall fell over the camp. When we started the long trip back to Denver for his burial, the entire command turned out in respect to Icky. We were completely crushed - it was a tragedy from which we never recovered. I do not know how others have felt when facing the same situation, but I have never known such a blow. Today when I think of it, even as I now I write of it, the keenness of my loss comes back to me as fresh and terrible as it was in that long, dark day soon after Christmas, 1920."

Our 35th president, **John F. Kennedy** and his wife Jackie lost their two-week old son Patrick in 1963 while he was president. The Kennedys' first daughter was stillborn.

**George H.W. Bush** and his wife Barbara lost their daughter Robin, 4years old to leukemia.

--Author Unknown

*Sometimes our hearts borrow from our yesterdays. And with each remembrance we meet again with those we love.*

--Flavia

## Anniversary Days Mean Saying Good-bye



"Does it get easier?" "Will I always feel saturated with pain?" "Will I ever be happy again?"

These are questions we ask after the door has slammed and we've sunk into a dark and bleak pit. These are the questions that crowd our weary bereaved minds, along with all of the "what ifs" and "whys." Our child has died. Our world has caved in. Breathing is difficult. Misery and hopelessness are eaten with breakfast. The ache in our heart is so profound we are certain we will die of a heartache.

We dread each day without our child. Holidays approach and he is not with us to join in the fun. Her birthday arrives, without her here. And then a year since her death is about to pass.

We relive how we felt when first told our son or daughter or sibling had died. We replay in our minds how it was on that horrible day, the day we lived the worst possible nightmare.

We have what no parent wants – a death date to place next to the birth date. We call the death date, the anniversary date. It doesn't matter what we name it, it means the same - a day that belongs to us that we wish was just another any-ol' -day.

The years pass. We gain a little strength. We learn the bereavement ropes. We find others like us to help hold our hand on this rocky and uncertain journey of longing for our child's voice. We try not to let others who do not understand bother us too deeply. Yet each year that date arrives.

For me it is February second, known in the USA as Groundhog Day. February second is the day I watched my son Daniel die. I told him good-bye then, although the words came out unwillingly from my mouth. No one wants to have to tell a child good-bye forever. Each February second, I light my vanilla-scented candle in memory of my tomato-picking-peeing-in-the-woods- watermelon-and-Little-foot-Dinosaur-loving boy.

Each year I am acknowledging his life of four years and his cancer death. I am saying those words I never wanted to say. I am saying good-bye. After eight years, I am still not ready to say good-bye.

Yes, the pain has diminished. Yes, I can smile and laugh again. I can get through months without tears. But the hole in my heart is as real and as present as sand at the beach.

After eight years, February second is still a day I wish never came and a day I wish would never show its face again. Because saying good-bye each year always makes a part of my heart feel chopped up and pounded.

So do the passing of years make it easier on the bereaved? I think so.

--by Alice Wisler

### **“Loss”**

I am here among friends, smiling at their humor  
And making plans for tomorrow.  
But there is another person, lying curled in  
the corner,  
Crying out in unbelievable pain.  
That, too, is me.

I am doing my household chores,  
And the routine is familiar and satisfying,  
A gesture toward a need for living.  
but there is another person, lying in bed,  
Willing her mind a blank, not wanting to  
think or be...  
That, too, is me.

I look at a lovely spring day,  
A view of a world of growth and change,  
A world only God could make.  
But that other person stares through tears  
With unseeing eyes, knowing there is no God.  
That, too, is me.

I am surrounded by my family,  
A gathering of love and joy and tenderness,  
Of cherished moments and warm hugs.  
But another person is there, whose arms and  
heart  
Ache for one she can never hold and comfort.  
That, too, is me.

Very slowly, I am learning there is room  
For joy and fun and cherished moments with  
friends.  
In this hurry-up world, with no space or patience  
For grieving, there may always be two of me,  
And I'm doing the best I can for both.

That, too, is me.

--by Beth Lorber, Gassville, Arkansas  
(Beth and her husband, Bob, are grieving the death of their son, “J. W.” Lorber who completed suicide at age forty- four years.)

### **What Did Your Child Leave You?**

I recently attended a workshop called “Living with Loss.” One exercise was to write an “ethical will” that is an accounting of the intangibles a loved one has left behind. I'd like to share what I believe my infant son left me.

He proved to me that a life truly is fragile, and I will handle it now more carefully. My children yet to come will benefit from my having had, and lost, Michael. He taught me that not all problems in life are monumental, and that I must remember to put things in perspective. He allowed me to reassess my spiritual beliefs. I need to do this from time to time in my life, and that is all right because there is a loving, caring God and he is with me no matter what.

He showed me that each individual, in some way, leaves a mark in this world, or moves someone, regardless of how long his life is, or how short. He gave me a reason and a need to help other people. He reminded me to show and tell the people I love how I feel about them as often and as openly as I can.

--Linda Worth, TCF Bremerton, WA

### **Newly Bereaved...**

#### **Am I Going Crazy?**



Your grieving heart...No, you're not going crazy. And you are also not alone in feeling like you are "losing it". When you think about the overwhelming loss you've experienced, it is indeed a miracle that you *don't* lose your sanity! But there's a safety net built into the wondrous grief cycle that somehow keeps you safe in the storm. You will survive this, sanity intact, and eventually go on to reclaim your life and some degree of joy, despite your loss.

There are many ways in which grief can touch you-- physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. It's an all-encompassing thing, you know? You need to understand that there are a wide range of "grief symptoms", and you may wonder what is "normal" and what is not.

Rest assured that almost ANY symptom you might have, although it would be considered alarming otherwise, is perfectly normal during grieving.

[www.recover-from-grief.com](http://www.recover-from-grief.com)



### For Friends and Family...

Dear Abby: My beautiful 20-year-old daughter was killed in a car accident. I am writing...for all parents who have lost a child, and to all of the wonderful people who asked, "What can I do for you?" At the time there wasn't much anyone could do to help, but after two years I have an answer: Accept me for who I am NOW! When Rachel came into my life, it changed me profoundly. Losing her did the same. Her father and I work hard to honor her memory, but we will never "get over it" to the degree of being who we were before. I am different now ... I am kinder, more patient, more appreciative of small things, but I am not as outgoing nor as quick to laugh.

I know people mean well when they encourage me to get on with my life, but this IS my life. My priorities have changed. My expectations of what my future will hold have changed. Please extend to me again the offer of "anything I can do" and, please, accept me as I am now. – Different now–

Dear Different Now: ... I hope that your letter will help anyone who doesn't understand that the death of a child is the most devastating loss parents can suffer, and that the experience is life-changing. They may get beyond it, but they never get "over" it. To expect that they would is unrealistic, because it's a wound that may become less visible but never goes away.

--As printed in the Independence MO Examiner Feb.- Mar. 2011, pg. 9



### Welcome...

### Why Compassionate Friends?

As a Compassionate Friend you can expect to receive and should expect to offer in return... FRIENDSHIP - nothing more, nothing less. At a time when you may feel abandoned by many friends and family members we gather for mutual support and we share. We share our

pain, we share our tears, we share our kids' stories, we share our precious memories and most importantly we share ourselves. Isn't that what friends do? We can acknowledge and honor our children without fear of being told to "get over it", "move on" or other such nonsense.

We have formed a unique bond with one another. We are not brought together by ideology, belief systems, political agendas, occupation or any other sort of earthly trappings. Our bonds are the most powerful forces of love and grief. We love our kids. We miss our kids... deeply. In this group we can freely share our pain and love with those around us because we know they understand how we really feel and we in turn understand how they feel. Our friendships are borne on the shoulders of mutual understanding of the human experience in its truest form. Often, it isn't fair.

