



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Families After a Child Dies



South Bay/L.A. Chapter



A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND FAMILIES

JUNE 2012 ISSUE

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

OUR NEXT MEETING
will be June 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)

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.

JUNE 6th...

This month friends and family are invited to our Pot-Luck Remembrance program instead of our regular meeting.

Upcoming Events: July 20-22: TCF 35th National Conference... Are you coming? **Can you volunteer to help? Limited financial support** is available for our chapter members. (Respond ASAP) See pg. 17 for more information.

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

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

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June 6th Meeting ... is our pot-luck remembrance program instead of our regular meeting. This newsletter will address June celebrations while grieving. Father's Day, graduations, and upcoming weddings may bring up unresolved feelings. Your child should have been going to summer camp, proms, graduating, looking forward to summer vacation, maybe participating in a wedding, or even getting married. Since he/she is not here, do we still partake? Do we continue the way we used to do things or make adjustments as needed?

Summer is almost here and the thought of planning a vacation can be overwhelming. The doubts begin to haunt us. How can we even think of making plans to have fun ... it's all we can do to get through a regular day, let alone planning and going on a trip of some kind. We each need to examine ways we can look ahead to the summer. Together, let's start with our annual balloon liftoff.

Friends and Family are Invited to our Balloon Liftoff and Pot-luck Dinner



In June, instead of a regular meeting, we have our pot-luck dinner and balloon liftoff to honor the memory of our children. Friends and family members are invited to attend as we write messages of love to our children and send them off together. This is a time to reaffirm the love that we still share for our child with our friends and family. We will meet in the Fellowship hall, write our messages, and send the balloons off together. Then we will return for a light supper and a short program. Each family is asked to bring a main dish and either a salad or dessert to share.

The button machine will be at the event so those of you who would like to make a picture button can do so. If you would like a picture button made, bring a picture with you for each button you would like made. Color Xerox pictures work great. If you mail them to Ken ahead of time they will be ready for pick up at the dinner. For those attending the upcoming conference in July, take advantage and avoid the long lines of other parents who are having their picture buttons made. The Memory Book pictures of our children will also be on display. If you haven't brought a picture in for the memory

book, now is a good time.

Balloon Lift-Off

We stand together - yet each alone - tightly holding our balloons by the string, with our hand-written messages to our children carefully tied at the end. At a signal we release our grasp and the balloons soar upward, carried by the brisk wind. Moving quickly, they strangely seem to stay together, like a group of children running across a field.

No one says a word. We just stand and watch, each of us lost in his own thoughts, eyes fixed on that special balloon, watching as it goes higher and higher, growing smaller and smaller until it disappears, no matter how hard we strain to see. Like our children, we know that they are still there - just no longer in our sight. It is a painful, bittersweet experience.

I guess I have attended close to a dozen balloon lift-offs in the years since my son died, and my feelings are always the same. There is the awful pain of knowing that - like our children - we can't call them back - can't hold them again - can't even see them again. And at the same time, there is the unspoken deep-down hope that somehow our child knows about that special balloon and its message of love. With the simple faith of a child writing a letter to Santa, we fantasize that our message will be received and read - that somehow a tangible connection has been made with our child if only for a brief moment. It is a powerful moment. It is a beautiful, poignant moment that we will all carry in our hearts and thoughts for days to come. And for weeks to come we will recapture that precious moment every time we see a balloon soaring toward the heavens

--Carole Ragland, TCF Houston West Chapter

Summer of Grief

Summer is here and along with a new season comes a new batch of things we will no longer be able to do with a child who has died. Vacations, picnics, bike riding, even mowing the yard can become filled with painful reminders of what was or should have been. There are no road maps for this journey, no easy steps to follow but here are a few things I've learned to help me cope.

I keep pictures of Missi in my car, wallet, and suitcase - these remind me of the memories I carry in my heart. I retrieve them often.

When I go to a special event, such as a wedding, I visualize Missi in a conspicuous spot like perched on a beam or anyplace a mischievous angel might alight. In my mind, she is always smiling, enjoying the event and adding her own twist of humor to the proceedings.

I always find at least a few minutes to be alone with my sadness and regrets. I shed a tear if I feel the need. I need this time to pull myself together and find enough inner peace to be a part of the living world. I remind myself that many of the people around me grieve for Missi, too. As central as my grief is to my world though, they have a right to enjoy the celebrations of life without my grief at the forefront. My love for them shares their joys, just as their love for me shares my grief.

