



# *The Compassionate Friends*

## *South Bay/LA Chapter*

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

December 2020 ISSUE

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

**\*\*REGULAR MEETINGS  
STILL CANCELLED\*\***  
We will let you know when meetings at The Neighborhood Church will resume.

#### LOCATION:

Online only for the time being. Join us on Zoom for our virtual meetings. For more information call Connie or Leo at (310) 536-9305 or e-mail Connie at [ConnieStar58@gmail.com](mailto:ConnieStar58@gmail.com)

#### **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 Dec. 3rd Virtual meeting is coming using Zoom.**

See page 16 to request the link for the meetings. It is very easy to join just by clicking on the link in your email. Leo will walk you through it ahead of time if you are worried about technicalities, just email him at [Liccica79@gmail.com](mailto:Liccica79@gmail.com)

**The TCF Sharing group** takes place at Hoff's Hut's outdoor dining area (Crenshaw & 237<sup>th</sup> St. in Torrance) Join us on Friday's at 1 PM in their patio dining area. Call (310) 963-4646 to let us know you are coming for the reservation.

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

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(310) 963-4646  
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Chapter Co-Leaders:  
**We need a Co-leader  
Could that be you?**  
Lori Galloway (760) 521-0096  
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The National Office of TCF  
P.O. Box 3696  
Oakbrook, IL 60522-3696  
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[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

**The Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> Zoom meeting** will start with “**Grief and the Holidays.**” The death of a child throws us into chaos. Grief’s power overwhelms us as we struggle to regain a balance in our lives once again. Then suddenly we are faced with the holidays. A house where a child has died drains the energy of the grieving parents. Holiday get togethers, family dinners with an empty place at the table, shopping for that elusive gift...it’s just too much. Usually we can share our feelings and get ideas/hints from other bereaved parents at our meetings. Since that is not possible right now, I encourage you to join us via Zoom to help overcome some of the anxiety and stress you are having in your grief. Talking to other bereaved parents and finding that those bizarre thoughts running through your head are a common part of parental grief, and that you are not going crazy, is very comforting.

### Thoughts For The Holidays

**Plan Ahead:** Bereaved individuals who experience the most difficulty with the holiday season are those who have given little thought to the challenges they will encounter. Consider ahead of time what may be expected of you, both socially and emotionally, as well as your own preferences.

**Accept Your Limitations:** Grief consumes most of your available energy no matter what the season ... The holidays place additional demands on your time and emotions. Plan to lower your expectations to accommodate current needs.

**Make Changes:** Your circumstances have changed. Expect to make necessary alterations in holiday plans to accommodate those changes. Consider changing your surroundings, rituals, and/or traditions to diminish stress. Serve notice on family and friends that this year things may be somewhat different.

**Trim Down to Essentials:** Limit social and family commitments to suit your available energy. Shop early or use catalog sales. Re-evaluate priorities and forego unnecessary activities and obligations.

**Ask For Help and Accept Help:** Accept offers for assistance with holiday shopping, decorating, cleaning; cooking, etc. Chances are, loved ones are looking for ways to lessen your burden at this time of year. Allow those who care about you to offer their support in concrete ways.

**Inform Others of Your Needs:** Give family and friends the tools they need to help you through the holidays. Be specific with them about your preferences and desires, and keep them up-to-date when those needs change.

**Build in Flexibility:** Learn to “play it by ear”.

There is no concrete formula for learning to deal with loss. You are the foremost authority on what is best for you, and your needs may legitimately change from day to day. Accept the fluctuations that must occur when walking in unknown territory, and learn to take each moment as it comes.

**Give Yourself Permission “To Be”:** Allow breathing space and expect fluctuations in mood and perspective. The bereaved work overtime. Not only is life more complicated, but all energy is siphoned into mental and emotional resolution. Grieving is nature’s way of healing the mind and the heart from the greatest injury of all. Allow yourself the privilege of limping till your wounds have healed and you can learn to run again.