It has been several years since my beloved daughter died. After being on this grief journey for some time, I am constantly awed and inspired by the depth of compassion and love that grieving people share. I have witnessed a young mother, who only had a few short hours to share her lifetime of love for her dying newborn, embrace and comfort a woman who had lost her 40 year old son. Compassion has no limits. Love knows no boundaries - it is universal and complete. These emotions are what unite us and help us to continue when we are at our lowest depth of grief and despair. Our children have become our teachers and guides. How we honor them becomes our connection to them when we feel hopeless and disconnected. How our children died and at what age has little meaning. What matters is how much we loved them, how we remember them and how we carry on in their memory. That is our journey.

--David Derby Littleton, CO

Editor's note: We encourage you to come to a meeting and see for yourself how helpful it is to be surrounded by other bereaved parents who understand what you are going through. By helping each other cope with our pain, we feel it start to lessen. Making a connection with another bereaved parent gives you someone to lean on and share the doubts and fears you are facing. Come try a few meetings and see for yourself how helpful TCF can be.



## Helpful Hint...



### Living Valentines

February is the month for valentines. Giving a valentine is a way of saying, "You are my special friend, and I want to be your special friend, too." Did you know there is a way that you can give a valentine to a loved one who died? It is called a "Living Valentine."

A "Living Valentine" is when you do something that would bring joy and love to your child if he/she were here now. It doesn't have to be something big. It could be simply pitching in to share a household chore with someone in your family, such as doing the dishes together and having fun with it. Or it might be putting out some food for birds on a cold wintry day, or caring for our life giving earth by recycling paper, cans or glass. Pick something that you know you can do.

One nine-year-old boy made his "Living Valentine" by being friendly to a new kid at school whom everyone had been picking on. Making a "Living Valentine" can leave you with a good feeling in your heart. Imagine that your child is sharing that good feeling with you.  
-- Yvonne Williams, Bereavement Magazine, Feb. 1992.

## Book In Review...



Forgotten Tears, written by Nancy Bennett, is a unique and honest portrayal of a grandmother's grief journey following the stillbirth of her granddaughter. A distinctive feature of this book is the validation of grandparents as mourners in their own right. Along with quotes from leading grief authorities, writer Nina Bennett, a bereaved grandmother and healthcare professional, offers an intimate perspective on the process of redefining normal in a life forever changed by the death of a grandchild. Forgotten Tears reviews the traditional stages and theories of grief and also contains personal accounts from bereaved grandparents on various aspects of their grief journey. Although the main emphasis is on miscarriage, stillbirth, or newborn death, the exploration of the grief process is applicable to the death of a grandchild at any age.

## Valentine's Day (Sealed With a Kiss)



Remember how we used to write to those we loved the best?  
Out letters we would fill with hopes and dreams and seal them with a kiss.  
To you our child, we write today - and wish we could impart,  
The hopes and dreams that once we had, now crush our breaking hearts.  
The thoughts of what we had planned for you float through our wishful minds,  
Then burst like bubbles in the air, while dreams explode with time.  
And yet we still have hope and still dream on, and think of all we'll miss,  
And wish with all our hearts we could write to you, and seal it with a kiss.  
The grief we have for you is like a weight upon our chests,  
There's no way we can ignore it - it never gives us rest.  
And no words could ever tell of our longings to express,  
to write a love letter to you, our child, and to seal it with a kiss.  
And if we had but one chance more to write to you today,  
The words would come with no regrets and we'd like for them to say ...  
"To love and to be loved by you, our child ... an honor and so blest,  
Our time on earth cut short, it's true ... But We Sealed it With a Kiss."  
By Faye McCord, TCF Co-Chapter Leader, Jackson, MS Chapter

## We thank the following families for their year-end donation to help our South Bay/L.A. chapter of The Compassionate Friends

Bruce & Karen Sakura in memory of Andrew Patrick Sakura



Ron Acker  
Born: 10/65 Died: 5/95  
Mother: Ursula Spey-Acker  
Father: Heinz H. Acker

Jonathan Adams  
Born: 1/81 Died: 2/08  
Parent: Siv & Eddie Adams

Ramon Alvarez  
Born: 10/84 - Died: 2/07  
Mother: Terrie Alvarez

Sumer Nicole Alvarez  
Born: 5/85 Died: 7/005  
Parents: Dave Alvarez &  
Sandy Murphy

Noah William Aragon  
Born: 1/05 Died: 3/06  
Parents: Rich & Michele  
Aragon

Brandon Armstrong  
Miscarried: July 1995  
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Joshua Arevalo  
Born: 7/93 Died: 8/11  
Mother: Vilma Alfaro

Joseph David Artino  
Born: 11/51 Died: 11/07  
Mother: Nancy Graybill &  
Step-father: Art Graybill

Jason M. Bakos  
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07  
Father: James Bakos

Alexandra Renee Balesh  
Born: 9/73 Died: 3/95  
Parents: Ron & Stella Balesh

Kimberly Barcenas  
Born: 2/88 Died: 10/06  
Mother: Maria Guadalupe  
Ixta

Christopher Barnhart  
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/07  
Parents: Ron & Susan Mother  
Sister: Stacy Pierce

Christopher Michael Barta  
Born: 2/72 Died: 9/04  
Mother: Mary Barta

Stephen Barrington Baxter  
Born: 7/61 Died: 4/99  
Parents: Cash & Betty Baxter

Vincent Beagle  
Born: 11/82 Died: 5/10  
Mother: Angela Beagle

Tristina Ann Beale  
Born: 12/80 Died: 9/08  
Mother: Kathy Beale

Frank Becker  
Born: 11/61 Died: 8/07  
Parents: Al & Louise Becker

Kimberly Belluomini  
Born: 10/62 Died: 10/00  
Parents: Joyce Anderson &  
Ronald Assmann

Sammy Bloom  
Born: 2/59 Died: 12/82  
Parents: Lois & Sam Bloom

Kurt Boettcher  
Born: 12/71 Died: 06/95  
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Todd Boettcher  
Born: 2/79 Died: 10/79  
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Alan Bolton  
Born: 11/63 Died: 3/06  
Mother: Helen Eddens

Kevin Border  
Born: 11/88 Died: 11/09  
Mother: Kelly Border

Antoinette Botley  
Born: 12/67 Died: 7/10  
Mother: Fredia McGrew

Renee Bouchard  
Born: 3/75 Died: 5/06  
Mother: Susan Bouchard

Tamara Lynette Boyd  
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/00  
Parents: Gloria & Gayle Jones

Jazzelyn Braga  
Born: 11/08 Died: 5/09  
Father: Leonard Braga

Lawrence Tom Brennan  
Born: 11/86 Died: 12/10  
Parents: Manuel & Lisa Jo  
Hernandez

William Joseph Britton  
Born: 3/62 Died: 7/85  
Mother: Jean Anne Britton

Sayumi Claire Brower  
Born: 9/08 Died: 9/08  
Parents: Scott & Maiko  
Brower

Devon Leigh Brown  
Born: 5/90 Died: 3/92  
Mother: Heidi Brown

Eric Michael Brown  
Born: 11/65 Died: 9/00  
Mother: Beverly Young

Benjamin Matthew Brytan  
Born: 10/84 Died: 6/96  
Mother: Karen Merickel &  
Robert Brytan