I will often bring a flower or some little souvenir from an event to her grave. One summer, after a trip, I left a map we had used there, marked with our route. Sometimes I'll just stop and buy a rose on my way home to leave like a "wish you were here" postcard.

I dry and save the petals from roses I bring home or receive as gifts in her memory. In the summer, I sprinkle them on her grave. I hope that these grief strategies of mine might help you this summer. These strategies have developed over a period of nearly 6 years now. It never gets easy, but as time passes, I do get more creative.

Don't pressure yourself to do things or go places you are not ready for. Don't be bullied by the expectations of others. A quiet, "I'm just not ready for that," will usually spark their compassion for your heart's journey.

--Joanne Rademacher, TCF Minot, ND

Graduation Day



Today is the day you so long awaited: it is your graduation day. This was to be your new beginning. We had all planned to be so gay. But instead, my heart is breaking because you won't be there. In your place of honor will sit a solitary chair. They brought us your diploma and gave it to Dad and me with a copy of the program, dedicated to your memory.

But I was the student, son and the teacher, it

was you. You taught me more of life than even you ever know. The hardest lesson I ever learned is one I wish I'd never known and that is, that I must live after you have gone. Often, when I think of you, I will sit and softly cry but, I am no longer afraid, my son, that I, too, will die.

I know someday we will be reunited, although it may be many years... I will once again kiss your sweet face and you will wipe away my tears. Until then, I can only weep and hold this to my breast, but always remember, as a son, you truly passed the test. So I will keep this safe for you and won't it be grand that when we meet once again, I will place it in your hand.

--Lynn Sarna TCF Little Rock, AR

Father's Day



Father's Day not a big holiday like Christmas or Thanksgiving, but one that holds a lot of meaning for those to whom it applies. For first-time fathers, that Sunday in June brings a feeling of joy and pride. For a long-time dad, it's a reminder of the fulfillment which children may have brought to his life. For those men who have lost a child, it can be a painful time. For those who must endure their pain in secret and in silence, either through their own desire for that approach or through society's expectations that they must be strong and controlled, it can become a horror. But we in TCF wish to acknowledge the day because the death of a child does not negate the parenthood of the dad who loved him or her.

Love for ones offspring does not die when the body dies and death does not succeed in robbing us of our parental identity. We wish all bereaved fathers a day of peace. In the midst of the grief and loss, may you experience a taste of good memories and remembered love for your child.

--Betty Roehm, TCF Mesa County, CO

A Step-parent's Thoughts

I am a bereaved step-parent - step-father, to be exact Robin, my step-daughter, was killed by a drunk driver when she was 17. I have a son named Greg. His mom remarried, so I saw him on weekends, and did the trips and long summer visits, as many divorced parents do. I did not get the chance to be a part of his life and see him

every day. I got to hear about his activities and accomplishments after the fact.

When you marry someone with kids, you get another chance. After several months of dating my (now) wife Cindy, I finally met her kids, Chris and Robin. Robin was almost 7 years old at the time. I remember that first meeting clearly because Robin wasn't feeling so good. She ended up getting sick and had to go home. After that, I became totally involved in the lives and activities of both children. Cindy and I attended parent- teacher conferences for both kids, as well as a Cub Scout pack meeting and a Girl Scout Brownie meeting. Not bad for a single guy, who had been unmarried for 13 years!

Over the years, I got to know Robin's likes and dislikes, as well as all of her friends and she had a lot of friends! I attended and participated in all of Robin's activities, supporting her many endeavors, including gymnastics (her favorite). I was there when she had migraine headaches, running her to the doctor when her mother couldn't. I encouraged her, supported her - all the things dads do for their kids.

I want to tell you in no uncertain terms, being a step-parent is so much harder. You get the responsibility and, often, none of the respect. "Mom said I could, so I don't have to listen to you" or "You can't tell me what to do, you're not my dad," and so forth. I tolerated and dealt with emotional outbursts. During her teen years, when she became incensed at anything (sometimes it seemed everything). All dads know how trying those times can be!