-- Joannetta Hendel Bereavement Magazine



### A Dog Named “HOPE”

On December 24, 1989 my daughter Jeanne Marie died suddenly at the age of 31 of an aneurysm. I had given her a yellow lab puppy for Christmas 1988. Jeanne was going through some very difficult times and I thought a dog of her own would help. After she named her puppy, I asked how she came to name her Hope. She replied, “Whenever I look at her I’ll know there is always Hope for me.” The two of them were inseparable. So much love between the two of them. Several weeks before Jeanne died, as she was playing with Hope, she looked up at me with her big brown eyes and said “Mom, if anything happens to me will you take care of Hope?” It was as if she knew.

Now I have Hope who is always happy to see me when I arrive home. When I cry Hope gets very upset with me; barking, running around me, licking my tears away; until I get so mad at her and THEN I get control of myself and love her for loving me. At Christmas time when Hope opens her gifts we sit around laughing at how excited she gets opening her presents. Ripping the paper off to get to another treat, etc. It brings back memories of how excited Jeanne would become as she opened her gifts -

opening one after another with such joy and many OH's.

It's such a warm/wonderful feeling to laugh at Hope and remembering the past Christmas'. Just picture adult's sitting around laughing at a dog opening her gifts, laughing so hard that we felt our sides would burst.

You see, Hope is an extension of Jeanne. She was her baby. Although I'm divorced, Jeanne's father and I are Grandma and Grandpa to Hope. When friends get talking about their grandchildren and showing pictures, I begin to tell them about my "Grand-Dog." If someone had told me years ago that someday I would love a dog as I do, I would have told them they were crazy. Now maybe I am! Without Hope I would not have been able to survive this terrible loss.

Since Jeanne's death the house isn't so quiet and lonely. I have someone who still needs me to care for them, to talk to, to play with, laugh at, and someone to love. I now have "HOPE"!!!

--Betty J. Lambert, TCF Dubuque Area Chapter, IA  
Mother of Jeanne Marie

*Editor's Note: The following article is a special overview of dealing with grief and the holidays. Combining humor and wit, Darcie's articles hold a myriad of knowledge we can all relate to as bereaved parents. If it doesn't apply to you now, you will look back one day and realize how astute her advise was. The first TCF conference I attended she was the key note speaker and had me truly laughing for the first time after my son's death. She will forever hold a special place in millions of bereaved families lives. --LV*

## The Wisdom of Darcie Sims Low Fat Lite Holidays

I'm tired of LOW-FAT. I'm tired of FAT-FREE. I'm tired of thinking rice cakes are good! (They're NOT the same as Oreos!) I'm tired of trying to be creative in my thinking, my eating, my living; and I'm tired of dreading the holiday season. In fact, I'm just plain TIRED!

I saw my first holiday greeting card today, and I'm still in shorts and sandals. I thought I was tired of summer—but not so tired that buying a holiday greeting card was the answer. I must admit that the summer's heat could end now and I would not miss it, but must we rush the seasons that much?

It's one thing to wish for a cool day once in awhile, but the TALK SHOW HOSTESS does not have to share a recipe for preparing a low-fat version of fruitcake on a show that still features HOT

## WEATHER GARDENING TIPS!

I'm tired of RUSHING, too. The holidays will be here soon enough. I think they actually start right after the 4th of July because that's when the clothing ads feature sweaters and winter coats start. WHO can think of wearing WOOL when it's 103! AM I CRAZY or is the rest of the world nuts?!

I'm tired of dreading almost half of each year because some marketing expert thinks it would be "cute" to have Jingle Bells echoing through the frozen food section in the middle of August. If I have to start thinking HOLIDAY in July, and it takes more than a few weeks to "recover" from The Holiday Season after it's over, then I really am spending almost half of each year coping with the holiday blues. And I'm TIRED of THAT!

Most people think THE HOLIDAYS start sometime in November, but for me, they never really stop. I can get depressed any time of the year and blame it on the holidays (except for the month of August—there are no holidays in that poor month, but just being August is reason enough to be depressed).

My reds and greens can turn to blue at any moment. It only takes a few notes of a song, a whiff of REAL food (low-fat does not smell heavenly) or a trace of a memory to send me into the dumps. We can recycle pain ANYTIME, but somehow, once the displays are up in the stores and the weather turns cooler than before, the downhill slide towards THE HOLIDAYS intensifies.

By Halloween, I'm bracing for THOSE days and by Thanksgiving, the thought of being cheery is often simply too much to bear.

