



# *The Compassionate Friends*

## *South Bay/LA Chapter*

### **Supporting Family After a Child Dies**

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

APRIL 2019 ISSUE

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

**OUR NEXT MEETING**  
will be April 4th, the first Thursday  
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. → Go to the WEST parking lot. Meetings are held at the west end of the church.

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

The Compassionate Friends  
Mission Statement...

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

The April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting will start with "Sibling Grief and Our Changed Family."

For a free 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.

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brother or how close we had always been and how he always helped me. Why should they even care about me? But, you know what... they did help. With the help and support of this group of wonderful caring people, I am alive today and working toward a fruitful life. I will never be the same as I was before June 18, 1992, but I truly believe I have become a better person.

While Lee's life taught me so much, his death taught me some invaluable lessons. I have learned to become more aware of life and my own mortality and am more attuned to others' needs, no longer take anything for granted. I miss him terribly, but take solace in the belief that he's happy in his new world and that one day we will be reunited.

Sibling grief takes a tremendous amount of time and work. Sometimes just thinking of my brother, looking at his picture, or hearing his favorite song, "God Bless America," reduces me to a teary mess. Sometimes these same things make me smile. But, I am surviving and have developed a new perspective on life. I am closer to and cherish my family more than ever, and realize how very important they are. I am dedicated to helping other surviving siblings work through their grief.

I pray daily for peace, not only for myself and my family, but for everyone making this journey through grief.

One thing that I have found to be most helpful during the past fifteen months of grief work has been to talk about and be honest about my feelings. I encourage siblings (and parents) to hook up with a support group such as The Compassionate Friends to talk out your feelings and concerns. After all, we've already paid an extremely high price to join this group... the life of our loved one ... so why not take advantage of what they have to offer? You may even find yourself helping someone else (even though you might not believe that now).

--Sunday Lee Stanton, TCF Wyoming Valley, PA

## Did Anyone Know?

Did you know I don't like to be held when I cry? I also don't like to be touched; I just like for someone to listen when I want to talk, or to go away when I don't.

Did you know I'm tired of having these awful feelings? Feelings like guilt, denial, grief,



sadness, depression, and missing Brenda. They hurt, they hurt my heart, they make me feel afraid, lonely, and sad. I can't control myself when I feel this way. These feelings are painful, I don't like the pain, and I want them to go away!!

Did you know how much it hurts to realize your sister is dead? To really, in your heart, know and realize your sister is dead. I could say it a hundred times and never flinch; but to say it that one time, when you know what it is you're saying, hurts so much!

Did you know that sometimes I just want to be held? Because for that time span I'm being protected from all the outside problems.

Did you know that sometimes I want a hug? The kind of hugs that last forever, and don't lessen even when you let go. I just need support and friendship, and someone who cares.

Did you know grief does not go away? You have to work through it, and no one can take it away, no matter how much they want to, and how much you want them to.

Did you know the only people who judge grief are those who have never experienced it themselves?

Did you know sometimes I have to talk about my sister? I have to talk and I just can't stop.

Did you know I like going to my sister's grave? Sometimes I can't get out of the car, but usually it makes me feel better.

Did you know I love my sister and I know she loved me, too?

Did you know remembering her makes me feel good? Even when it makes me cry; crying isn't bad.

Did you know when you're grieving you want things to be the same around you and you want to go on with your life?

Did you know when you're grieving you want the world to stop and grieve with you?

Did I know any of these things before Brenda died? NO, ... but I know them now!

--Laura Harlow, TCF Houston Bay Area

## A Love Letter to My Children

You are great kids. You have always been great kids, although I haven't always been a great mom. After your brother died, I was hardly any kind of mom at all.

I was so lost in my own grief, I wasn't there for you. You were bewildered, scared, and hurt, but I

couldn't seem to reach out to you beyond my own pain. I was like a day-old helium balloon drifting along, not sure whether my place was with you or with your brother.

I didn't drift for long. You grabbed my string and yanked me back! The yowls and shrieks still ring in my ears. "Mom, all my underwear is dirty!" or "Mom, I'm starved!" or "Mom, he punched me!" Your brother was being cared for by his heavenly Father, but you needed your earthly mother. It was your need for me that saved my life.

I'm sorry that your brother's death robbed you of your childhood. While other kids fretted about what to wear or which movie to see, you wondered when the tears and sadness would ever end and if we would be a family again. If I could have shielded you from such great sorrow, I would have; but I couldn't.

Your lives were changed forever, and the future was uncertain, but you kept going. You supported and inspired me as we traveled that rocky road of grief together. You talked about your brother when no one else would say his name. You kept his picture in your rooms and proudly pointed out to friends, "This was my brother." You used his things, but gently. You reminded me of the cute, funny things he said and did. You included him in your bedtime prayers. You still do. Some day I believe you will tell your own children about your brother. Thank you for keeping his memory alive. Because of the tragedy you experienced, you are more mature than other kids your age. You possess strength and courage beyond your years. You are resilient; little things don't get you down. Best of all, you are kind, sensitive, and compassionate to others. I adore you. You are my life.

Love, Mom

--Patricia Dyson TCF, Beaumont, TX

### 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*

### The Wounded Heart



Children have preceded their parents in death for eons of time. We are not the first, nor will we be the last to enter the realm of Bereaved Parents. But for now - right now - it is OUR HEARTS that are freshly wounded and OUR HEARTS in need of mending.

Wounded hearts must be allowed to mourn and lament their loss; to pour out their pain, agony, sadness, hurt, and anger, and to release their well of tears. Wounded hearts need to be wrapped in quietness, gentleness, and compassion, away from the turmoil of daily life.

A wounded heart not allowed to mend from the depth of its agony, will be as an abscess - to swell and undermine - erupting at a distant time. Or, suppressed, will slowly choke the spirit of its host. Only the bearer will know when his heart has healed.

The wounded heart, encouraged and given the time and freedom to mend, will carry in its chambers the memory and shared love of a precious child.

--Nancy Green - TCF Livonia MI

### "You're So Negative!"

How many times have we - as bereaved parents, grandparents, and surviving siblings heard that comment from those around us? How many of our family members, friends, co-workers, or even mutual acquaintances have hinted or have been so bold as to say such a thing to us - particularly after we have just suffered the death of a child in our lives? Unfortunately, THE DEATH OF A CHILD IS A NEGATIVE EVENT!

I don't think anyone can find one thing positive to say about the death of a child, although many have tried by using such common and irritating comments. We know they don't understand because they can't come close to how it feels.

But even after we have grieved and felt sorrow and tears for awhile, still our outlook on life is negative because we find it hard to see anything



positive at the moment. “When will you get on and try to find something worthwhile to do with yourself? When are you going to find a happier moment? Why don’t you just dwell on the happier times?” and on and on.