Now I am a bereaved step-parent I'm in a kind of "no man's land." I am not biologically connected to Robin. I sometimes feel like an outsider around people who were once a family - mother, father, son, and daughter. Many of our friends have worried about Cindy and Chris. They often ask me "How is Cindy doing?" or "Is Chris OK?" Although I knew and lived with Robin for 10 years, very few ask, "How are you doing?" I am only the step-parent. The idea that this tragedy cannot be as devastating to me as it is to Robin's "real family" is incomprehensible to me.

One definition for the word father is "father figure: one often of particular power or influence who serves as an emotional substitute for a father." This is what I was for Robin. She loved to push my buttons - but that was part of our

relationship, frustrating as it could be. Robin is the only daughter I will ever have. I was every bit a father to her. I love her and I miss her.

We, the step-parents of children who have died, grieve for our children, too. Only society puts the "step" in the name. Parents are still the biggest part of who we are. We hurt because they were our children too - often without the support and understanding that is demonstrated toward the biologically connected parents.

These beautiful children with whom we developed emotional bonds are now gone out of our lives; and we, too, endure the same feelings of loss and sadness.

--Tony Cinocco TCF, Denver, CO



A Fathers Day Like No Other

In June, 2000 it was my third Fathers day without my son Christopher. He died in an industrial accident on September 28, 1997. This was such a lonely day for me as my only surviving child had been out of the country for over a year. I had no one to celebrate being a father with. It started as a very dark and dismal day indeed.

After trying to avoid the trip to the cemetery for most of the day, there was nothing left to keep me away. So my wife Robyn and I went to the cemetery to visit Chris' grave.

While deep in emotion and feeling like I had nothing to look forward to, we were sitting by Chris' headstone remembering how much fun he was and how terribly sad it was not to have him to hold and tell him that I loved him. I was wishing so badly that he could be here to spend the day with me.

I had put my head down to let the tears run off my face. I felt a small breeze come up; it was an unusual breeze in that it came from the northeast, which in June is not a common occurrence. I looked up and noticed this balloon with a lead weight dragging behind it, dancing ever so slowly towards me. We watched it dance across the grass and then the balloon bounced directly into my chest. The balloon had a message that I know was from my son Chris. It said "Worlds Greatest Dad." I was so surprised and happy to have received this "Father's Day Gift". I thanked him for the wonderful gift and for

cheering me up. There was no one else around or near us; we were not sure where the balloon had come from. I did not notice it at the time but a woman and her 2-year-old son had come to visit her father's grave, which was about 150 yards away from Chris. Robyn and I sat around for another fifteen minutes or so and then decided to leave.

When we left to go to our car Robyn noticed that the lady visiting her Father was frantic and screaming that her son had locked himself in the car. We went over to see if we could help. The son had locked the doors to the vehicle, the windows were rolled all the way up and the mom had left the keys inside. The outside temperature was very warm and the little boy was starting to sweat.

The police had been called to come and open the door but they were not sure that they could get there very soon. I was just about to break out the back window when Robyn said let's try to get him to open the door. She took the balloon and tried to coax the little boy to open the door. She told him through the glass that she would give him the balloon if he would just push the button. She kept pointing to the button that would release the door lock.

Suddenly the lock popped open, we didn't notice it at the second the lock popped up, but later we realized that the boy's hand was nowhere near the lock when it opened.

We got the boy out and Robyn gave the little boy my Father's Day gift from Chris. The boy's mother looked at the balloon and asked where we had gotten that balloon because she had left a balloon just like it on her dad's grave the day before. We looked for his balloon and it was gone.

It turned out to be the same balloon that had bounced across the grass and bumped into my chest earlier. The balloon was now in the hands of his grandson. The events of that day have been with me ever since. First of all, I know that my son sent that balloon to me to help me through my sad and lonely Father's Day, and that he also helped to save that boy's life.

--Mark Kingery, TCF, Salt Lake City, Utah

*"Hope is hearing the melody of the future;
faith is dancing to it today."* -- Ruben A. Alvez



For Males ... After A Death

You, a man, recently learned of the death of someone YOU loved. You may have been told by police officer, doctor, or other spokesperson ... or possibly you discovered it yourself. It really doesn't matter much whether it was a murder, a drunk driving homicide, an accident, suicide, or a catastrophic illness. You are starting down a traumatic road which can, if you allow it, destroy your life.