Gifts? RIGHT! What could I possibly find, wrap, give or get that would lighten THIS load? Icicles form around my heart and THE holidays are only colored with despair. I've forgotten where I stashed the gifts I did manage to buy during the sidewalk sales last summer, and that recipe for low-fat fruitcake was copied down and promptly misplaced (for which my family and friends SHOULD be eternally grateful).

By November, I've run out of options, however, and no matter how creative I am, there is no denying the approach of THOSE DAYS when the rest of the world looks far happier than I have been or will ever be.

Even their voices are cheery as we slip past each other on the icy sidewalks! It grows dark at 4:30 in the afternoon, and there is little comfort in a carrot on a wintry day. I'm tired of LOW-FAT substitutes



for happiness. I'm tired of bracing for the memories that flood back to better times and for fearing the sights and sounds that only serve to remind me of what isn't anymore.

**CAN ANYONE STOP THE HOLIDAYS PLEASE? CAN ANYONE FIND A FAT SUBSTITUTE THAT REALLY TASTES LIKE MOM'S PUMPKIN PIE? CAN ANYONE FIGURE OUT A CURE FOR THE PAIN OF THESE MEMORIES?** Probably not. So, as long as we are stuck with the approaching holidays and as long as we remain determined to be healthy and keep up the good low-fat fight, what can we do to turn this season of despair into a season of hope? Where are the beacons of light (recipes?) that make low-fat anything acceptable?



Handling the holidays is not deciding how to eliminate the fat, the pain, the memories from our lives, but rather, learning how to **LIVE WITH THE HURT INSTEAD OF BEING CONSUMED BY IT.**

**BE PATIENT WITH YOURSELF.** Know that hardly anyone is as happy as you think they might be. We all have our hurts to hide. We are always in a hurry. We want things to **BE BETTER NOW.** Do what you can this season and let it be enough.

**BE REALISTIC.** It will hurt, especially if there is an empty chair at the table. Don't try to block bad moments. Be ready for them. Lay in a supply of tissues (a roll of toilet paper is more efficient). Anticipation is often far worse than reality. Let those hurting moments come, deal with them and let them go.

**LEAVE** the word **OUGHT** out of this holiday. **PLAN AHEAD.** Grieving people often experience a lack of concentration. Make lists. Prioritize everything. Decide what is really important. (Breathing and potty time rank right up there!)

**REDEFINE EXPECTATIONS** of self and others. Be honest in what you expect to be able to do. We live in a world of **OUGHTS** and **SHOULD**s and suffer from guilt because we cannot meet our own expectations.

**BE KIND AND GENTLE TO SELF.** Figure out what you **SHOULD** do, balance it against what you are **CAPABLE** of doing and then **COMPROMISE.** Forgive yourself for living when your loved one died.

**LISTEN TO YOURSELF.** Find the quiet space within where all the answers live. As you become aware of your needs, tell family members and friends.

**KEEP SOME TRADITIONS.** Choose which ones. Don't toss out everything this year. You can always try changing a routine. Try whatever pops into your head. You can always scrap it if it doesn't work.

**TAKE CARE OF SELF PHYSICALLY.** Eat right (toss some chocolate chips into the oat bran; gift wrap some broccoli; ban low-fat for 1 glorious meal) ! Exercise (or at least watch someone else). Jog your memory!

**HOLD ON TO YOUR POCKET BOOK & CHARGE CARDS.** You can't buy away grief, although you might be tempted to try. **SCREEN ALL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES:** Will it be the holidays without it? Why do you do this activity? — Tradition, habit, obligation? Do **YOU** have to do this, or can others do it for you? Do you **LIKE** doing it? How could this activity be done differently?

**GIVE YOURSELF THE GIFT OF EMOTIONS.** Put the motion back into the emotions. Toss a Nerf brick when you're angry or pound a pillow. Go outside and yell while you shovel snow. Find a way to express the intensity of your feelings in a **PERSONALLY NONDESTRUCTIVE WAY.**

- **BUY A GIFT FOR YOUR LOVED ONE.** Give it away to someone who would otherwise not have a gift. It is the giving, the exchanging of love that we miss the most. When you share love, it grows.