What we really want to tell the world is this: **JUST SURVIVING THE DEATHS OF OUR CHILDREN IS THE FIRST POSITIVE STEP WE ARE TAKING TO GET THROUGH THIS TRAGEDY.** Living through one second, one minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month, one year are other positive steps toward recovery! Finding a moment of laughter or having loving, warm, and happier memories is another positive step that we are making it.

Co-existing with the deaths of our children is not something that any of us were given the choice of making. However, living and accepting this tragedy is another positive step towards learning to live some type of a life again: we learn to let the pain go. Sharing our grief, our sorrow, and our pain with other bereaved individuals is positive because not only does it help to comfort the other bereaved, it helps us to heal as well. We all benefit from one another in our pain and sorrow, in our comfort and hugs, in our ability to lean upon each other.

Yes, the death of a child is tragic. Negative. Painful. Whatever other adjectives one may use. But the idea of us being so negative? No, we’re not. The next time you hear that word, say instead “realistic,” because that is what we really are— real. We were given a crash course of reality when our children died. We know now how precious life is, how important it is to savor every moment given to us. Take pride in the positive accomplishments you have made since the death of your child, because, not only have you worked so hard to attain them, you have more than earned them!!

--Chris Gilbert, Editor BP USA - Tampa Bay

## Somehow It’s Spring

It’s spring in some places now. And in some places it will be winter for another couple of weeks (months?). Somewhere the tulips are beginning to push through the soft earth and somewhere the birds are returning to sing. Somewhere the air is warmer, the breezes more gentle, the land begins to awaken from a frozen



sleep. The trees are beginning to bud and even the air smells fresh and clean. Somewhere windows are open and the sound of the vacuum can be heard, marking the beginning of spring cleaning... a ritual given to us long before our forefathers set sail for a new world. Somewhere the last holiday decoration is being packed away (those holiday diehards!) and somewhere a lawn mower is being readied for a new season.

As spring approaches, we begin to shed our overcoats and stand in front of the mirror... examining the body for the extra lumps we’ve accumulated during the hibernation season. We lace up our jogging shoes and make our way to the sidewalks, high school tracks and to the gym, eager to strip away the added inches that came because it was dark and gloomy and food seemed to soothe and comfort during the dark days of winter.

Somewhere someone is planning a wedding, a graduation, a family reunion. Vacation brochures begin to appear and plans are discussed in anticipation of summer.

Spring is the reawakening season... the great wake up call for the earth. Somewhere, someone is answering that get up call... greeting the new season with vim, vigor, and vitality. There are smiles and renewed energy and hope seems to simply float on the softened air. Somewhere... all of that is occurring, but not within me.

It’s still snowing inside my being. It’s still winter inside here and there aren’t any tulips about to burst open in my spirit. I’ve still got my snow boots on and the sun hasn’t quite made it to my world. It’s still winter inside me... I wonder if spring will ever come.

Oh, there have been moments of spring in the past. Wonderful, warm fleeting moments; moments when I “forgot” about the pain, the emptiness, the despair, the grief. Moments when the world was right side up and the music made me dance. But they were only moments and I’m waiting for spring to arrive in me.

Hope... the major ingredient in spring, seems to elude my grasp. Just when I think there might be some hope, a memory comes creeping across my soul and it’s winter again in my heart. It’s this lack of hope that seems especially cruel during springtime. I thought this winter inside me would end and I was looking forward to a more peaceful time in my life. I thought we would settle down, plant a garden and live our life filled with

memories and the opportunity to make new ones. HA! I thought grief would end at some point. The books all say it will... everyone else looks like their grief has subsided... how come spring missed us?!

A season without hope is the ultimate in despair and I've spent too many such seasons. Where does hope go and how do I get it back? Hope is that elusive something that keeps us moving, even in the dark. We are only powerless when we have no hope, no vision, no faith in our own abilities. We may be helpless at times. We may question the arrival of spring but we are only truly powerless when we have no hope no dreams...

Don't lose the hope! Search for it! Fight for it! Demand its return. Hope changes as we do and it can be so disguised that we may not recognize it, but it can be found — in the moments of our memories. We probably won't ever have totally happy lives again... We probably didn't have that kind of life anyway; we just thought we did. Don't let death rob you of the moments of joy still to be remembered, and found. Don't let grief rob you of those spring places where love and joy live forever in the heart. Somewhere it is spring... Deal with the anger, the guilt, the depression as it comes and then let it go as you can... so there is room for joy to come again. Let hope come in... it's spring.  
--Darcie Sims

## Easter And Passover

The Easter and Passover seasons are upon us. They are special family times that make it more obvious that one is missing. Some parents are struggling with what they believe. The pretty dresses and hats don't seem to matter as much as they did. There are more important things on our minds now. We are facing the renewal of life all around us - and yet the missing child's life is not renewable.

We hurt because life is going on and his or hers is not. These are normal reactions for some when grief is fresh, for the changing of seasons is a poignant time for many. Those of us who have had the necessary time, wish to convey to those who have not that it won't always be this painful. When your grief softens (and it will), so will many of the hurtful responses. Get out in the sunshine, go for a walk, smell the fragrance of the flowers and allow the warmth and beauty of the season to

permeate your being. It just may make your day a little lighter.

—Mary Cleckley

Atlanta GA TCF

## The Starfish Story



A friend of ours was walking down a deserted Mexican beach at sunset;

As he walked along, he began to see another man in the distance. As he grew closer, he noticed that the local native kept leaning down, picking something up, and throwing it out into the water. Time and again, he kept hurling things out into the ocean.

As our friend approached even closer, he noticed that the man was picking up starfish that had been washed up on the beach and, one at a time, he was throwing them back into the water. Our friend was puzzled. He approached the man and said, "Good evening, friend. I was wondering what you are doing."

"I'm throwing these starfish back into the ocean. You see, it's low tide right now, and all of these starfish have been washed up onto the shore. If I don't throw them back into the sea, they'll die up here from lack of oxygen."

"I understand" our friend replied, "but there must be thousands of starfish on this beach. You can't possibly get to all of them. There are simply too many. And don't you realize it is probably happening on hundreds of other beaches all up and down the coast? Can't you see that you can't possibly make a difference?"

The local native smiled, bent down, and picked up yet another starfish. As he threw it back into the sea, he replied, "Made a difference to that one!"

--Based on the original story by Loren Eiseley (as retold in Chicken Soup for the Soul)

## Justice For Johnny

Sitting here thinking how life would be? I'm 37 and you'd be 30, our sis hmm well she's older than you and me....LOL. Why did this happen? Why did you leave our family? As we sit and try not to mourn, but cherish every memory!