At first, the sudden shock left you numb. You may have even cried a little. But then the little voice inside said, "Men don't cry." You then talked about what needed to be done, called the rest of the family, arranged the funeral, and carried on with life.

You may have looked at the women in the family and found them incapacitated with outward displays of grief. Therefore, you decided to pull yourself together even more, taking the pain like a "little soldier."

You kept busy so you wouldn't have time to cry. You met people at the door as well as in the funeral home. You supported your family. You might have remembered for a fleeting moment the last argument you had with the dead person, but it was quickly smothered. You couldn't lose another day of work, and you had to pay for all of this.

You cram down the all-consuming anger over the way the death happened, but have fleeting thoughts that you would rather be hunting down and killing the person who did this than working so hard to maintain control.

You get through the funeral, and then it's back to work, back to normal living, back to associating with people who don't know or don't understand. If you show too much emotion - or any at all - you are looked at with suspicion and run the risk of losing your job. You notice that after one "I'm sorry," colleagues look the other way, seeming to hope you'll go away. They act like what happened to you is catching. So you bury yourself in your job, even though your loved one is in your thoughts nearly all the time. You try to push them aside and work. So, further down go the feelings, deep into the mind to fester.

Just about the time you think you'll survive, if it was a murder or other homicide, the trial starts. Each minute detail comes out. Your loved one is

attacked by the defense attorney. You realize that the killing is considered a crime against the state rather than against your loved one, and you don't count except as evidence. It takes days for the trauma of a few minutes to be relived. Even if the case is "won," an emptiness accompanies it. There can be no true justice. And, of course, the appeals and other efforts to reverse the decision begin immediately and can continue for years.

You may begin to notice that some of the women in the family seem to have cried themselves into a semblance of recovery. They have cried together. They may have joined a therapy or self-help group. Because they seem to be doing a little better, you can't talk to them for fear of appearing weak and maybe sending them back into grief. So you draw away and feel guilty about it.

You may begin to accept overtime or take on more than you can possibly get done. Extra jobs, which at first helped with burial expenses, continue to be an escape from facing up. You spend less time at home from facing the guilt from which you must escape.

Sleeping may have become a problem, and during the day you experience wide mood swings. A well-meaning but foolish doctor may give you some sleeping pills. They help outwardly. They help you to forget, so you become dependent on them for day-to-day existence. Perhaps you try more and different kinds.

Evenings are a real problem. You can't talk with your wife anymore, and just sitting watching television doesn't keep the memories from returning. A few drinks might help. Maybe going out with the boys can get rid of the guilt you feel while being with your wife.

Maybe your wife is the one who died. You just can't stay home anymore. Who really cares if you drink too much? No one's talking to you. No one cares if you live or die anyhow.

WHO CARES???

Everybody does! But they are standing outside the barrier you have thrown up around yourself. Their hearts are broken as they watch you destroy the man they love so dearly. But they can't break down the wall. Only you can break down this impassable, invisible wall.

HERE'S WHAT YOU MUST DO:

FORGET that "men don't cry" .
 FORGET the silent little soldier.
 FORGET to hide your feelings.
 FORGET that it's not manly to ask for help.
BUT MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, allow yourself to cry long and loud until you begin to recover. It won't be easy. Years of crippling training have to be undone. It takes tremendous courage to cry ... almost as much courage as it did not to cry all these days.

Your life will never again be the same. You will not have your loved one back physically. Your relationship with him or her is changed, and now it is the memories that you hold in your heart. No one can take those away. But you can only cherish the good memories if you are healing. And, you will only heal when you allow the tears to flow.

—Charles Collenberger, MADDVOCATE

Charles has survived the murder of a loved one. He says, "I can cry. I am healing. I am surviving."

Suicide

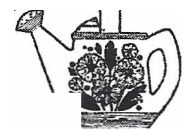
Jeremy, Jeremy, my last-born son,
 Whatever possessed you to pick up that gun?
 Even with the comfort of knowing you're now in
 God's care.

The pain and hurt sometimes is just too hard to
 bear.

I go around with an emptiness deep down in my
 soul,

So I pray each and every night that
 God will make me whole.

--Marjorie Brewer



Filling In Holes

Today, my husband and I went to the plant nursery and bought some flowers and bedding plants to go in our gardens. Spring is here, and the weather is beautiful. Not cold at all, but also not so hot that the thought of pattering in the garden brings a groan of dismay.