**HANG THE STOCKINGS. PLACE A WREATH ON THE GRAVE.** Do whatever feels **RIGHT** for you and your family.

**SHARE YOUR HOLIDAYS** with someone—anyone. Ride the ferry, visit a soup kitchen or nursing home, spend an evening at the bus station. There are lots of lonely people who could use your love and caring.

**WORK AT LIFTING DEPRESSION.** Take responsibility for self. We cannot wait for someone else to wrap up some joy and give it to us. We have to do that for ourselves. Think of things you enjoy and give yourself a treat. (**ONE** cookie will **NOT** cause mounds of fat to be deposited on your hips—a dozen, however, might!)

**UNDERSTAND THAT HEARTACHES WILL BE UNPACKED** as you sift through the decorations, but so too are the warm, loving memories of each piece.

Don't deny yourself the **GIFT OF HEALING TEARS.** **ASK FOR HELP.** Make a help-on-a-stick sign and stand on the porch, waving it. Someone will notice, but may not stop. (Just because you ask

for help does not guarantee you will get some, but if you never ask, no one will ever know how much you might need a hug.)

**LEARN TO LOOK FOR JOY IN THE MOMENT.** Learn to celebrate what you do have instead of making mental lists of what you're missing. Change the way you look at things.

**LIGHT A SPECIAL CANDLE**—not in memory of a death, but in celebration of a life and a love shared! **NEVER FORGET THAT ONCE SOMEONE LOVED US AND WE LOVED BACK. NO ONE CAN DENY THAT GIFT EXCHANGE!**

**LIVE THROUGH THE HURT SO JOY CAN RETURN TO WARM YOUR HEART.** I'm tired of **LOW-FAT LIFE** and I'm tired of dreading the approaching holiday season. I can't live with my entire being focused on fat grams and painful memories. So, since I can't eliminate fat completely, and if I get rid of the memories I must also get rid of the remembered joy, I'll just have to do what I can and forgive the rest. The holidays are survivable just as fat is manageable.

I'll have to run a few more miles and shed a few more tears, but I'm not going to let yesterday use up today and if I do find something wonderful to eat or a terrific memory to cherish, I'll enjoy them all. I will not allow fat or pain or fear or sadness to ruin the entire season. It may not be the same as before we became health conscious or bereaved, but whatever **IT IS CAN BE SOMETHING**, and that just may be the beacon of hope in this season of despair.

Grab the fruitcake and the low-fat turkey and get moving to the rhythms of this holiday season—the season where love and memory lighten the heart and chase the gloom. Skip the fat, shed the tears, light the candle and find the light. Make this holiday season full of **LITE** and **LIGHT** and **LOVE**: the best seasoning of all!

## Hanukkah Thoughts

As this season of lights,  
We remember the light you  
brought into our lives.  
The light of your laughter  
The light of your wit and intelligence  
The light of your love  
May the time not be distant when  
the memory of these lights  
Will illumine our hearts and minds  
And eradicate the darkness therein.  
—Stephanie Hess, TCF Rockland Co. NY



## The Four Tasks Of Grief

### Tell The Story:

Talk about what has happened until it becomes real. Talk to caring family and friends, attend a support group, begin individual work with a mental health professional, but find a way to speak about the person who died and how the death has impacted your life and family. Tell the story until you don't need to tell it anymore. Chances are you will be close to acceptance of the reality of your loved one's death at that point.

### Express The Emotions:

Grief is filled with conflicting tidal waves of emotion. Just when you think you've accepted the death, disbelief may sweep over you again. You may feel intense anger along with equally intense feelings of love and loss. Or in the midst of crying about the person's death, a sense of unreality may surface again. There is no right or wrong way to feel. Your feelings are valid just because you have them. No matter what the range of emotions, all are to be expected during grief. It is crucial to get the emotions outside of yourself. Stuffed feelings can build and build and become overwhelming. Scream, cry, write, draw, punch a punching bag, tell an empathetic someone, take a walk, do **SOMETHING** to express what you feel.

### Make Meaning From The Loss:

Nothing can make what has happened "okay". Life is turned upside down and changed forever. However you can determine that something good and reasonable will come out of the unreasonable tragedy that you are experiencing. At some point, you may be able to accept the reality that your loved one's entire life was not defined by his or her last decision to die. Nothing can take away the good things the person accomplished. When you are ready, you may reach out to others with similar experiences or set up a scholarship or other appropriate memorial in the person's name... or work in some capacity to better the lives of others. There are many, many ways to make meaning from tragedy.