It's been 10 years and it seems to have gone by so fast yet...at the same time, it seems like we keep remembering that day that destroyed our

family.

Justice for Johnny!!! Your life that was taken, the goals and dreams that you had a never ending nightmare we live, that ended all bad. Our hopes of justice, our desires to get peace for you, we long for the day that God makes that come true. Our faith has kept us strong and daily leads us to believe, your killers will be caught and justice will hopefully ease our grief.

Just want you to know, we haven't forgot about you, and in the name of Jesus Christ, one day we'll be reunited with you. FOREVER 22 we love you!

Mom and Lena

–Greater Orange County CA chapter of PMOC

**Loved And Missed Forever**

Many people have asked me this question: "Does time heal?" I often say that I will grieve for my son for the rest of my life but I do believe that time softens the pain and the anguish. We can cope with the loss, but we never forget. The closer we are to our children, the harder it is when they leave us. Being a member of a TCF group can help us to see how our members cope differently with their grief and the way they feel after a period of time. Some have lost children less than one year ago and others ten years ago.

Talking things over in a group and knowing that you are not alone in your grief works wonders. Often family and friends listen to you for a few weeks after your child's death but then tell you to get on with your life. Little do they know that this is not possible.

I have listed below how I feel seven years after my son's suicide, and how I felt in the beginning of my grief. I do hope that this will help the newly bereaved and give them some hope for the future.

**Early Grief**

**Seven Years Later**

- |                              |                                   |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Cried all day.            | 1. I cry now and again.           |
| 2. Could not concentrate.    | 2. Concentration much better.     |
| 3. Could not read.           | 3. Read many books.               |
| 4. Very bad memory           | 4. Memory improved but not great. |
| 5. Did not want to go out.   | 5. Like to go out.                |
| 6. Could not drive.          | 6. Drive a great deal.            |
| 7. Would not go on holidays. | 7. Enjoy holidays.                |

- |                                                   |                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8. Dislike people.                                | 8. Have accepted people's ignorance.                                |
| 9. Liked my own company.                          | 9. Still do.                                                        |
| 10. Lonely. Missed him at family gatherings.      | 10. Still the same.                                                 |
| 11. Wanted answers to "Why?"                      | 11. "Why" is not important now.                                     |
| 12. Would not accept he had taken his own life.   | 12. Know that he did.                                               |
| 13. Wanted to talk about him all the time.        | 13. Still like to talk about him but people and places selective.   |
| 14. Frightened that people would forget he lived. | 14. All that is important is that our family not forget.            |
| 15. Photos and videos very important now.         | 15. Still cry when I see them.                                      |
| 16. Walked the house at night. Nightmares.        | 16. Sleep much better. Rarely have a nightmare.                     |
| 17. Hated shopping.                               | 17. Enjoy shopping now.                                             |
| 18. Jealous of other couples with a son.          | 18. Still jealous.                                                  |
| 19. Kept looking for him on railway stations.     | 19. No longer look for him.                                         |
| 20. Believed his spirit was with me always.       | 20. Still believe he is with me always.                             |
| 21. Wrote to Michael about special family events. | 21. Wrote in a journal every day. Now realize how bad my grief was. |
| 22. Had counseling for two years twice a week.    | 22. Now run a group for other bereaved parents                      |
- author unknown

**A Father's Grief**

How was it to be that I now am robbed of such joy?  
 Of watching you grow or finding out if you're a girl or boy.  
 Never did I get to hear your cries or even see your tears,  
 Or kiss your little brow and hug away your fears.  
 I am just left here now with pain and few memories,  
 Of the days that were happy with you inside of me.  
 For you were loved and wanted oh so much,  
 What I would give just to have felt your touch.  
 The hours crawl by yet the time does not seem to slow,





I want to scream out to the world you are gone,  
 why don't they know?  
 How is the world still turning  
 when I feel it should have stopped?  
 Why are people laughing and living  
 when it feels like I can not?  
 Not enough tears can be shed  
 to express the love we have for you,  
 No words can describe  
 what we all wanted to be able to do.  
 I would have just held you  
 and breathed in your sweet smell,  
 Shouted with joy and phoned all the people  
 we wanted to tell.  
 But this time we called loved ones  
 with the sad sad news,  
 That too little were you to live among us  
 and we were meant to lose.  
 But nothing will ever erase  
 those twelve weeks we had together,  
 For a piece of my heart you now hold  
 always and forever.  
 ~Kerri-Anne Hinds

## Newly Bereaved...

### Self Care and Health in Bereavement



I can remember in my very early days of grief wandering my home asking myself and whoever was in earshot "How do I do this?" How would I continue, heal, pick up the billions of pieces of me shattered across the universe? Over the past few years now, I have learned only a few things. I am certain I have more to learn. The camaraderie of The Compassionate Friends is built on sharing—among other things.

This is my "how" list, keep what works for you—round file the rest.

Eat when you can, things which sound or taste good. Be mindful that overindulging— eating your grief— will only bring poor health and extra pounds. Early on though, just make sure you eat to keep your health. Others need you well.

Sleep when and if you can. It will be hard and we all know that nightmares or just wakefulness can plague the bereaved parent. Sleep issues— if they impact your health or well being should be addressed with your health care provider. Sometimes crying yourself to sleep is a means to

an end. Crying in the shower or a soothing pre-bedtime bath might work as well. The crying is a given— as a sleep enabler, not horrible.

Water— drink enough. If you cry a lot, or a little— it depletes your stores. Replenish. Stress and mourning will rob you of hydration also. Replenish. Water helps us restore and heal. Make it a healthy habit.

Support group— monthly meetings, time in the company of nurturing friends, gathering in places of worship or meditation. There is strength and healing in these sacred circles.

Express— find healthy outlets to express your grief. Some yell, some cry, some rage, some paint, some journal, some read, some bake or cook, some pray, some serve the less fortunate. Find that activity or activities that soothes your soul and do them. Tend your soul and your broken heart.

Movement— find some way to move in your day. There is our walking group you could join, or many enjoy hiking. Others run or swim. Others— get out of bed. There are days that is enough, and quite an effort really. Finding a way to move when you seem rooted in one place is difficult but necessary for healing and health.

Ritual— most bereaved parents have rituals they do to honor their children and heal themselves. We often have small memorials set up, we create gardens or visit our child's grave sight. We find rituals to mark their birthdays and the anniversary of their death. Try to create rituals that don't become an added burden. Make an agreement with your self that when or if it becomes so, that it is not forbidden to let it go. Some rituals are simply only for a season. Some will bring you great comfort over the years.