I remember my first spring in this house. We were so excited. Our family was nearly complete. Our third son was on his way, and we had just had a house built. We were at the plant nursery at least once a week. Our life was busy, bright, and untainted by grief.

I remember our second spring in this house.

How winter hung on, tenacious, unyielding, both outside, and in our hearts. I remember the first warm spring day. I came home from work early, determined to make SOMETHING grow in my life.

Maybe I couldn't get my son to live, but I was going to make something live. Grief was a raw, open wound then, and my anger was deep. I was angry at the world, at God, and at everything. And so I approached my yard, shovel in hand. I decided I had to have a garden in the middle of my yard. I began furiously digging out the grass, making an oval in the center. It took me hours digging out that oval. But I wasn't through. I then decided I wanted a garden right by my doorway, so I dug out that area, too. And then I made big holes, and tore out all the roots and stones and other junk.

I made big holes in my yard that day, and in the weeks to come I DID fill them with things.

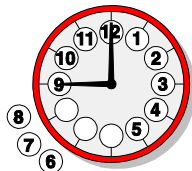
Funny thing, as I dug those holes and pulled on the grass, my anger drained away. My salty tears mixed with the sweat of exertion and the dirt, and ran off my arms undetected to the outside world. Digging those holes provided an outlet for my anger and my hurt.

Today I dug some more holes. But this time, my holes were smaller. And I filled them with small, delicate flowers, purple and white. I put bulbs in the ground, too, filling other small holes. And I reflected back on another hole, the hole in my heart. No, I can't ever fill it with what "should" be there ... my son "should" be almost seven now, full of energy, and wanting to plant flowers with Mom. But I have filled that hole with other things; with love, healing, memories, and with the lessons and the gifts my son gave me. I never saw those gifts that spring, as I was digging out holes in my yard. And though I would rather have that hole filled with my son's presence, I am grateful for the gifts he gave. And so I will go on, filling holes.

--Lisa Sculley, TCF Troy, MI newsletter

Newly Bereaved...

The Magic Clock



How many times have you been told, "Time heals"? It is such a well-meaning statement - but

it is so untrue. Time is just a clock; it has no magical power in itself.

To disprove the "Time heals" theory, imagine treating a broken leg with just a calendar. Don't protect or immobilize the leg with a cast; you can skip the pillows, pain medication, and physical therapy. Of course you can walk on that leg; it doesn't really hurt. But Can you imagine what kind of healing would take place?

A broken leg cannot even be compared to the heart that is broken by the death of a child.

The tasks associated with grief take lots of time. Little by little, we come to accept the reality of our loss. Our beloved child is really not here any more. We hate having to say the words, but they are true. Our child has died.

The pain we feel cannot even be explained. To those who say they can't imagine what we are going through: they can't; it's beyond comprehension. Somehow, miraculously, we do survive. It's not because we are special people, somehow singled out as stronger. We just don't have a choice.

As we reach a place in this new world without our child, it is sort of like existing on a new planet. We move, however slowly, through life. Our child is now the memories we bring with us. We work at adjusting to a new environment where our child doesn't live any more. We try to find a new normal.

Grief is work. The hands of the clock may move effortlessly. Bereaved parents do not: not caring about the task at hand; sitting; staring; thinking; remembering; crying. Wondering if you might be missing something important, but not really caring.

Have you had a day when you had to remind yourself to breathe? Talk about slow motion - you feel like you are going backwards, not making the progress others expect of you.

Time does not heal. It's what you do with the time that matters. But healing does take a very long time. Grieve and mourn, weep for the child you have lost. When you have moments of sunshine in the shadows, be glad.

Some day these moments will become hours, even days. It may be hard to believe, but some day the joy of your child's life can outshine his or her passing.

--Donna Corrigan BPUSA, Hinsdale, IL

Friends and Family...



Grief Is Like

One of the difficulties bereaved persons face is how to explain to us how they FEEL, when they are grieving. What does it FEEL like to be in the skin of a bereaved person? Is it similar to other experiences in our life? Is there a way we can relate on some level to the pain of grieving persons when we are not grieving ourselves. Most people can't allow themselves to go to the place where they could actually see themselves in the dark hole of grief. We don't want to believe it would be that bad for us, that we have the inner resources to minimize grief's hold on us, unlike our grieving friends. But if we can just connect their feelings with some feelings that we have experienced ourselves, then maybe, just maybe, we can begin to comprehend the impact of grief on a person's life. Then, after you connect with any of these feelings you need to remember to multiply your own feelings times 100, to get closer to the bereaved person's experience.