### Transition From The Physical Presence Of The Person To The New Relationship:

While missing the physical presence of a loved one in our lives may continue well into the future, it is possible to transition into acceptance of the person's nonphysical presence. What can that relationship be? For some, it is memories and love carried in our hearts. No one can take away our memories and,

as long as we treasure love for the person who has died, they are not forgotten. The new relationship may be spiritual or in some other way in keeping with religious beliefs.

--Author Unknown

## **GRIEF (Guilt, Regret, Ignorance, Envy, Forgiveness)**



The recent loss of my mother picks at the scabs of grief as I tumble back into the swells of sadness where I lost my five-year old son, Ryan. Once again I am captured as the lurking monster returns to angrily tug me under as I wonder, had it ever left my side. Losing my son, then sibling, now both parents, all this loss in one lifetime, how could grief depart? Life is once again different as grief, the tsunami, rearranges my existence just when I thought I grasped a new form of living.

Grief comes calling with each letter of the word representing the stages I vacillate within.

**G represents the guilt** that surfaces with any loss. Guilt that bubbles up repeatedly in the what if's. Did I do enough, say enough, and even learn enough about them.

Guilt questions our every action. Why didn't I ask more? And as I type these thoughts, I still wonder, why don't we? Then the guilt of going through their things arrives. Do you keep everything or let it go? Some days I am drowning in guilt.

**R is easy—regret.** After death there is always room for regret. Shuffling in like it owns your thoughts.

Thoughts that spill recklessly into the room; the date you did not make, each thing you promised yourself you would do, but instead pushed to another time.

Those words that you spoke in anger, or frustration; yes, even the ones that needed to be said resurface again and again. Sure, you'll try and stuff them down, but like holding a ball under water, it returns with force.

**I represents the ignorance.** The ignorance on how to feel compounded with the ignorance in how others act. Comments that stab at your heart, well intended for the most part, but words that will catch like a broken record, scratching across each memory until resentment is all you see. How blind we are when navigating the tightrope of grief, unaware of a pain so exposed until it consumes us.

**The E in grief is envy,** another emotion I constantly unpack. How does one person lose so much? How do family and friends still have what I have gone

without? Envy consumes me with the unfairness of life. The way death feels random, yet appears over and over. Envy is a difficult one to smile through, to work through, and discover joy within when you have lost so much.

**F is for forgiveness.** Forgiveness for yourself; you need it, and cannot survive until you let it in. And even though survival is not a thought for a long time, it is the only way we can endure such heartbreak. Forgiveness is not for the misspoken. It is, instead, a gift for you to release the guilt you harbor. Forgiveness is God's grace wrapping softly around you. All these emotions you are rumbling through are necessary. But when you arrive at forgiveness, it is yours to savor.

And as grief does as it is supposed to do, ushering through the murky emotions, unraveling our thoughts and organizing each season of life, we eventually reconcile our anguish.

Nobody understands the depth of loss, even while standing amongst it. I no longer know what it is like to have them in my life. To do things differently or witness their journey. Instead, I only get to imagine it and that is the hardest part of all.

-- Tina Zarlinga Reprinted from the TCF Autumn/Winter 2018 issue of *We Need Not Walk Alone*

## **Grief, Not Anger, Heals After Suicides**

Dear Ann: A few weeks ago, my 33-year-old son died by suicide. It was his third attempt. Last November, he stopped communicating with all family members, including me. I believe that is when he made up his mind to end his life. He didn't want anyone to talk him out of it. When I saw how down he was, I suggested therapy. His response was, "I don't need any help. I am so angry with my son for not giving himself a second chance to find a reason to live. I am furious with him for not caring how much his suicide would hurt his wife and children, not to mention his parents. Help me get past MY anger so I can forgive my son and move forward. --A Heartsick Mother in Texas

Dear Texas Mother, A person who dies by suicide does not think of anything except how to escape from the pain of living. Being angry with your son for having done this will serve no useful purpose. What you must do now, is understand the agony your son was going through and that his death was something you could do nothing about. You could not have given your son the will to live. Please get

some grief counseling to help you get over this tragedy. If there is a chapter of The Compassionate Friends in your area, I hope you will go to the next meeting. This fine organization assists families after the death of a child of any age, from any cause. Contact them at The Compassionate Friends, P.O. Box 3696, Oakbrook, IL 60522-3696 (www.compassionatefriends.org), or call their toll-free number, (877) 969-0010.