Permission— give yourself permission to grieve. I firmly believe that mourning our children is sacred and an endeavor worth giving your all. After all— grief is love with nowhere to go. Allow and defend your right to mourn. Good heavens, no one should try to deny you that.

Choice— allow yourself to make healthy choices that you choose freely that will allow you to grieve, and heal. Choose the way you wish to grieve. Choose without forcing it to allow yourself to laugh and have joy as well— your child will not feel betrayed— I promise.

We love you and we want you well— with no demand to be silent or dry eyed.

--Penny Daniel Snohomish, WA



## Seasoned Greivers...

### Living Life Is Still An Effort

My husband's family held a reunion in July. We planned to attend, and told the family to count on us. But when it came time to buy the tickets and make a commitment, I found I could not do it. I simply did not want to deal with the hassles of traveling, leaving home, getting out of my daily rhythm.

I am a different person since my child died. I am a different person than I was 6 months after my child died. And I will be a different person in another year. I find that I am evolving: My basic personality is still in tact; most of my mind works well enough; my perception of life, love, people, and events is probably heightened but fairly unchanged. Yet, I am a different person.

Now I work at living my life. I make myself do the things that I once took for granted - such as getting dressed each day, going to work, handling a number of responsibilities I have chosen to accept. I make myself laugh at silly jokes. Sometimes I even have to force myself to really listen to others. I am surprised when I laugh spontaneously, smile for no particular reason, or say something "prophetic." What is going on here? Who am I? Why has the joy of life disappeared?

I believe I have found the answer to these questions, and even to questions I haven't yet asked. It lies in the nature of losing one's child to death. Initially, we work very hard to maintain sanity. Gradually, we expand the boundaries of our lives. Carefully, we add events, people, responsibilities, and simple enjoyment. But our progress is measured in months and years, not days and weeks.

My awakening to this new reality came at a meeting of The Compassionate Friends. It has been rekindled at each meeting since then. I learn about myself by observing others. I note the change in their voice, their body language, their perspective. I see the sorrow in each parent. I see parents whose children have been gone for many years still weep openly, and later talk about a special event they are planning. Then I see parents whose loss was recent; yet, they appear to be normal, controlled, and sociable on many levels. And they suddenly and mysteriously

crumble before my eyes.

That's the journey. We set our own limits as to what is acceptable for us. Over time, we shift from minimalist boundaries to a good representation of the person we once were. We have major setbacks: birthdays, holidays, death anniversaries. We have minor setbacks: a picture, a forgotten scent, a baby shoe, a poignant memory. We sob, we scream, we withdraw. But we do go on. With the help of our Compassionate Friends, we move forward and are supported when we suffer a setback. We each deal with the many facets of our grief. We learn from others. We teach others. We grow from the dialog. Our kindred spirits bring questions, answers, and peace.

Who am I today? A fairly well-balanced mother of one beautiful child who is no longer alive. I am where I should be. When will I stop evolving? Probably never.

--Annette Mennen Baldwin (in memory of my son, Todd Mennen) TCF, Katy, TX

## Welcome...

There is hope, you are not alone, we are The Compassionate Friends and we are here to help you on your grief journey. We are glad that you have found us, but we are sorry that you have a reason to be here. We are a self-help peer support group open to bereaved parents, adult siblings and grandparents. We invite you to join us and see how helpful meetings can be. We encourage you to try three meetings to see if TCF is right for you.



## Book In Review...



***Just Us: Homicidal Loss and Grief***, by Wanda Henry-Jenkins

Just Us. Two small words that define the plight and capture the essence of what it feels like to be a survivors of murder victims. The author identifies three different cycles of mourning when someone you love is murdered: Crisis, Conflict and Commencement. This book is for anyone who has experienced a homicidal loss of a loved one. (paperback) Order from the Centering Corp. Call (402) 533-1200 for a current catalog. Tell them you are a member of TCF for free shipping.)

## Friends And Family...



### The Gift of Someone Who Listens

Those of us who have traveled a while  
 Along this path called grief  
 Need to stop and remember that mile,  
 That first mile of no relief.  
 It wasn't the person with answers  
 Who told us of ways to deal.  
 It wasn't the one who talked and talked  
 That helped us start to heal.  
 Think of the friends who quietly sat  
 And held our hands in theirs.  
 The ones who let us talk and talk  
 And hugged away our tears.  
 We need to always remember  
 That more than the words we speak,  
 It's the gift of someone who listens  
 That most of us desperately seek.  
 --Nancy Myerholtz TCF Waterville/Toledo, OH

### Helpful Hint...

If you are thinking of planting a memory garden this spring, now is the time for planting. Remember many butterflies are attracted by: Evening Primrose, Shasta Daisy, Purple Coneflower, Cosmos, Black Eyed Susan, Zinnia, Gloriosa Daisy, Coreopsis, Nicotiana, Marigolds, and The Butterfly Bush.



### The Visit

In the early hours of this new day  
 Just as light creeps around the edges of morning  
 I await your visit.  
 Sometimes you come softly  
 Other times, it is as if you come with cymbals  
 crashing!  
 But, faithfully, relentlessly, you come.  
 I eagerly await your arrival, all the while  
 dreading it.  
 For, the reality is that here, in the quiet of my  
 memory,  
 Here is the only place you and I can be  
 "together".

I flip through memories, searching for the one  
 we will share.  
 Some make me laugh  
 Most make me cry.

It doesn't really matter which memory is chosen.  
 You first walking on shaky legs...  
 You dashing out the door on your way to the  
 beach ...  
 You in the midst of your messy room...  
 You in the midst of my life, our lives ...  
 Each memory brings smiles, but mostly tears  
 And pain ... intense pain  
 binding up my heart to the point of strangling.

But, I will not forego this pain  
 It is there underscoring the love--  
 The passionate feeling I will carry for you,  
 forever in my heart.  
 Such intense pain, such immense love.  
 I'll see you tomorrow ...  
 --Susan Howard- TCF San Diego, CA

### The Butterfly

I asked God to send me one so I would know,  
 She is in heaven with beautiful wings she is proud  
 to show,  
 And sure enough on that day  
 It was fluttering around me and I knew it was her  
 Trying to say...  
 Tell everyone I'm fine,  
 Tell everyone I'm great,  
 And when it's theirs and your turn,  
 I'll be waiting for you at those pearly gates.  
 And until then I will be here  
 Watching over you until you appear  
 Until then you will know if you're smart,  
 I'll be forever and always in your heart.  
 So live like there is no tomorrow and smile  
 everyday,  
 For you know you will see me,  
 When you spread your wings and finally come  
 home to stay.  
 -- Caitlin Daniels, In Memory of Sarah D. Harvey

I still miss those I loved  
 who are no longer with me  
 but I find I am grateful for having loved them.  
 The gratitude has finally conquered the loss.  
 -- Rita Mae Brown