Here are some feelings that I've experienced while grieving or that I've heard other bereaved persons describe.

GRIEF is like being in a bubble. You are no longer a part of the world around you. Everything sounds muffled. You hear conversations, but it's like the words have no meaning. Nobody can reach you. There is an uncomfortable distance that has been created between you and those who don't understand grief.

GRIEF is like looking through a one-way window. You can see others, but they can't see you. You feel invisible to others. It's hard to understand how the world can go on when life has stopped.

GRIEF is like wearing a heavy weight on your chest. You have trouble breathing. Sometimes your body takes deep sighing breaths in an attempt to get more oxygen. Sometimes you have anxiety attacks. And your heart actually aches.

The location of your grief spot is right under your sternum close to your heart. It's no wonder that your chest hurts.

GRIEF is like wearing a heavy coat with all the pockets full of rocks. The grief literally weighs you down and slows you down. Grief is

not only emotionally exhausting, but physically exhausting also. Because the warm glow of life is not pulsing through your body you may find it hard to keep warm. After a while that heavy coat of grief will begin to feel comfortable, and you may decide you don't want to take it off.

GRIEF is like being a traveler on a high-jacked plane. It is as if you have been taken to a foreign land where you do not know the language or the culture. Soon you learn you can never return to the world as you knew it. Grief can be pretty scary. You do not want to be there. You probably don't know how to grieve and you may not know what is expected of you. When you try to speak to your friends, they may not understand you. Your friends know you have "gone away" for a while, but they assume you will return and be the same old you they once knew. But then you begin to realize you will never return to that place again and that others may never know or understand this.

GRIEF is like the stages of love: first falling in love and being totally preoccupied by your new love, then becoming comfortable as you begin to trust that your love will always be with you. In grief, as when you first fall in love, your heart longs to be with the person who's died. Your desire to touch him or her is overwhelming. Most other parts of your life seem unimportant in comparison. Then slowly, normal life begins to creep back in and you find that your grief no longer demands the high maintenance that it first required. You will have created a special space in your heart where you can carry this departed loved one with you at all times, even as you go about other things.

Death ends a lifetime, but not a relationship.
--Pat Schwicbert, R.N., TCF Online

Welcome...



Hands Of Love

We, the members of Compassionate Friends Have known the tragedy which death brings. We've lived the hurts, and the despair. And so with hands outstretched in love We welcome you to join us, and we promise you That we will lend a listening ear.

--Lorraine Weaver TCF, Lancaster, PA

Helpful Hint...



Grief is a solitary journey. No one but you knows how great the hurt is. No one but you can know the gaping hole left in your when someone you know has died. And no one but you can mourn the silence that was once filled with laughter and song. It is nature of love and of death to touch every person in a totally unique way. Comfort comes from knowing that people have made the same journey. And solace comes from understanding how others have learned to sing again.

--Helen Steiner

Book Review ...



Anna, A Daughter's Life, by William Loizeaux. William captures his attention in his daily journal, expressing his journey of grief following the death of his 6-month old daughter, Anna. His openness and beautiful way with words validates the intensity of a father's grief and love. Anna left a distinctive imprint on her parents' lives, as her father has left on ours. Ordering information: Little Brown & Company, 1-800-759-0190.

If We Could Do It Over

If we could do it over,
I mean my son and me,
Would things be any different?
You can believe that they would be.
The fishing trips we never took,
The games we never saw,
A thousand things still come to mind,
And we could do them all.
If we could do it over,
My missing son and I,
I'd take him to that place out West
Where mountains touch the sky.
We'd hike the trails together
And learn of this great land.
He always did want to know
Where he fit in nature's plan.
If we could do it over,
Like every dad and son,
I'd teach him how to drive the car
And safely shoot my gun.

We'd talk of things ... you know, the girls,
And he would smile and say,
"Aw, Dad, I know all that stuff."
But we'd discuss it anyway.
If we could do it over ...
But we can't, can we?
In God's Great Plan, He called my boy,
Just took him away from me.
Now all I do is sit and dream,
How beautiful it would be,
If we could do it over,
I mean my boy and me.