## A Loss Before the First Christmas

I think the only thing sadder than looking back at Christmases that were and will never be again is having no Christmases to look back to at all.

There are some people who believe it is easier to lose an infant than an older child, and I am sure that for some parts of grief, they are right, but this is not one of them.

Memories are painful, but they are treasured, wonderful things that can help fill the emptiness. Christmas is one of the big expectations. Matter of fact, it is one of the reasons we have children. So, if our child dies before sharing a Christmas with us, we know we are missing something wonderful, but we don't know exactly what.

We will try as hard as we can, over and over again, to imagine our children on Christmas, but we cannot fabricate a memory. We can not see our child's face light up, or hear their sweet voices, or watch their movements. So the more we try, the more frustrated we become. We hurt horribly, and we are empty, lonely, and devastated. But because we did not have them long enough, most people (even ourselves, sometimes) will feel we have no right to grieve this Christmas. So I've got to tell you, we have as much right and as many reasons to cry and grieve, as any parent whose child has died.

--Laura Bouse TCF Hardin County, OH

## Seasoned Griever...

### Tradition, Tradition, Tradition

Even in normal times, tradition isn't what it is always cracked up to be, and sometimes "tradition" gets in the way of sanity. Often, we cling to tradition because it's easier, we don't want to offend others, we don't want to be embarrassed, or we don't know what else to do. When you are a grieving parent,

giving in to tradition can drive you over the edge.

I found myself in the "tradition predicament" regarding putting up a tree the first Christmas holiday after my son, Chad died. I didn't want, need, or have the energy to put up a tree. Yet other family members wanted a tree and they wanted it as it always had been, big, bright, and decorated with ornaments they had purchased or made through the years. What eventually took place, with regard to a tree, changed our holiday forever and it has been a good thing for everyone involved.

I don't know the exact circumstances of how our "new tradition" came into being that first year. But I do remember frustration, tears, and upset people. I also remember my daughter saying to me it was her Christmas too and she needed a tree. It was her older brother, the one she remembered getting up with every Christmas morning when she was little that was dead, and she had to have something so she could deal with the emptiness. So she came up with a plan. She and her father would go find a tree and she would take care of the decorations all by herself.

That was ten Christmases ago and this year, once again, my husband and my daughter will leave early in the morning, a week before Christmas, and hunt for a tree, just the two of them. When they come home, I will prepare breakfast, while they get the tree in the holder, and move the furniture. We will sit down together and enjoy our meal and then my husband and I will leave for several hours. During that time we will do whatever we feel like doing. We have gone to the cemetery, gone for walks, gone to the bookstore, visited friends, etc. When we return, my daughter will have decorated our Christmas tree, and the whole house!

Every year the tree has been different, limited only to my daughter's imagination and the budget we keep her on. She didn't use our regular ornaments for a while and when she did, she told me ahead of time and said how meaningful it was for her to be the one who put Chad's ornaments back on the tree. We have continued this "new tradition" to this day. Now, I find angel ornaments to put on the tree to honor our missing angel, and enjoy with my husband, sons, and family, my daughter's traditional tribute to her brother. This "changing tradition" has been so healing. Our family has had the brightness and beauty that a lighted tree can provide, and I have been able to save my energy for other things I wanted to do.

During the next few weeks, I hope you will make



the activities of the season as stress free as you can. I hope that you will feel free to experiment with new traditions, knowing there is no "right way" to go through this season, only "your way." I hope that you will remember Christmas is only one day and that the time leading up to that "one day" will probably be more difficult than the actual day. And finally, I hope for peace in your hearts, if not today then tomorrow, or the tomorrow after, or the tomorrow after that.