Troy Akasaka  
Born: 1/91 Died: 2/15  
Parents: Jay & Sharon Akasaka

Brandon Armstrong  
Miscarried: July 1995  
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Connor Aslay  
Born: 5/99 Died: 7/18  
Mother: Erin Aslay

Jeremiah Bell  
Born: 1/88 Died: 6/15  
Mother: Angela Alvarez

Scott Berkovitz  
Born: 5/88 Died: 1/16  
Parents: Carl Berkovitz & Maria Moore

Noah Bernstein  
Born: 6/87 Died: 2/17  
Mother: Beth Bernstein

Cheianne Jayda Berry  
Born: 12/2001 Died: 7/16  
Mother: Kristina Berry

Sam Boldissar  
Born: 10/91 Died: 3/17  
Parents: Jeeri & Frank Boldissar

Alex James Bonstein  
Born: 11/91 Died: 7/16  
Mother: Cynthia Sanchez

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

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

Larry Broks Jr.  
Born: 7/88 Died: 9/17  
Mother: Thessia Carpenter

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

Julian Burns  
Born: 12/18 Died: 1/19  
Parents: Daniel & Marta Burns

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

Carina Chandiramani  
Born: 5/86 Died: 9/18  
Mother: Norma Chandiramani

Blair Chapin  
Born: 4/82 Died: 5/18  
Sister: Elizabeth Chapin

Michael Edward Clapp  
Born: 2/93 Died: 4/18  
Mother: Patti Clapp

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

Matthew Hales Clifford  
Born: 1/80 Died: 3/15  
Parents: Bob & Melissa Clifford

Aaron Christopher Cochran  
Born: 11/90 Died: 9/12  
Mother: Julia Carr

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

Hannah Elizabeth Cortez  
Born: 9/92 Died: 7/13  
Parents: Rafael & Shari Cortez

Mike Sebastian Cortez  
Born: 5/97 Died: 6/17  
Mother: Rita Cortez

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

Michael N. Daffin  
Born: 2/85 Died: 4/17  
Parents: Michael & Diana Daffin

Daniel Elijah Day  
Born: 4/93 Died: 5/16  
Mother: Kristen Day

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

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

Michael John Dornbach  
Born: 7/60 Died: 10/17  
Parents: Maria Triliegi & Edward Dornbach

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jesse Eric Esphorst  
Born: 9/00 Died: 3/17  
Parents: Jesse & Julie Esphorst

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

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

Lexie Rose Gilpin  
Born: 4/09 Died: 4/09  
Mother: Michele Gilpin

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

Marc David Guerrevia  
Born: 7/97 Died: 7/17  
Mother: Sharon Cortez

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

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

Christie Hagenburger  
Born: 4/63 Died: 12/17  
Father: D.W. Hagenburger

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

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

Sarah Jade Hurley  
Born: 6/97 Died: 5/17  
Father: Tim Hurley  
Grandmother: Laurie Hurley

Steven Ishikawa  
Born: 9/75 Died: 4/17  
Mother: Miki Ishikawa



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

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

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

Kyle Bernard Kirby  
Born: 5/93 Died: 9/18  
Father: Vince Kirby

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

Scott Koller  
Born: 10/83 Died: 3/15  
Mother: Betty Benson

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

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

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

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

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

Lizzie Jester  
Born: 6/93 Died: 7/18  
Father: Lee Jester

Kevin Le Nguyen  
Born: 5/88 Died: 6/14  
Mother: Tracy Le Nguyen

Joseph Licciardone  
Born: 4/94 Died: 3/16  
Parents: Connie & Leo Licciardone

Gaby Lindeman  
Born: 7/64 Died: 9/12  
Parents: Gilberto & Graciela Rodriguez

Alberto Lopez  
Born: 8/66 Died: 2/12  
Mother: Albertina Lopez

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

Matty Mallano  
Born: 5/02 Died: 7/18  
Mother: Paula Mallano

Shauna Jean Malone  
Born: 8/70 Died: 1/13  
Parents: Tom & Mary Malone

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

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

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

Travis Frederick Marton  
Born: 10/91 Died: 1/15  
Mother: Ricki Marton

Matthew "Matty" Louis Matich  
Born: 5/02 Died: 7/18  
Parents: Mike & Shirley Matich  
Grandmother: Susan Matich

Max McCardy  
Born: 4/05 Died: 8/15  
Parents: Derk & Akemi McCardy

Joseph Mc Coy  
Born: 9/11 Died: 11/14  
Mother: Amy McCoy

Sarah Mc Donald  
Born: 10/00 Died: 6/23  
Parents: Tom & Shideh Mc Donald

Kirk Mc Nulty  
Born: 7/84 Died: 2/14  
Mother: Elaine Mc Nulty

Jeremy Stewert Mead  
Born: 10/61 Died: 11/14  
Mother: Carol Mead

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

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

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

Christopher Metsker  
Born: 11/94 Died: 3/18  
Parents: Justin & Tara Metsker

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

Jacki Montoya  
Born: 10/89 Died: 6/15  
Mother: Theresa Montoya

Joshua Montoya  
Born: 4/15 Died: 6/15  
Grandmother: Theresa Montoya

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

Danielle Murillo  
Born: 5/96 Died: 4/14  
Parents: Cheryl Outlaw & Manuel Murillo

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

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

Lisa Nakamaru  
Born: 12/93 Died: 10/14  
Mother: Grace Nakamaru

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

Stephanie Sue Newkirk  
Born: 12/67 Died: 10/15  
Mother: Cindy McCoy

Steven Scott Nussbaum  
Born: 5/61 Died: 11/15  
Parents: Will & Gloria Nussbaum

Trevor Mitchell Nicholson  
Born: 7/99 Died: 1/18  
Parents: Brad & Kendra Nicholson

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

Isabella Ofsanko  
Born: 6/97 Died: 10/15  
Mother: Desireé Palmer

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

Jessica Perez  
Born: 5/89 Died: 10/03  
Sister: Monica Perez

Andrew Periaswamy  
Born: 5/97 Died: 10/16  
Parents: Megala & Xavier Periaswamy

Donnie Vincent Pulislich  
Born: 1/75 Died: 1/18  
Mother: Maria Pulislich  
Sister: Michelle Pulislich





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

Dax Jordan Quintana  
Dantas De Oliveria  
Born: 6/17 Died: 8/17

Parents: Alexandar & Sanderson  
Quintana Dantas De Oliveria

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

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

Cindy Ranftl  
Born: 8/68 Died: 7/97  
Parents: Pat & Bob Ranftl

Sarah Lynne Redding  
Born: 12/80 Died: 12/05  
Mother: Linda Redding

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

Dominic Niall Pennington Roque  
Born: 8/02 Died: 9/09  
Parents: Kerrie & Ren Roque