--Eugene F. Lewis TCF, Cincinnati, OH

On Vacation

I sat and watched the waves come in and out
I looked for you there, but you weren't about.
I saw a young child about your size,
And I thought it was you, till I looked in his eyes.
I heard a strange voice call your name,
And I thought for a second you were home again.
I went to the jetty where you used to fish;
I gazed at the stars and made a wish.
Then I closed my eyes and I heard you say,
"I love you, Mommy, but it can't be that way;
I can't come back to earth as you know
But I will live within you wherever you go;
For I am with God in a place so divine
Where there is no pain, no space, and no time."
Then I opened my eyes and I walked away
And I've known where you are since that day.
--Penny Linehan TCF Morris Area, NJ

Words Are But Dust

Words are but dust in the roaring wind
When they try to bring you relief,
And thoughts are but straws on the raging sea
When they seek to soothe your grief.
But love is a light in the lonely night
To give comfort and show you the way,
And faith is a rock on which hope is built,
That you'll meet again someday.
--George D. Walley, TCF, Northwest Suburban,
NY



Our Children Remembered



Ron Acker 4/10/12
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: June 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

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

Ophebra 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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lorian Tamara Elbert
Born: 5/66 Died: 10/07
Mother: Dorota Starr Elbert

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Our Children Remembered



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

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

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 Lauthere
Born: 9/74 Died: 3/96
Parents: Larry & Chris Lauthere

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

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

Anthony "Tony" Low
Born: 1/46 Died: 3/99
Parents: Frances & Matthew Low

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

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

Audrey Sinclare 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 Sinclare 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

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

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

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

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

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



Our Children Remembered



D'Juan M. 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 Ramarez JR.
Born: 8/10 Died: 8/10
Parents: Bridle & Jules Ramirez

Tejal Pati Reddy
Born: 6/86 Died: 12/08
Parrents: 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

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

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

Shaulamit Rose Scher-Gilfert
Born: 12/08 Died: 12/08
Mother: Aliza Scher
Grandmother: Adrienne Scher

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

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

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



Our Children Remembered



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 S. 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.)

A Birthday Tribute to:

Michael B. Ruggera, Jr
April 1951 - April 1996.



It's been 16 years since you were taken from us, and you would have been 60 years old. Our lives will never be the same without you son. We thank God each day for having blessed us with a son and friend like no other. For all the moments together, good and bad, for all the laughs, the lessons and most of all the love we shared together. We are blessed and thankful to God and to you. We will carry this love with us throughout our lives. We will never walk alone for we are never without you.

Old pilots never die, they just flyaway to heaven.

Peace - Love - Eternity,
Ruggera Family and Friends

For Siblings...



My First Friend

They say you will always remain in my heart
It's time for me to move ahead.
Time to make a new start.
Still I struggle to move forward,
wishing you were by my side.
Thoughts of you always filling my heart with
such an overwhelming pride.
I am so thankful to have had you in my life,
You were my brother
Your place in my heart will be filled by no other.
I know when it is my turn you'll be waiting for
me, My first friend.
Yet my broken heart at times seems it will
never mend.
I will always hear your words,
I will always remember your smile.
Yet I'll still choose to linger here in denial
All that I am, I owe mostly to you.

You made me realize I was capable of so many things
I never even knew.
You once told me I was your Angel, and because of
me you would be fine.
Little did I know to my surprise I would turn around and
you would be mine.
At first I didn't believe our time was really over, our
time had come to an end.
I will think of you always,
you were my first friend.
I MISS YOU DANNY
--Kelly Frances, TCF Concord/Needham, MA

For Grandparents...



Agony

Every waking moment
And even in my sleep
You are on my mind.
I treasure every memory,
Every picture;
You are with me all the time.

The pain I feel because you are gone
Is more than I can bear.
I'm screaming inside,
Filled with tremendous sadness.
It just isn't fair!

How can you be gone,
Sweet baby, precious boy,
My wonderful grandson?
The emptiness is vast, the silence too loud;
There is nothing that can fill this void!

I miss you so much, Izaya!
My joy is diminished, I'm dying inside.
I go on each day and put on a happy face
While my deep sadness I hide.