Robert L. Buckner  
Born: 2/92 Died: 3/03  
Parents: Brad & Cindy  
Buckner

Scott Buehler  
Born: 3/80 Died: 2/08  
Mother: Elizabeth Buehler  
Miller

Tony Burack  
Born: 12/63 Died: 12/87  
Parents: Rita & Herb Burack

Brittany Nicole Cail  
Born: 10/88 Died: 4/08  
Mother: Raquel Cail

Albert Caldera  
Born: 3/78 Died: 2/10  
Parents: Refugio & Maria  
Caldera

Christina Califano  
Born: 10/90 Died: 11/06  
Father: John Califano

Cesar Isaac Cancino  
Born: 01/05 Died: 01/05  
Parents: Claudia & Cesar  
Cancino

Kenneth Capparelli  
Born: 1/77 Died: 1/04  
Mother: Sandy Capparelli

Frank Christopher Castania  
Born: 8/94 Died: 7/05  
Parents: Frank & Debbie  
Castania --Grandparents:  
Richard & Ann Leach

Vanessa Roseann Castania  
Born: 2/97 Died: 7/05  
Parents: Frank & Debbie  
Castania-- Grandparents:  
Richard & Ann Leach

Ryan Cavanaugh  
Born: 6/83 Died: 11/06  
Mother: Kimberly Cavanaugh

Zackary Kenneth Charlton  
Born: 11/81 Died: 3/10  
Parents: Christine & Kerr  
Sister: Allie Bentley

Nathaniel Choate  
Born: 7/80 Died: 5/08  
Mother: Vicki Blain

Andrew Alexander Chou  
Born: 12/03 Died: 12/03  
Parents: Lu-Sieng Siau &  
Wibawa Chou

Ophelra Grace Clark  
Born: 10/82 Died: 9/10  
Sister: Rebecca Clark

John Francis Cleary  
Born: 12/74 Died: 8/93  
Mother: Pauline Cleary Basil

Kelly Swan Cleary  
Born: 3/59 Died: 3/95  
Parents: Dick & Bev Swan

Sarah Elizabeth Cooper  
Born: 10/95 Died: 8/00  
Parents: Mark & Sandra  
Cooper

Tiffany Corkins  
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/05  
Mother: Nancy Lamb

Hugo Ignacio Corbalan  
Born: 4/84 Died: 5/08  
Mother: Isabel Acosta

Marika Critelli  
Born: 3/78 Died: 11/09  
Father: Michael Critelli

Joseph Francesco Michael  
Curreri  
Born: 9/80 Died: 10/07  
Mother: Karen Curreri

Scott Curry  
Born: 8/59 Died: 7/08  
Mother: Marilyn Nemeth



# Our Children Remembered



Rodney D. Day, Jr.  
Born: 4/96 Died: 6/01  
Parents: Jersuha Day

Ramsay Downie, II  
Born: 2/64 Died: 10/99  
Ramsay & Sally Downie

Chase Feldkamp  
Born: 5/05 Died: 3/06  
Parents: Buddy & Jessica  
Feldkamp

Richard Lamar Gibbs  
Born: 3/84 Died: 5/05  
Mother: Ann Wasecha

Danielle Ann Davis  
Born: 10/78 Died: 3/10  
Mother: Jackie Davis

Joel Draper  
Born: 1/84 Died: 5/04  
Mother: Tracy Solis

David Joseph Ferralez  
Born: 2/74 Died: 12/02  
Parents: John & Rebecca  
Ferralez

Steven Paul Giuliano  
Born: 4/55 Died: 4/95  
Mother: Eleanor Giuliano

Michael David Deboe  
Born: 12/75 Died: 5/09  
Parents: Dave & Judy Deboe

Rachel Sheridan Dunlap  
Born: 9/69 Died: 3/09  
Mother: Janell Dunlap

Michella Leanne Matasso  
Fincannon  
Born: 8/86 Died: 1/06  
Parents: Bill & Cheryl  
Matasso

Jacob Seth Goar  
Born: 1/79 Died: 5/01  
Parents: Michael & Venus  
Nunan

Phillip Dennis Delurgio  
Born: 11/64 Died: 7/10  
Mother: Denise Nolan  
Delurgio

Myaka Kaitana Durham  
Born: 1/04/06 Died: 1/06  
Parents: Jahman & Ampy  
Durham

Emma Nicole Fisher  
Born: 11/99 Died: 7/06  
Parents: Nancy & Elliott  
Fisher

Morgan Leeann Gomez  
Born: 1/08 Died: 1/08  
Parents: Amanda & Louie  
Gomez

Anthony Joseph Demasio  
Born: 6/52 Died: 7/00  
Vivian Demasio

Scott Michael Dykstra  
Born: 7/72 Died: 10/01  
Parents: Mike & Rita Dykstra

Casey Owen Flint  
Born: 5/75 Died: 7/09  
Mother: Catherine Flint

Nicholas Gonzalez  
Born: 2/63 Died: 10/01  
Parents: Nick & Gloria  
Gonzalez

Lee Denmon, III  
Born: 7/79 Died: 3/03  
Parents: Frances & Lee  
Denmon, Jr.

Gary Edholm  
Born: 5/56 Died: 9/95  
Parents: Patti & Bob White

April Lou Flynn  
Born: 4/61 Died: 1/05  
Mother: Peggy Flynn

Evan Leonard Grau  
Born: 8/82 Died: 5/04  
Parents: Maria & Wayne Grau

Douglas Thhorn Dethlefsen  
Born: 11/64 Died: 11/09  
Father: Douglas G.  
Dethlefsen

Mark Edler  
Born: 11/73 Died: 1/92  
Parents: Kitty & Rich Edler

Mark Frazee  
Born: 5/79 Died: 7/07  
Mother: Kathy Cammarano

Christopher Dudley Gray  
Born: 5/83 Died: 2/04  
Parents: Dudley & Laurie  
Gray

Cori Daye Desmond  
Born: 3/80 Died: 12/09  
Parents: Mark & Monica  
Desmond

Timothy Charles Egnatoff  
Born: 11/92 Died: 9/08  
Parents: Rick & Cathy Reny

Hunter Rebecca Bloem Freese  
Born: 1/02 Died: 4/12  
Parents: Brian & Michelle  
Freese

Matthew Ryan Gregory  
Born: 3/80 Died: 1/11  
Parents: Carol & Fred  
Gregory

Luke Edward Devlin  
Born: 12/07 Died: 12/07  
Parents: Jacqueline & Tom  
Devlin

Luke Emery  
Born: 7/89 Died: 12/99  
Parents: Karen & Glenn  
Emery

Peter J. Fuentes  
Born: 2/68 Died: 3/98  
Mother: Pat Fuentes

Adam Francois Guymon  
Born: 4/89 Died: 4/06  
Mother: Eileen Guymon

Allison Jeanine Kirkbride  
Dewart  
Born: 10/87 Died: 1/06  
Parents: Z & Michael Dewart

Jeffery Mark Engleman  
Born: 6/61 Died: 2/10  
Parents: Janette & Laszlo  
Engelman

Donald A. Funk  
Born: 12/41 Died: 9/00  
Parents: William & Norma  
Jean Funk

Anthony Joel Guzman  
Born: 5/87 Died: 1/08  
Mother: Teresa Guzman

Gary A. Dicey, II  
Born: 4/82 Died: 6/98  
Father: Gary A. Dicey, Sr.