--Sue Anderson TCF South Bend, IN

## Newly Bereaved...

### Questions ...

I'm weak. I try to cry but the tears don't come. I want to scream! I'm so tired. I'm tired of feeling like this. I'm tired of waking up every morning. I'm tired of pretending to be okay. I'm tired of being strong. I'm scared. I'm scared of what just happened. I'm scared of what will become of us. I'm scared of the future. I'm scared of losing someone else. I'm scared to live. I'm scared to love.

I find myself living in constant fear. The fear of what? Of life and all life has to offer. I just want to be happy. I want to laugh again. I want us to be normal. I want this horrible feeling deep inside just to go away.

I wish I could understand. I want to know why! I want to understand it. I wish I could have him back. Why? Why him? What is the purpose? When will the pain go away? I pray for strength. I want to smile again. I want to know the meaning of happiness. It seems that in one second all my happiness and the life I had always known was totally destroyed.

We all have to start over. Where do we begin? How do we begin? Yes, how do we begin? My heart is broken. My world has fallen apart.  
--by Amy Young, TCF Defiance OH

## For Friends and Family...

Looking for a special gift this holiday season for a person who is dealing with a tragic loss of a loved one? Well, you don't have to search all of the specialty shops in town to find one. The one gift you can give doesn't cost a dime. Give them the gift of a memory!



A memory gift comes from the heart and will mean more to the receiver than a package wrapped in gold foil or expensive paper. You can make this yourself with very little time or money. If you feel that this is not enough and you have to purchase something, then add to your present, and include a memory gift.

The main thing to remember at the holidays, or any time of the year, is that a grieving person is thinking about their loved one and hurting. If the one who is gone is not mentioned, it does not ease any of the pain, so don't leave them out for fear of upsetting the ones left behind. Yes, the pain will always be there and you cannot take it away or fix the griever's aching heart, but you can give them the gift of remembering their special someone. So what if they cry, it's a human emotion. Your memory will not cause the tears, the pain of loss did. The worst fear for any grieving individual is that the one who meant so much to them will be forgotten, let them know in some way, that this will never happen.

Whatever your beliefs, however you celebrate the Holidays, take a few extra minutes, and write, record, video tape or call someone who needs a Memory Gift. You could be making someone's Holiday Season something very unique.

--Bonnie Harris-Tibbs TCF, Richmond, VA

## Book in Review...



**Tomorrow Comes** -Based on a true story of love and family, grief and joy. Tomorrow Comes is inspired by the sudden and unexpected death of author Donna Mebane's own daughter. Donna breathes vitality and warmth into Emma's character, and you'll find yourself rooting for Emma as she learns to navigate her new world with courage, humor, and an indomitable spirit. Available at [www.centering.org](http://www.centering.org)

## Helpful Hint...



## Gifts of Love

Be prepared to find "gifts" from your children when you unpack your Christmas decorations for the first time. It seemed as if each box I opened there was something left there from her, something that I had long forgotten about: one box contained a picture of her in a Santa hat smiling that brilliant braces-laden grin. Her



carefully crafted handmade ornaments, another one a hand-written card in her just-learning-to-print handwriting, and on and on ... so many memories. I realized that in a sense these were Nina's gifts to me now that she wasn't physically here. She was giving me the gifts of memories.. beautiful memories that were given in love.

Those memories will only increase in value as the years go on. They are invaluable because they are yours and yours alone ... no one can ever take those priceless memories away. Though they may hurt now and probably always will but not as intensely, give yourself a gift ... the gift of emotion and allow those healing tears to fall. Give yourself time to grieve.

--Cathy Seehuetter, St. Paul, MI newsletter

## Welcome...



## Please Help

Can anyone understand my deep internal pain?  
The agony that's within?  
Can someone answer the questions I ask?  
Can you help the healing begin?  
All of the people who offered to help  
Have long gone on their way.  
I feel there's no one to talk  
With me to relieve my day  
Everyone else seems to think  
The time that's passed should mean  
The broken heart that only knows  
The emptiness within.

Then comes a group into my life  
With people who understand and care:  
Compassionate Friends are a light in the dark  
'Cause I know they'll always be there.

--Collette Covington TCF Lake Charles, LA

Editor's Note: Yes, Compassionate Friends CAN and WILL help. We invite you to join us on Zoom for our virtual meetings. We have a small group that meets Friday's at 1 PM at Hoff's Hut in their outdoor dining area to share with each other the pain and conflicting issues of grief. We also have bereaved parents on the phone committee to talk to when you are having a bad time. You can also join us on Facebook ... TCF understands and is there for you. As our motto states, "You need not walk alone".