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

Danny Ryan  
Born: 07/79 Died: 10/15  
Parents: Mike & Andrea Ryan

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

Daniela Mora Saldana  
Born: 3/17 Died: 3/17  
Mother: Rosa Saldana

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

Phillip Ruben Sandoval  
Born: 7/84 - Died: 6/16  
Parents: Valerie & Joe Desjardin

Andrew Sankus  
Born: 4/71 Died: 8/15  
Mother: Mary Sankus

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

Spencer Simpson  
Born: 1/80 Died: 6/13  
Parents: Rich & Shelly Simpson

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

Paul Slater  
Born: 10/71 Died: 11/16  
Parents: Bob & Gwen Slater

Dale Lee Soto  
Born: 7/94 Died: 5/11  
Mother: Monique Soto

Patrik Stezinger  
Born: 1/89 Died: 8/17  
Parents: Raul & Rosemary Mosher

Jonathan David Streisand  
Born: 1/87 Died: 8/13  
Parents: Pricilla & David Streisand

Brittany Anne Suggs  
Born: 10/88 Died: 4/16  
Mother Camille Suggs

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

Kenneth Tahan  
Born: 2/66 Died: 7/16  
Parents: Shirley & Joseph Tahan

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

Anthony Tanori  
Born: 8/82 Died: 8/12  
Parents: Chuck & Sylvia Tanori

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

Laura C. Toomey  
Born: 1/61 Died: 12/78  
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth Toomey

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

Catarina Sol Torres  
Born: 12/16 Died: 12/16  
Parents: Marcus & Vanessa Torres

Carlos Valdez  
Born: 01/61 Died: 01/12  
Parents: Antonia & Refugio Valdez

Vance C. Valdez  
Born: 10/90 Died: 3/12  
Parents: Carlos & Maria Valdez

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

Manuel Vargas III  
Born: 3/95 - Died: 5/15  
Father: Manuel Vargas

David Michael Villarreal  
Born: 11/90 Died: 2/18  
Parents: David & Barbara Villarreal

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

Matthew L Weiss  
Born: 9/96 Died: 8/18  
Mother: Natalie Narumoto

Rennie S. Wible  
Born: 8/66 Died: 1/18  
Mother: Jinx Wible

Dovan Vincent Wing  
Born: 6/83 Died: 9/17  
Mother: Becky Wing

Aaron Young  
Born: 9/74 Died: 6/15  
Mother: Sheila Young

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

Michael Jordan Zareski  
Born: 5/71 Died: 12/17  
Parents: Susan & Norm Zareski

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, click on the following link to donate online.

[www.tcfsbla.org](http://www.tcfsbla.org)

\* Please remember we are always working a month in advance and need your tributes by the first of the month preceding the actual birthday.

### A Birthday Tribute to:

#### Andrew Sankus April 1971 - August 2015



Dear Andy, My Son/Sunshine of my life,

Well, it has been 3 years since your passing on to your next experience. I wish I could hug you! And yet I cannot.

Love lasts forever - When I think of the life we shared I remember a boy, a teen, a man and a father. My heart is full of joy and gratitude and longing ...

Your children Maddie and Andrew Gareth, Junior, are well and living in Greenville, South Carolina, not far from their other Grandparents and Aunt. They are wonderful children. I am sure you are watching over them diligently and send your Love.

I accept that we cannot know exactly what happens after our bodies die, but I still do wonder. While on Earth you were bright and curious and male. So many of my favorite memories center around your 'All American Boy' childhood days.

This is the first article I am writing to speak on your behalf and to tell others about the ever amazing You.

You took your first breath on a Monday morning in April of 1971. I was a junior high school teacher then and had gotten up early to prepare to go to Francis Wyman school. You were ready and active and doing your best to join us. Your Father, David, convinced me that it was time to call the doctor. We were working together with great effort and you were born later that morning. Yup, 9 pounds, 6 ounces - perfect for our families. I watched as you came into this world, loudly. What a miracle! You were such a beautiful baby; a perfect 10 on the APGAR scale. As the first grandchild on both sides of the family, we had plenty of visitors to the hospital the 10 days it took for both of us to be ready to go home. They quickly hired a substitute for my teaching job so we

had 'get to know you' time. What a blessing. It was astonishing to witness your "Brightness" - a characteristic which highlighted your whole life!

You were sitting by your third month and walking by your ninth - ever ready to move on ... another life-long characteristic. We lived in an apartment complex with a pool- yup, even in New Hampshire. My physical education teacher friend, Pat Maguire, taught you to swim even before you could walk. It was fascinating to watch you, dear little baby of mine. You were a Happy child and confident in your physical abilities. That summer your Uncles; Fred, Jim, Mike and Dan visited us often. You were their favorite real live toy.

It was so much fun to dress you up. I wonder if you knew of the joy you brought us all.

Your energy was unbounded and your vibrant health lifted everyone who met you. You made us a family. I will Love you forever and ever ...

Love, Mom



### A Birthday Tribute to:

#### Edward W. Myricks II April 1972 - October 2011

Happy Birthday to our beautiful son,

You are the second miracle in our lives. The first being your sister. We all love and miss you terribly, and always will.

Love, Mom, Dad, & Sister

## For Siblings...



### A Brother's Death

Barbara Lazear Ascher's brother, Bobby, died of AIDS at the age 31. Following is an excerpt of a beautifully written sensitive article describing the author's struggle with grief. "A Brother's Death" was originally printed in the New York Times Magazine.

When we first learned of Bobby's illness, it seemed incomprehensible that this could be happening to our baby brother. My sister and I began a journey into paralysis. There were days when it seemed we had to concentrate on putting one foot in front of the other if we were to walk at all. If we traveled more than a couple of blocks, we were exhausted for the rest of the day.

We were hungry, we weren't hungry. We made chocolate chip cookies and chocolate brownies and didn't eat them. We opened and closed the refrigerator door, looking for something that might cushion the pain, fill the chasm that was opening

from within.

Now I realize that this was the beginning of grief which starts in the stomach, yawning like the gaping mouth in Munch's painting. "The Scream." But what did we know of grief? We were young, our beloved had not yet died I began to understand that grieving is like walking. The urge is there, but you need a guiding hand; you need someone to teach you how.

I went to speak with a wise and trusted minister at my church who warned that there were bad times ahead. The death of a sibling, he said, grievous in itself, is also a startling reminder of our own mortality. I suppose it's not dissimilar to the time in youth when we first learned of our origins and began to understand, if they made me, then they can make another. After that we became the nervous sentinels of our territory.