You were the light of my life;
You brought laughter and spark.
I miss your bright smile and beautiful blue eyes.
My world has been plunged into the dark.

I miss your laughter, I miss your funny faces,
And the cute things you used to do.
I miss reading your favorite books
And snuggling with you.

I miss your energy, I miss your creativity;
I miss your sweet way.
My life will never be the same
Since you left us that day.

Oh, how I would love to hold you in my arms.
What I would give just to see you.
I miss hearing you tell your stories.
Oh, Izaya, how much I love you!
--Melodie Hale in memory of her grandson, Izaya Baiz-
Hickey

From Our Members ...



Hope

Hope is not pretending that troubles don't exist. It is
the trust that they will not last forever, that hurts will be
healed and difficulties overcome. It is faith a source of
strength and renewal, that lies within, to lead us
through the dark to the sunshine.
--Author unknown submitted by Linda Cortez

We welcome and encourage you to submit
contributions you found meaningful to you in your
grief. We prefer your original poems and thoughts,
but we can also print other material if proper credit is
given to the author. Please contact our editor.

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 right 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.

TCF 2012 National Conference... will be held July 20-
22, 2012 in Costa Mesa, California. For more
information call the National office at (877) 969-0010
or go online at www.CompassionateFriends.org. You
can also make reservations for the conference hotel if
you choose to stay there. We recommend that you
reserve your room early, they are going fast.

South Bay/LA Chapter Members...

We have limited funds available to support our

chapter's bereaved parents that cannot afford the conference registration fees (\$90) if registered before June 15th. Please mail your request for this scholarship to: South Bay/L.A. Chapter of TCF, PO Box 11171, Torrance, CA 90510 so you can meet the June deadline.

We Need Your Help... The 2012 Conference Planning Committee needs volunteers for this summer's conference. Our chapter is in charge of the Volunteer desk, and the Hospitality and Reflection Rooms. If you are planning on attending please let us know if you can help by calling Kitty Edler at (310) 541-8221 or E-mail her at KittyEdler@aol.com There are many jobs, both big and small that need to be done. A couple of hours of your time would be greatly appreciated. We would love to include as many members of our chapter and other chapters across the country. This is a rewarding undertaking that we can do to honor our children and to help the newly bereaved... Please help us make this one of the best conferences TCF has ever had. Please call Kitty Edler at (310) 541-8221 or E-mail her at KittyEdler@aol.com for more information.

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. 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 such as conferences, the Walk to Remember, and the Worldwide Candle Lighting. Please visit often and contribute to the conversation.



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 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 every Thursday at noon EST and are also archived on the TCF national website. Shows are also broadcast at 11 a.m. EST Sundays on a number of radio stations across the country and streamed online simultaneously at www.HealthRadioNetwork.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: April 1 for May 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. 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

TRINITY CARE HOSPICE: Bereavement Coordinator Gayle Kirma (310) 257-3567

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

BEREAVEMENT MAGAZINE: Articles for all types of

grief. Bereavement Publishing, Inc., 4765 Carefree Circle, Colorado Springs, CO 80917

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

THE GATHERING PLACE: Various support groups including support for loss of a child, support group for children 5-8, 9-12, and teens,(also Spanish). Call Claire Towle (310) 374-6323, Beach Cities Health Dist

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

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 Reverend Karl Johnson and the Neighborhood Church for the use of their facilities for our meetings.

STEERING COMMITTEE OFFICERS:

CHAPTER LEADER: Cheryl Stephens

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines

PROOFREADER: Becky Jordan

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 Michael B. Ruggera, Jr., April 1951 - April 1996. As I think of you, tears roll down my cheeks and I bite my lips to ease the pain.

We Love You, The Ruggera Family

In loving memory of Kiera Goodman, December 1977 - January 2012. You died with grace.

Tribute sent from Donna Goodman

In loving memory of Brandon Armstrong and Dominique Oliver ... 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 Tommy Villanueva, 10/68 - 5/02. Your are thought of and missed every day. How can it be ten years? We miss your smile, your laugh and those big hugs we could still feel an hour later.

- Love you forever - Mom and Dad

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

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For Father's Day
You have good memories
Don't crowd them out.
Think about them – treasure them
And let them bring you solace
and a measure of joy.
--TCF Louisville , KY

– Change of Service Requested –



MAY 2012

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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