Richard Paul Engelman  
Born: 02/66 Died: 03/95  
Parents: Janette & Laszlo  
Engelman

Mark Scott Galper  
Born: 2/62 Died: 5/97  
Mother: Sheri Schrier

Andrew John Gvist  
Born: 7/88 Died: 5/05  
Father: Mark Gvist

Michael A. DiMaggio  
Born: 10/54 Died: 7/01  
Parents: Neno & Helen Di  
Maggio

Henry Espinoza  
Born: 12/63 Died: 9/98  
Mother: Virginia Espinoza

Melinda "Peeper" Gardner-  
Collins  
Born: 6/56 Died: 8/07  
Mother: Pat Gardner

Justin Todd Gwizdala  
Born: 10/75 Died: 6/96  
Parents: Kathy & Gary  
Gwizdala

Amy Elizabeth Dodd  
Born: 1/74 Died: 7/02  
Mother: Kathleen Dodd

Kurt Faerber  
Born: 8/63 Died: 3/87  
Mother: Trudy Faerber

Justin Brian Gartland  
Born: 10/81 Died: 4/05  
Parents: Brian & Paulette  
Gartland

James Burman Hahn  
Born: 11/68 Died: 12/05  
Mother: Berna Hahn &  
J. Thomas Hahn

Wayne Douglas  
Born: 9/71 Died: 1/10  
Mother: Marie Galli

Jarod Ryan Faulk  
Born: 8/86 Died: 12/08  
Father: Joe Faulk

Grant Henry Hampton  
Born: 3/79 Died: 7/05  
Parents: Jeri & George Medak



Brandon Allen Hanson  
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/10  
Mother: Yolanda Alepe

Robert Belmares Harris  
Born: 12/66 Died: 12/95  
Parents: Bea & Larry Harris

Leslie Geraci Hart  
Born: 6/66 Died: 7/11  
Father: John Geraci

Rachel Anne Hartman  
Born: 2/91 Died: 7/04  
Parents: David & Paula  
Hartman

Robert Hashimoto Jr  
Born: 5/66 Died: 5/92  
Parents: Robert & Shirley  
Hashimoto

Caleb Haskell  
Born: 6/78 Died: 9/06  
Parents: Karen & Kim  
Haskell

Daniel Hassley  
Born: 2/71 Died: 2/90  
Parents: Eila & Richard  
Hassley

Alicia M. Hayes  
Born: 1/81 Died: 5/96  
Parents: Becky & Dave  
Jordan

Jason Patrick Healey  
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/09  
Mother: Sharon Sykes Healey

Emma Joy Heath  
Born: 5/98 Died: 6/07  
Parents: DJ & Phil Heath

Kent Hisamune  
Born: 6/00 Died: 6/00  
Parents: Toshi & Hideko  
Hisamune

Jesse Hoffman  
Born: 1/86 Died: 8/10  
Mother: Gina Hoffman

Hope Ann Honeycutt  
Born: 12/62 Died: 6/00  
Mother: Donna Honeycutt

Adria Horning  
Born: 12/91 Died: 3/07  
Parents: Gary Horning &  
Linda Cipriani

Jeremy Michael Howard  
Born: 7/83 Died: 6/94  
Mother: Donna Howard-  
Scruggs  
Grandmother: Charlotte  
Crager

Jennifer Nicole Hower  
Born: 6/75 Died: 12/04  
Brother: Jeff Hower

Miranda Howells  
Born: 8/91 Died: 11/09  
Father: Walter Howells III

Rachel Suzanne Hoyt  
Born: 2/70 Died: 1/95  
Sister: Laura Hoyt D'anna

Tara Hudson  
Born: 1/86 Died: 1/07  
Mother: Mari Hudson

Chad Michael Huisinga  
Born: 10/74 Died: 12/95  
Parents: Alan & Melinda  
Huisinga

Hannah Nichea Hupke  
Born: 9/87 Died: 6/05  
Parents: Bruce & Joni Hupke

Zane Austin Hutchins  
Born: 9/03 Died: 2/04  
Parents: Mae Rivera & Jon  
Hutchins

Casie Leean Hyde  
Born: 3/89 Died: 12/05  
Mother: Kelli Rigby-Hyde

John Joseph Iacono  
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/04  
Parents: Nancy & Anthony  
Iacono

Ben Francisco Inez de la Cruz  
Born: 1/71 Died: 11/91  
Parents: Francesca Inez &  
Emmanuel de la Cruz

John E. James  
Born: 6/62 Died: 9/93  
Parents: Marilyn & Lupe  
Arvizo

Kalaea Jennings  
Born: 4/07 Died: 9/07  
Parents: Nacio & Maria  
Jennings

Melissa Gale Jetton  
Born: 5/58 Died: 7/84  
Parents: James & Cathie  
Jetton

William Jimenez  
Born: 3/94 Died: 5/04  
Sister: Adrianna Jimenz

Daniel A. Jones V.  
Born: 5/92 Died: 10/09  
Father: Daniel A. Jones IV.

David B. Jones  
Born: 3/50 Died: 3/01  
Mother: Lucille Jones

Thomas Sean Jordahl  
Born: 7/67 Died: 4/03  
Mother: Lynda Orr

Jeff Joyce  
Born: 2/68 Died: 4/01  
Mother: Wadene Duffy

Lance John Juracka  
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/06  
Parents: Frank & Nancy  
Juracka

Heather Mary Kain  
Born: 6/83 Died: 2/10  
Mother: Maura Kain

Edwin J. Kaslowski  
Born: 11/67 Died: 7/96  
Mother: Carolyn Kaslowski

Emily Matilda Kass  
Born: 6/95 Died: 3/06  
Mother: Susan Kass

Scott Ira Kaufman  
Born: 4/68 Died: 7/95  
Mother: Renee Kaufman

Douglas Drennen Kay  
Born: 3/72 Died: 9/06  
Parents: Steve & Diane Kay

Kalin Marie Keech  
Born: 10/90 Died: 6/09  
Richard & Kris Keech

Kathryn Anne Kelly  
Born: 12/72 Died: 1/91  
Parents: Dick & Timmy Kelly

Timothy Michael Kerrigan  
Born: 4/68 Died: 8/02  
Mother: JoAnna Kerrigan

Sean A. King  
Born: 7/63 Died: 12/07  
Parents: Catherine & Michael  
King

Kay Dee Kinney-Palser  
Born: 6/87 Died: 6/99  
Grandmothers: Diana Palser  
& Kay Kinney

Colby Joshua Koenig  
Born: 6/84 Died: 1/10  
Parents: Cindy Tobis & John  
Koenig

Keith Konopasek  
Born: 1/63 Died: 7/95  
Parents: Ken & Mary  
Konopasek

Michael Kroppman  
Born: 12/88 Died: 3/12  
Parents: Brenda & Greg  
Kroppmann

Susan Ann Kruger  
Born: 9/64 Died: 6/08  
Mother: Gloria Swensson

Kyle Kubachka  
Born: 1/89 Died: 11/08  
Parents: Keith & April  
Kubachka

Natalie Samantha Large  
Born: 6/05 Died: 6/05  
Parents: Burke & Maya Large

Dolores LaRue  
Born: 8/57 Died: 11/08  
Mother: Maggie Ramirez

Cherese Mari Lulhere  
Born: 9/74 Died: 3/96  
Parents: Larry & Chris  
Lulhere

Bernard Lawrence  
Born: 2/63 Died: 12/06  
Mother: Jackie Bowns

Bryan Yutaka Lee  
Born: 12/70 Died: 9/07  
Mother: Kathee Lee

Steven J. Lee  
Born: 1/63 Died: 10/06  
Mother: Donna Lee

Avery James Lent  
Born: 12/03 Died: 7/06  
Parents: Crystal Henning &  
Dan Holly