When a sibling dies, the absolute certainty of death replaces the cherished illusion that maybe we'll be the exceptions. When a sibling dies, death tugs at our own shirrtails. There's no unclasping its persistent grip. "You too," it says. "Yes, even you."

When you are new to grief, you learn that there's no second-guessing it. It will have its way with you. Don't be fooled by the statistics you read: Widows have one bad year; orphans three. Grief doesn't read schedules.

One morning three weeks after Bobby died, I arose feeling happy and energetic. Well, now, I thought, I guess we've taken care of that. Wrong. The next morning I was awakened by a wail I thought was coming from the storm outside until I realized it was coming from me.

Grief will fool you with its disguises. Some days you insist that you're fine, you're just angry at a friend who said the wrong thing. One day I wept into the lettuce and peaches at our local market when an acquaintance approached to scold me for my stand in an old battle. Of course, we both assumed that she was responsible for my tears.

You learn that you can cry and stop and laugh and even follow a taxi driver's commands to "Have a nice day," and then cry again. You learn that there is no such thing as crying forever. Three months ago I was certain that I would never be happy again. I was wrong.

Grief is like the wind. When it's blowing hard, you adjust your sails and run before it. It blows too hard, you stay in the harbor, close the hatches and don't take calls. When it's gentle, you go sailing, have a picnic, take a swim.

You go wherever it takes you. There are no bulwarks to withstand it. Should you erect one, it

will eventually tire of the game and blow the walls in.

We cannot know another's grief, as deeply personal as love and pain. I cannot measure my own against the sorrow of my brother's friends who must wonder every day which among them will be next. I shy away from the magnitude of my brother's own grief when, upon being diagnosed, he heard the final click of a door as it closed on possibility.

A friend of mine said of her son when he died at 30, "He was just beginning to look out at the world and make maps." So was my brother. And then there was no place to go.

--Barbara Lazear Ascher, NY, NY



## For Grandparents...

### Grandparent To Grandparent: What advice would you share with a newly bereaved grandparent?

As I pondered this question my initial response was, "I have no advice" because when you are experiencing the horror and pain of losing a grandchild there is no path that seems to lead in the direction that you wish that you could go. So many times the prayers and wishes are that the power greater than we, should reverse their decision and take us instead. Take us and allow the precious little one the opportunity to remain on this earth and fulfill our child's hopes and dreams. But we know deep in our hearts that this is not possible.

So I would say to each and every grandparent who is in pain, "build the foundation for memories"! It is something that we do so very well. Grandparents bring to the extended family, love, hope and joy, but most importantly, strength! Our children are looking to us for guidance and support. Talk about the missing angel and the beautiful times no matter how short they were. Bring identity to the "grandbaby" that will last through eternity with friends and family members and others that we touch. Also remember that regardless of how uncomfortable the outside world is about the mention of the name or the feelings attached, it's okay!

Seek out peace, poetry, anything of beauty that will allow you to attach to the beauty of the child that died. Music is one of the things that allowed me to cry when my stubborn strong image was refusing! Crying cleanses some of the pain and brings with it some peace. Don't punish yourself;



don't second-guess about what you could have done differently to change the current situation. Just remember that neither you nor your child had control. Each of us will deal with the grief as our minds will allow and no one has the right to tell you to "get over it, get on with your life"! You will never get over it; you will only learn to put it into perspective as that hole in your heart the size of the Grand Canyon begins to mend.

--Pamela

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## From Our Members...

"Grieving is not a short-term process; it's not even a long-term process; it's a lifelong process. 'Having a future' now means that although your life will flow again, it will flow differently as a result of the loss. Your grief will become incorporated into your life history, become a part of your identity. And you will continue now, and forever, to redefine your relationship with your deceased loved one. Death doesn't end the relationship, it simply forges a new type of relationship - one based not on physical presence but on memory, spirit, and love."

-- From Transcending Loss by Ashley Davis Bush submitted by Linda Curtis

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 take the time to submit a poem or article you found helpful.

**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.



**Get Your Photo Buttons...** Photo buttons are a perfect way to share your child, grandchild or sibling with others at monthly meetings. If you would like to have

some made, simply bring a photo for each button you would like (color photo copies work great) to any of our chapter meetings and Ken can make them for you. There is no cost. Keep in mind that the button is about 3" in diameter, so the picture needs to fit inside that area and the actual photo is used, so make sure it's one we can cut.



**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.) You can mail them to the P.O. Box or send them by e-mail to

[Lynntcf@aol.com](mailto:Lynntcf@aol.com)

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

**Memory Book...** Our chapter has an ongoing Memory Book that is on display at each meeting. Each child is given a page in the book. Blank pages are located in the back of the book. Feel free to take a page home to work on. 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 Linda know so we can put your child's name on a donation label inside the book.

**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, it is only your donations that keep us functioning, and we appreciate your help. To make it easier for those who would rather donate online, just go to our website and use the donate button at





[www.tcfsbla.org](http://www.tcfsbla.org) A receipt will be emailed to you for tax purposes. Please let us know if you want the tribute published in the next newsletter. For donations at the meetings, attach a tribute to your donation to be listed in the newsletter. (Just a Hint: If you plan to leave \$\$ at the TCF meeting, you might want to make it by check so you can receive an IRS deduction.) No amount is too small and donations are definitely needed to keep our chapter going.

**Our Website...** Joe Zelik is hosting the website and updating it with the current newsletter and chapter information. Thank you to those who are willing to get your newsletter online. To be able to send a reminder each month to let you know when the latest issue of the newsletter is available, we need your e-mail address. If you have not been getting a reminder e-mail, please let me know. To update our files, please call Lynn at (310) 530-3214 to update by phone. You can also e-mail Lynn at [Lynntcf@aol.com](mailto:Lynntcf@aol.com) if you want to do it electronically. Thank-you for your understanding and help. TCF South Bay/LA



**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.

Linda Zelik (chapter co-leader).....(310) 370-1645  
 Mary Sankus (chapter co-leader).....(310) 648-4878  
 Kitty Edler.....(310) 541-8221  
 Richard Leach (grandchild).....(310) 833-5213  
 Kristy Mueller (sibling).....(310) 938-2409

#### LOCAL TCF CHAPTERS

**Beach Cities/L.A.** (Manhattan Bch): (970) 213-6293  
 Third Tues

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

**Newport Beach** (917) 703-3414 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed.

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

**Orange Co./Anaheim:** (562) 943-2269

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

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

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

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

**South Los Angeles:** (323) 546-9755 last Tue

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

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

#### Local Support Groups...

**FAMILY & FRIENDS OF MURDER VICTIMS:** Rose Madsen, (909) 798-4803 Newsletter and support group, e-mail [Roseydoll@aol.com](mailto: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](http://www.Alivealone.org)

**SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE:** Support Group for families that have lost someone to suicide. Contact Terry Jordan, LCSW (301) 859-2241

**OUR HOUSE/BEREAVEMENT HOUSE:** Support groups in LA & So. Bay (310) 475-0299 Also Spanish Support Group, Loren Delgado 310-231-3196.