# Our Children Remembered



Wendy Levine  
Born:10/65 Died:11/95  
Parents: Paul & Sharon  
Levine

Michael Lococo  
Born: 2/55 Died: 1/10  
Mother: Patrina Lococo

Richard Lee Luthe  
Born: 11/76 Died: 1/98  
Parents: Jeff & Lorraine  
Luthe

Audrey Sinclair Marshall  
Born: 2/00 Died: 3/00  
Parents: Kimberly & Don  
Marshall

Kyle Jeffrey Martin  
Born: 11/80 Died: 7/04  
Parents: David & Joanne  
Martin

Jason Lee Martineau  
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07  
Father: James Bakos

Michelle Marie Mandich  
Born: 5/89 Died: 2/05  
Parents: Michael & Lori  
Mandich

Daniel Edward Manella  
Born: 9/67 Died: 10/98  
Sister: Kathleen Manella

Elizabeth Mann  
Born: 7/60 Died: 5/05  
Parents: David & Olivia  
Mann

Janet Sue Mann  
Born: 10/61 Died: 9/10  
Mother: Nancy Mann

Gabriella Mantini  
Born: 5/85 Died: 8/06  
Mother: Martha Mantini

Alex J. Mantyla  
Born: 3/89 Died: 8/08  
Parents: Jarmo & Bonnie  
Mantyla

Audrey Sinclair Marshall  
Born: 2/00 Died: 3/00  
Parents: Don & Kimberly  
Marshall

Paul Martinez  
Born: 1/86 Died: 3/08  
Mother: Lorraine Martinez

Daniel George Mateik III  
Born: 12/84 Died: 6/09  
Mother: Stefanie Hudak

Daniel McClernan  
Born: 7/53 Died: 2/07  
Mother: Lee McClernan

Robert Andrew Mead  
Born: 5/65 Died: 4/11  
Mother: Carol Mead

Nicole Marie Megaloudis  
Born:10/84 Died: 2/04  
Mother: Gail Megaloudis-  
Rongen

Alexis Melgoza  
Born: 3/90 Died: 6/11  
Mother: Gina Melgoza

Shawn Mellen  
Born: 05/81 Died: 8/99  
Godmother: Rose Sarukian

Damion Mendoza  
Born: 7/76 Died: 6/92  
Parents: Carlene & Paul  
Mendoza

Shannon R. Middleton  
Born: 2/77 Died: 5/94  
Mother: Candy Middleton

Steven Douglas Millar  
Born: 2/70 Died: 10/00  
Parents: David & Suzanne  
Millar

Patricia Acha Miller  
Born: 1/62 Died: 11/10  
Mother: Christina Acha

Jamie Susan Mintz  
Born: 11/52 Died: 12/04  
Sister: Jessica Mintz

Angel Flores Misa, Jr  
Born: 10/69 Died: 7/06  
Parents: Roland & Luscita  
Dilley

David F. Mobilio  
Born: 7/71 Died: 11/02  
Parents: Richard & Laurie  
Mobilio

Danielle Ann Mosher  
Born: 8/78 Died: 6/97  
Parents: Paul & Rose Mary  
Mosher

Benjamin A. Moutes  
Born: 3/07 Died: 5/10  
Parents: Kevin & Claudia  
Moutes

Peter Anthony Murillo  
Born: 11/72 Died: 10/04  
Mother: Stella Murillo

Christopher Myers  
Born: 10/86 Died: 5/06  
Parents: Janet & Larry Myers

Edward W. Myricks  
Born: 4/72 Died: 10/11  
Parents: Edward & Sandra  
Myricks

Annamay Rebecca Celine  
Naef  
Born: 4/95 Died: 10/11  
Parents: Heinz & Ursina Naef

Christian Paul Nagy  
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/02  
Parents: Paul & Teresa Nagy

Richard Paul Negrete  
Born: 6/43 Died: 2/04  
Mother: Sally Negrete

Joy Ellen Nelson  
Born: 1/97 Died: 1/97  
Parents: Mary Desmond &  
David Nelson

Eric M. Neuan  
Born: 1/79 Died: 3/09  
Parents: Eric & Lynn Neuman

Danielle Nice  
Born: 7/81 Died: 8/04  
Parents: Daniel & Debbie  
Nice

Monique Nicholson  
Born: 7/71 Died: 1/08  
Sister: April Nicholson

Geoff James Nowak  
Born: 11/97 Died: 2/98  
Parents: Christen Murphey &  
Geoff Nowak

Logan Kay Nunez  
Born: 1/95 Died: 4/05  
Parents: Mike & Laura Nunez

Michaela Grace Nunez  
Born: 2/05 Died: 7/05  
Parents: Roger & Jennifer  
Nunez

Sally Anne O'Connor  
Born: 12/62 Died: 2/11  
Mother: Grace "Darline" Dye

Thomas Jinkwang Oh  
Born: 2/72 Died: 6/03  
Sister: Barbara Oh

Tyiri Ojose  
Born: 9/10 Died: 7/10  
Mother: Maureen Ojose

Dominique Oliver  
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/02  
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Henry Ortega  
Born: 5/97 Died: 7/08  
Parents: Henry & Wendy  
Ortega

Caitlin Nalani Oto  
Born: 10/88 Died: 2/05  
Father: Carl Oto

Sally O' Toole  
Born: 10/53 Died: 03/85  
Mother: Kay Arndt

Lucas Hunter Palar  
Born: 11/89 Died: 5/06  
Parents: Hugh Palar &  
DeAnna Williams

Armon Parker  
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/04  
Mother: Sabrina Parker

Annemarie Pellerito  
Born: 9/73 Died: 8/03  
Parents: Vicki & Pete  
Pellerito

Joseph Ryan Persh  
Born: 1/03 Died: 2/03  
Parents: Gary & Jane Persh

Daniel Andrew Peterson  
Born: 1/78 Died: 5/85  
Mother: Gay Kennedy

Richard Phillips  
Born: 9/81 Died: 3/11  
Mother: Lisa Grant

Jennifer Pizer  
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/91  
Parents: Janis & Bud Pizer

Chris Pierce  
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/07  
Sister: Stacy Pierce



Steven Randall Prather  
Born: 9/62 Died: 8/10  
Parents: Stu & Evalyn Prather

D'Juan Marcel Pratt  
Born: 12/79 Died: 11/06  
Mother: Gwendolyn Elaine  
Maiden

Shannon Quigly  
Born: 112/68 Died: 1/09  
Mother: Kathleen Shortridge

Daniel Paul Rains  
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/91  
Mother: Janet Ferjo

Jeffrey Alan Rakus  
Born: 10/86 Died: 7/06  
Parents: Tony & Donna  
Rakus

Julius Ramirez JR.  
Born: 8/10 Died: 8/10  
Parents: Bridle & Jules  
Ramirez

Leo Joshua Rank II  
Born: 3/11 Died: 4/12  
Parents: Roberta & Leo Rank

Tejal Pati Reddy  
Born: 6/86 Died: 12/08  
Parents: Pranitha & Krupa  
Reddy

Richard R. Reyes  
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/08  
Mother: Terry Reyes

Aaron Rico  
Born: 12/89 Died: 12/10  
Parents: Cameron & Annette  
Rico

Keith Patrick Riley  
Born: 3/69 Died: 10/99  
Parents: Kevin & Debby  
Riley

Christopher Rivera  
Born: 10/67 Died: 1/06  
Mother: Katherine Wagner

Ryanne Robles  
Born: 10/12 Died: 10/12  
Mother: Glenda Osborne

Ruth "Vanny" Rodriguez  
Born: 10/73 Died: 5/01  
Parents: George & Ruby  
Rodriguez

Christine E. Rojas  
Born: 6/64 Died: 12/94  
Parents: Ray & Esther Rojas

Jamie (James) Lloyd Roman  
Born: 4/78 Died: 2/97  
Mother: Carolyn Roman

Frankie Romero  
Born: 10/81 Died: 9/93  
Mother: Magdalena Hilda  
Salas & Francisco L. Romero

Dominic Roque  
Born: 8/02 Died: 1/09  
Parents: Kerrie & Ren Roque

James Garrett Ross  
Born: 12/74 Died: 10/05  
Parents: Jim & Sharon Ross

Michael William Roth  
Born: 6/71 Died: 12/08  
Parents: Karen & William  
Roth

John Patrick Rouse  
Born: 1/78 Died: 7/02  
Mother: Sharon Rouse

Michael B. Ruggera, Jr.  
Born: 4/51 Died: 4/96  
Parents: Michael & Frances  
Ruggera

Shannon Quigley  
Runningbear  
Born: 12/68 Died: 1/09  
Mother: Kathleen Crowley  
Shortridge

Joseph Sahu  
Born: 6/89 Died: 4/12  
Parents: Ron & Cathy Sahu

Armando Sainz  
Born: 6/76 Died: 2/02  
Mother: Jennie Hernandez

Andrew Patrick Sakura  
Born: 3/90 Died: 3/08  
Parents: Bruce & Karen  
Sakura

Jeffrey Alan Sampson  
Born: 3/86 Died: 5/05  
Parents: Claude & Paula  
Sampson

Lisa Sandoval  
Born: 9/76 Died: 12/92  
Parents: Susan & Ruben  
Sandoval

F. Marlow Santos  
Born: 10/84 Died: 7/93  
Parents: Fred & Julie Gillette

Karen Ailegra Scholl  
Born: 8/64 Died: 4/99  
Mother: Kay Scholl

Matt Scholl  
Born: 2/73 Died: 4/08  
Parents: Bill & Kay Scholl

Candace Arond Schonberg  
Born: 3/98 Died: 11/00  
Parents: Andrene & Arond  
Schonberg

Jonathan "Jamie" Schubert  
Born: 7/65 Died: 12/06  
Parents: Lynn & Roy  
Schubert

Melissa Lauren  
Schweisberger  
Born: 10/84 Died: 11/99  
Parents: John & Margarita  
Schweisberger

Dylan Elwood Sievers  
Born: 8/08 Died: 8/08  
Parents: Daren & Marne  
Sievers

Tyson Donald Sievers  
Born: 8/08 Died: 9/08  
Parents: Darren & Marne  
Sievers

Gerald Slater  
Born: 2/71 Died: 8/94  
Parents: Bob & Gwen Slater

Joel Paulson Draper  
Born: 1/84 Died: 3/04  
Mother: Tracy Solis

Jeff Eric Snowden  
Born: 2/61 Died: 6/01  
Parents: Daryle & Sandra  
Snowden

Larry A. Stauffer  
Born: 1/67 Died: 5/08  
Mother: Shirley Finnin

Miaamor Jennine Steeh  
Born: 7/05 Died: 9/10  
Father: Donya Steen

Daniel John Swiggum  
Born: 6/88 Died: 7/08  
Parents: Stewart & Marian  
Swiggum

Elizabeth D. Szucs  
Born: 4/72 Died: 6/11  
Parents: Dolores & Frank  
Szeus

Joseph Tauaefa  
Born: 2/85 Died: 7/10  
Parents: Loi & Sioka Tauaefa

Kristi Nicole Taylor  
Born: 5/80 Died: 9/94  
Parents: Kathy & Cory Taylor

John Teresinski  
Born: 12/67 Died: 1/00  
Parents: Beverly & Victor  
Teresinski

Ryan William Thomas  
Born: 2/82 Died: 4/04  
Mother: Linda Thomas

Laura C. Toomey  
Born: 1/69 Died: 12/78  
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth  
Toomey

Michael D. Toomey  
Born: 4/62 Died: 2/05  
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth  
Toomey

Nathan Torbert  
Born: 1/78 Died: 12/05  
Mother: Rebecca Williams

David Torres  
Born: 6/66 Died: 3/06  
Mother: Joyce Whirry

Marcelo Torres  
Born: 8/81 Died: 9/03  
Parents: Jaime & Carmen  
Torres

Brian Gregory Trotter  
Born: 10/78 Died: 8/94  
Mother: Abby Trotter-Herft

Ubong Jabari Uko  
Born: 2/81 Died: 5/09  
Mother: Denise Dues

Vance C. Valdez  
Born: 10/90 Died: 3/12  
Mother: Maria R. Valdez

Lexi Noelle Valladares  
Born: 4/04 Died: 7/10  
Parents: Fausto & Erica  
Valladares



## Our Children Remembered



Mark T. Vasquez  
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/11  
Parents: Manuel & Blanca Vasquez

Gregory Earl Veal  
Born: 2/90 Died: 7/00  
Mother: Virginia Veal

Tommy Villanueva  
Born: 10/68 Died: 5/02  
Parents: Jennie & Edgar Villanueva

Justin Alexander Velasquez  
Born: 7/12 Died 7/12  
Parents: Ricardo & Marcie Velasquez

Eric Douglas Vines  
Born: 7/77 Died: 7/91  
Parents: Doug & Lynn Vines

Mark Daniel Vinson  
Born: 11/78 Died: 7/10  
Mother: Virginia Vinson

Serena Yasmeen C. Viveros  
Born: 11/05 Died: 11/05  
Mother: Brenda Viveros

Chris Henry Vogeler  
Born: 9/66 Died: 12/04  
Parents: Frank & Lois Fisher

Marisa Ann Vuoso  
Born: 7/83 Died: 3/93  
Parents: Debbie & Marco Vuoso

Kristopher Wadman  
Born: 11/82 Died: 10/00  
Parents: Michael & Melodie Wadman

Carl Alan Wagenknecht  
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/04  
Parents: Tom & Janis Wagenknecht

Jeffrey Sinclair Wagstaff  
Born: 9/80 Died: 4/99  
Parents: Johnny & Barbara Walker  
Sister: Sheimekia Wagstaff

Cory Dylan Walker  
Born: 8/76 Died: 3/01  
Parents: Jim and Susan Walker

Eric Webb  
Born: 6/85 Died: 10/07  
Parents: Jim & Vickie Webb

Dennis William Webber  
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/05  
Parent: Blaine & Sin Young Webber

Sharon Ann Wendt  
Born: 6/54 Died: 4/99  
Parents: Mr. & Mrs. Carmel Doucet

Brian Scott West  
Born: 8/70 Died: 4/08  
Parents: David & Connie Schlottman

Andreas Wickstrom  
Born: 12/83 Died: 12/01  
Parents: John & Inge Wickstrom

Victoria Winchester  
Born: 2/57 Died: 2/84  
Mother: Erin Adams

Jennifer Winkelspecht  
Born: 7/75 Died: 8/95  
Parents: Brian & Lisa Winkelspecht