**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. 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. (310) 546-6407

#### TORRANCE MEMORIAL BEREAVEMENT

**SERVICES:** (310) 325-9110 Weekly grief support.

**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

**Camp Comfort Zone -** Year round Bereavement Camp for Children [www.comfortzonecamp.org](http://www.comfortzonecamp.org) (310) 483-8313.

#### Other Grief Support Websites...

[agast.org](http://agast.org) (for grandparents)

[groww.com](http://groww.com)

[goodgriefresources.com](http://goodgriefresources.com)

[childloss.com](http://childloss.com)

[beyondindogp.com](http://beyondindogp.com)

[griefwatch.dom](http://griefwatch.dom)

[angelmoms.com](http://angelmoms.com)

[babysteps.com](http://babysteps.com)

[healingafterloss.org](http://healingafterloss.org)

[webhealing.com](http://webhealing.com)

[survivorsofsuicide.com](http://survivorsofsuicide.com)

[opentohope.com](http://opentohope.com)

[taps.org](http://taps.org) (military death)

[alivealone.org](http://alivealone.org)

[bereavedparentsusa.org](http://bereavedparentsusa.org)

[save.org](http://save.org)

[pomc.com](http://pomc.com) (families of murder victims)

[grasphelp.org](http://grasphelp.org) (substance abuse deaths)

[www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub](http://www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub) (Suicide)

#### A SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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

#### CHAPTER OFFICERS:

CHAPTER LEADER: Linda Zelik

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines

PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks

TREASURER: Ken Konopasek

WEBSITE: Joe Zelik



**STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Linda & Joe Zelik	Marilyn Nemeth
Cheryl & Bill Matasso	Lynn Vines
Nancy Lerner	Ken Konopasek
Kitty Edler	Susan Kass
Mary Sankus	Crystal Henning
Sandra & Eddie Myricks	

**National Office Information****Compassionate Friends E-Newsletter:** TCF

National Office publishes a monthly e-newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on what's going on with the organization and its chapters. We encourage everyone use the valuable information it holds to help you in your grief. To receive TCF's e-newsletter, sign up for it online by visiting TCF national website at <http://compassionatefriends.org>. and filling out the request to sign-up at the bottom of the page.

**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. There is also a closed group chat room for specific topics that you need to register for.

**Closed Group Chat...** TCF National has several closed Facebook groups you may find helpful on your grief journey. Click the blue link above to be connected and request to join.

**TCF - Loss to Substance Related Causes**

*Moderators: Barbara Allen and Mary Lemley*

**TCF - Loss to Suicide** *Moderators: Cathy*

*Seehuetter and Donna Adams*

**TCF - Loss to Homicide** *Moderators: Debbie Floyd and Kathleen Willoughby***TCF - Infant and Toddler Loss** *Moderators: Susan Peavler and Tiffany Barraso***TCF - Sibling Loss to Substance Related Causes**

*Moderators: Andrea Keller and Barbara Allen*

**The Compassionate Friends Sounds of the Siblings** (for bereaved siblings) *Moderators: Tracy Milne and Keith Singer***TCF - Loss of a Grandchild** *Moderators: Betty Farrel and Jennifer Sue Hale***TCF - Loss to Miscarriage or Stillbirth** *Moderators: Kelly Kittel and Kenzie Janzen***TCF - Loss of an Only Child/All Your Children**

*Moderators: Lisa Ridge and Vicki Woods-Ozias*

**TCF - Loss to a Drunk/Impaired Driver**

*Moderators: Robin Landry and Rebecca Perkins*

**TCF - Loss to Cancer** *Moderators: Lee Meyerson, Michelle Setzer, Marguerite Caraway Ward*

**TCF is On Facebook ....** Please visit and help promote TCF. 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.

**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).



The 42nd TCF National Conference will be held in Philadelphia, on July 19th-21st, 2019. "Hope Rings in Philadelphia" is the theme of this year's event.

The National Conference is a weekend spent surrounded by other bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. It is a place where hope grows and friendships are made with others who truly understand. With inspirational keynote speakers, abundant workshops for everyone's wants and needs, and a remembrance candle lighting program culminating with the annual Walk to Remember, this time of healing and hope is the gift we give ourselves. Join us as together we remember and share the everlasting love we have for our precious children, siblings and grandchildren.

- Choose to attend over a hundred different workshops and sharing sessions, given by professionals and also individuals just like you.
- Take advantage of "Healing Haven" to receive free personal services such as a massage.
- Craft items to commemorate the love for your family member in the "Crafty Corner".
- Step away for a quiet moment of pause in the "Reflection Room".
- Explore the TCF Marketplace offering items for purchase that are meaningful to all on the grief journey together.

We'll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our TCF/USA Facebook Page and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

**Registration and Hotel Reservations are now open. Click on the link below to register.**  
<http://compassionatefriends.org>

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



The Compassionate Friends is a totally self-supporting organization. Our chapter is run entirely by volunteers, but we do have operating costs. Your tax deductible donation is what keeps our chapter going. If you want the ease of using a credit card, we now have a credit card or pay-pal account for donations. Use the "Donate Link" on our Website at <http://tcfsbla.org/donate/> Or if you prefer, you can always mail in a check to the P.O. Box

Please consider giving a donation in your loved one's name.

In loving memory of Kenneth Tahan, 2/66 - 7/16. Happy Birthday Ken!  
Love, Mom

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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 \_\_\_\_\_

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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.

The Compassionate Friends  
South Bay/L.A., CA Chapter  
P.O. Box 11171  
Torrance, CA 90510

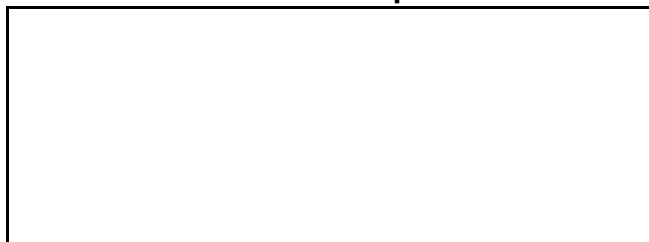
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– Return Service Requested –



**April 2019**

**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.**

**©2019 THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS -- SOUTH BAY/L.A., CA CHAPTER**

**If you no longer wish to receive this mailing or have a new address, please contact us.**