Jordan Michael Witte  
Born: 1/87 Died: 11/08  
Parents: Licha & Mike Witte

Bob Woodyard  
Born: 7/55 Died: 10/08  
Bill & Barb Woodyard

Amy Woolington  
Born: 10/85 Died: 1/07  
Parents: Pam Weiss & John Woolington

Christopher Wootton  
Born: 11/86 Died: 5/08  
Father: Jim Wootton

Cristofur Daye Wroten-Kennedy  
Born: 2/75 Died: 9/01  
Mother: Dusty Wroten  
Father: Joe Kennedy

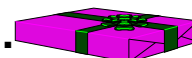
Steve R. Young  
Born: 7/57 Died: 2/90  
Mother: Marjorie Young

Whitney Marie Young  
Born: 8/87 Died: 11/06  
Parents: Marlene & Steve Young

Thomas Zachary  
Born: 12/85 Died: 7/11  
Father: Bob McGaha

Kevin Zelik  
Born: 11/85 Died: 6/10  
Parents: Joe & Linda Zelik

## Birthday Tributes...



In honor of your child's birthday, we welcome you to submit a birthday tribute. Though your child is no longer here to buy a present for, think of this as a birthday present about your child. This tribute is an opportunity to share your child with us all. (We thank you for any birthday donations that help offset chapter expenses.)

Sorry, no tributes were submitted this month.

## For Siblings...



## How Can They Move On?

How can they move on? Every day I realize that while my brother's death may have touched many people's lives, they seem to be able to just pick up where they left off and continue with their lives. For me, it has been so much harder.

I learned this week, that last year my brother's girlfriend had gotten married. While I am very happy for her to have finally been able to love again, my happiness is also filled with a little jealousy. I think of my brother at some point every day. Does this mean that she has forgotten him? I have asked myself this question all week. I hope that she hasn't and at least remembers the good times that they had sometimes. I find it hard to think of her with someone else, but she was so miserable for so long, she deserves a little happiness. I was also told that she is pregnant and is having her baby soon. When I heard this I almost cried. I think that was harder than finding out that she was married. Then a real jealousy kicked in. I thought, "Hey, what about Sean's baby?" He'll never know the joy of being a parent. After mulling this around for a while, I realized that everyone must move on.

Sometimes I feel as if I can't go

on another day because I feel so much pain. That pain is not as strong as it was two or three years ago, but it does come back to visit now and then.

When Sean first died, a few of his friends came over a lot. Over the past few years, that began to happen less and less until his friends stopped coming at all. One of his friends still comes by or at least calls my mom at Christmas. Another puts presents on his grave occasionally.

I know that a lot of people cared about my brother, but I think that knowing him for 19 years and being as close as we were has made it all the harder for me. I know that he watches over our family and is always with us. I know in my heart that moving on is not the same as forgetting. I hope with my heart that all who knew Sean still spare at least one thought for him once in awhile. While I wish every one of his friends much happiness in their lives, I hope that they will never forget.

--Tracy Morlock St. Louis, MO

## You're Always With Me

Though you're no longer with me,  
Every day I find,  
One way or another,  
You're back there on my mind.  
I might hear a piece of music,  
And at once my mind is stirred, Back  
to a treasured moment.  
The two of us shared.  
I never try to stop them,  
I let them just flow through,  
It's just my way of spending time,  
Once again with you.  
Jodie Day, TCF, Washington  
In memory of her brother, Wayne Day

## For Grandparents...



## A Grandparent's Lament

"My seven-year-old grandchild was killed in a tragic accident. We had such wonderful times together. He was the shining light of my life. And now he is gone. I feel sorry for my daughter and son-in-law, but they have lots of support from caring friends. No one

seems to understand my agony. Grandparents mourn too!"

**Rabbi Grollman responds:** How true. The grandparent-grandchild relationship is very special. With quality time they provide the biggest laps, make few demands, and give many gifts. It has often been said that parents aren't supposed to bury their children. But neither are grandparents supposed to bury their grandchildren. When a child dies, both parents and grandparents have lost a part of their future - one of the most horrific blows that human beings can endure.

There is the double assault of grieving for a grandchild while witnessing the suffering of your daughter and son-in-law. Your grief work may be different. Memories and attachments are not the same. Each of you has been rocked in individual paths to the very depths of your being in the attempt to patch together the pieces of your shattered lives. You must find a way to express what you are feeling or this suffering will stay inside you and fester. Seek out those with whom you can share your heartbreak. Pour out these emotions of grief and if necessary repeat them time and time again.

Perhaps keep a journal for your eyes alone to flood out your sorrow. But most of all, talk. Talk to your friends, family, clergy, neighbors, support group or a professional counselor. How sorely you need their expressions of help, warmth and understanding.

The death of your grandchild may also result in an even closer relationship with your daughter, son-in-law, and the rest of your family. Recall the unforgettable memories of the past as you search for a meaningful future. Even in your overwhelming despair, you will realize that part of that child's life will live with you forever.

-- Rabbi Earl A. Grollman

TCF Now on Facebook ... Please visit and help promote The Compassionate Friends National Organization's new Facebook page by becoming a fan. You can get there by clicking on the link from TCF's national website home page at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org). Or, you can



log into Facebook and search for The Compassionate Friends/USA. In addition to the social support aspect, The Compassionate Friends/USA Facebook page will have information about upcoming events.

Our Website... We are now posting a tribute page for each of our children. Please visit the site and add your child's information. You can also download the monthly newsletter which will help defray chapter expenses of the printing and mailing of your newsletter. (Please let us know if you can be removed from the regular mailing list.) Contact Crystal at: [crystal@tcfsbla.org](mailto:crystal@tcfsbla.org) and she will help you with the steps to create your own tribute.

The National Office of TCF has an ongoing support group for parents and siblings online. For a complete schedule and to register for Online Support, visit <http://compassionatefriends.org> and follow the directions to register.

Healing the Grieving Heart... Featuring experts who discuss the many aspects of grief, with a main focus on the death of a child and its effects on the family. "Healing the Grieving Heart" can be heard on the Web live at [www.health.voiceamerica.com](http://www.health.voiceamerica.com).

Welcome New Members ... We welcome our new members to our chapter of TCF. We're sorry you have a need to be with us, but we hope you feel you have found a safe place to share your grief and will return. It often takes a few meetings to feel at ease in a group setting. Please try attending three meetings before deciding if TCF is for you. Each meeting is different, and the next one might be the one that really helps.

We encourage you to take advantage of our resources. We have a well stocked library of grief materials, a phone friend committee that welcomes calls at any time, and a members' directory to call another parent you have met at the meetings.

**Thank You ...** Thank you to all those who donate to our meeting basket or send donations to our chapter. Since there are no

fees or dues to belong to TCF, your donations keep us functioning, and we appreciate your help.



**Birthday Tributes...** During your child's birthday month, you may place a picture and either a short personal message, poem, or story about your child in the newsletter. (Less than 200 words, please.) Do not cut your picture. We will block off unused areas. If it is a group photo, identify the person to be cropped. This tribute is an opportunity to tell a short story about your child, so we will be able to know them better. Photos must have identification on the back. Enclose a SASE in order for photos to be returned by mail. (Please do not send your only picture.)

Tributes must be in by the 1st of the month preceding your child's birthday month or at the prior meeting. (Example: Feb 1<sup>st</sup> for March birthdays). Otherwise they will appear if space permits or in the following month's issue.



**Phone Friends ...** Sometimes you want or need to talk about the life and death of your child with someone that understands and can share your pain. The following friends are on the telephone committee, and are available to talk when ever you need someone who understands.

Cheryl Stephens.....(323) 855-2630  
 Kitty Edler.....(310) 541-8221  
 Karen Merickel..... (310) 375-2498  
 Richard Leach (grandchild).....(310) 833-5213

**SIBLING PHONE FRIENDS**

Kristy Mueller..... (310) 373-9977  
 Joey Vines..... (310) 658-4339  
 Sue Gardner..... (310) 316-3777

**Memory Book...** Our chapter has an ongoing Memory Book. Each child is given a page in the book. Pictures, poems, or a tribute you choose that will help us to remember your child can be included. Feel free to add your picture to the Memory Book at any of our meetings. This is one way we can meet and remember the new member's children.

**Library Information...** At each meeting we have a library table. It is on the honor system. You may borrow a book and can bring it back at the next meeting. Many of

you have books you got when you were newly bereaved and may no longer need. Perhaps you would like to donate books on grief that you found helpful. If you wish to donate a book to our library, please let the librarian know so we can put your child's name on a donation label inside the book.

**Newsletter...** For those of you who are receiving the newsletter for the first time, it is because someone has told us that you might find it helpful. We warmly invite you to attend one of our meetings. Please let us know if you know of someone who could benefit from our newsletter which is sent free to bereaved parents. We do ask that professionals, friends, and family members contribute a donation to help offset the costs involved. If any information needs to be changed, or if you would like your child included in the "Our Children Remembered" section, please contact the editor at (310) 530-3214.

#### **Additional Grief Support .... Bereavement Organizations and Resources:**

**TCF National Newsletter:** For all bereaved parents and siblings. Published quarterly; subscription fee. Contact TCF Inc., P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696 (630) 990-0010

**FAMILY & FRIENDS OF MURDER VICTIMS:** Rose Madsen, (909) 798-4803 Newsletter and support group, e-mail Roseydoll@aol.com

**ALIVE ALONE:** For parents who have lost their only child, or all their children. 1112 Champaign Dr., Van Wert, OH 45891 Newsletter available. www.Alivealone.org

**SURVIVORS AFTER SUICIDE:** Support Group for families that have lost someone to suicide. Contact Sam & Lois Bloom (310) 377-8857

**OUR HOUSE/BEREAVEMENT HOUSE:** 1950 Sawtelle Blvd., Suite 255, L.A., CA (310) 475-0299

**PATHWAYS HOSPICE:** Bereavement support and sibling group. Bill Hoy (562) 531-3031

**NEW HOPE GRIEF SUPPORT COMMUNITY:** Grief support and education groups for adults and children. Susan K. Beeney, P.O. Box 8057, Long Beach, CA 90808, (562) 429-0075

**PROVIDENCE TRINITY CARE HOSPICE AND THE GATHERING PLACE:** Various bereavement support groups including support for loss of a child, support group for children 5-8, 9-12, and teens. Also Spanish. Call Claire

Towle or Patty Ellis (310) 374-6323

**THE LAZARUS CIRCLE:** Monthly grief support. Meets third Thurs of each month, 6-7:15 at First Lutheran Church, 2900 W. Carson St. Torrance

**SHARE Pregnancy & Infant Loss:** Contact: Megan Heddlesten (800) 821-6819

**Walk With Sally:** Cancer loss bereavement & art therapy for children- Monica Fyfe (310) 378-5843

#### **Other Grief Support Websites...**

agast.org (for grandparents)	groww.com
beyondindogp.com	griefwatch.dom
angelmoms.com	babysteps.com
webhealing.com	healingafterloss.org
survivorsofsuicide.com	opentohope.com
taps.org (military death)	alivealone.org
bereavedparentsusa.org	childloss.com
goodgriefresources.com	save.org
pomc.com (families of murder victims)	

#### **LOCAL TCF CHAPTERS**

**Los Angeles:** (310) 474-3407 1st Thurs.

**Orange Coast/Irvine:** (949) 552-2800 1st Wed.

**Orange Co./Anaheim:** (714) 993-6708

**Pomona/San Gabriel:** (626) 919-7206

**Redlands:** (800) 717-0373 3rd Tues.

**Riverside-Inland Empire:** (909) 683-4160

**Ventura Co. TCF:** (805)981-1573 1&3 Thurs.

**Verdugo Hills:** (818) 957-0254 4th Thurs.

**San Fernando Valley:** (818) 788-9701 2nd Mon.

#### **A SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

Post Net Printing for their help in printing our newsletters each month and to The Neighborhood Church for the use of their facilities for our meetings.

#### **STEERING COMMITTEE OFFICERS:**

CHAPTER LEADER: Cheryl Stephens

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines

PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks

TREASURER: Ken Konopasek

CARDS & WEBSITE: Crystal Henning

NEW MEMBER FOLLOW-UP: Cheryl Stephens



# DONATIONS TO THE SOUTH BAY/L.A. CHAPTER OF THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

In loving memory of Robert Hashimoto Jr., 5/66 - 5/91. Robert Jr. And Dad by the same names are together and Len, two years younger and Mother will join them for a final celebration guided by the spirit that forever binds us.

In loving memory of Brandon Armstrong, July 1995 - July 1995 and Dominique Oliver May 1985 - March 2002.... not a day goes by where I don't think of you or miss you. You two are the guiding force that makes me want to live, not just exist... Love, Mom

In loving memory of Chad Michael Huisinga, 10/74 - 12/95. You will live in our hearts forever.  
Love, Mom & Dad

In Loving memory of Jonathan Adams, 1/81 - 2/08. You 31<sup>st</sup> birthday is coming up and the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your sudden death soon after that. Impossible to imagine that you have been gone that long. Always missing you! Mom

With sincere gratitude and deep appreciation, we acknowledge the generosity of the previous individuals and companies. Your tax deductible donation, given, in memory of your loved one enables us to reach bereaved parents with telephone calls and information, and they also help defray newsletter and mailing costs. Please help us reach out to others in this difficult time. Indicate any special tribute you wish printed in our newsletter.

When making a donation, please make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. Chpt.

Mail to: The Compassionate Friends So Bay/ L.A. Chapter  
P.O. Box 11171  
Torrance, CA 90510-1171

In loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Birth date \_\_\_\_\_ Death date \_\_\_\_\_ Sent from \_\_\_\_\_

Tribute \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

To include your donation in the next newsletter, we must receive it by the first of the month or it will appear in the following issue.

Compassionate Friends  
South Bay/L.A., CA Chapter  
P.O. Box 11171  
Torrance, CA 90510-1171  
--Change of Service Requested--

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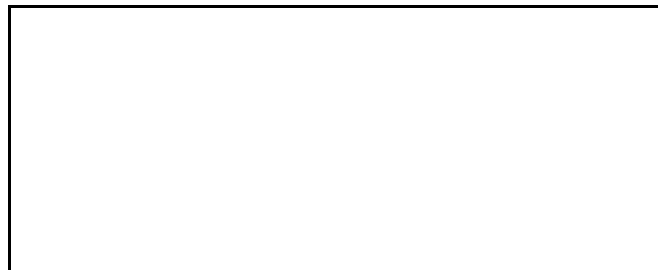
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***If love could have saved you,  
You would have lived forever.***

--Author unknown,  
bereavement quotes, TCF website



February 2013

Time Sensitive Material, Please Deliver Promptly



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.  
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes,  
but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain,  
just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.  
We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships.  
We are young, and we are old.

Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh  
and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength,  
while some of us are struggling to find answers.  
Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression,  
while others radiate an inner peace.

But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends,  
it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have  
died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to  
building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the  
joy,  
share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts,  
and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.  
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