## My New Christmas



I brace myself as the holidays approach, playing out my season greeting.

I remind myself it needs to sound heartfelt and cheerful even if it is not sincere.

I keep myself busy picking out special gifts for my children who grieve with me,  
I must remember to paint that smile on my old face a little brighter this holiday.

I decorate my home to illuminate Christmas and all its meaning.

Going through all the familiar motions that I have done so many times before.

As my children wish for St. Nick to visit them to load up their stockings with this and that,

I sit in front of my Christmas tree wishing a Christmas wish just for me... an Angel.

Not any Angel of course, a very special Angel, one who entered my life many years ago.

One that had a smile that was brighter than all the stars of Bethlehem.

I sit and wonder how many other mothers are out there who share my wish.

A wish for a sign of hope, love and of course peace from their Angel Child.

My boys will leave cookies and milk for Santa as well as carrots for the reindeer.

I leave a letter I wrote to my son in his stocking as I did the year before.

After kisses and hugs have been given and Christmas books have been read,

I go downstairs for one more look at the heavens to see if perhaps,

Just maybe, my beautiful Angel is waiting to wish me a Merry Christmas.

I sigh and think there is always tomorrow.

I wake to the screams of children asking if Santa had arrived,

And smile thinking that excitement never gets old.

After the gifts have been opened and countless toys have been filled with batteries,

I look once more at the heavens wondering where my Angel is...

I sigh once more thinking there is always next Christmas.

Wherever you are my Sean... Merry Christmas...

--by Christine Torricelli, Sean's Mother



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

Cheiann Jayda Berry  
Born: 12/01 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

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

Ryan Dobie  
Born: 7/92 Died: 2/19  
Parents: Linda & Douglas Dobie

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

Joel Draper  
Born: 1/84 Died: 5/2004  
Mother: Tracy Solis

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

Gregory Robert Ehrlich  
Born: 4/91 Died: 2/19  
Mother: Sarah Ott

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

Cody Jarod Esphorst  
Born: 3/02 Died 7/19  
Parents: Jesse & Julie Esphorst

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

Chidinma Ezeani  
Born: 8/89 Died: 10/19  
Mother: Ifeoma Ezeani

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

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

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

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

Sarah Mc Donald  
Born: 10/00 Died: 6/17  
Parents: Tom & Shideh  
Mc Donald

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

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

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

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

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

Alexander John Jacobs  
Born: 3/90 Died: 8/19  
Mother: Diane Jacobs

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

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

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

Stefanie Jacobs  
Born: 5/87 Died: 1/97  
Father: Rob Jacobs

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jillian Nicole Katnic  
Born: 3/87 Died: 10/18  
Mother: Debbie Hughes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chase King  
Born: 4/87 Died: 11/19  
Mother: Laura King

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

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

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

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

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

Keith Moilanen  
Born: 10/80 Died: 5/19  
Mother: Jill Moilanen

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Quvia (Cody) Samuel  
Born: 4/74 Died: 11/18  
Parents: Vincent & Betty  
Samuel

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: Paul & 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

Jacqueline Marie Taylor  
Born: 1/83 Died: 7/11  
Mother: Jennifer Flynn

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

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

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

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

Carlos Valdez  
Born: 10/90 Died: 1/12  
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

\* For corrections or to add  
your child to the Our Children  
Remembered section of the  
newsletter, call Lynn at (310)  
530-3214 and leave a  
message.

## Worldwide Candle Lighting Memorial

**Service...** The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting on the 2nd Sunday in December unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit on December 13th, 2020 at 7:00 pm local time, people commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon. It creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Due to Covid restrictions, our chapter will not be holding the event publicly this year. We encourage you to take part at home by holding your own informal candle lightings in quiet remembrance of children who have died and will never be forgotten. Every year you are invited to post a message in the Remembrance Book which will be available, during the event, at TCF's national website. The Remembrance Book will be open to post a message Tuesday, December 1st, through Monday, December 14th. Photos can be posted on our Worldwide Candle Lighting Facebook page.

## Birthday Tributes...



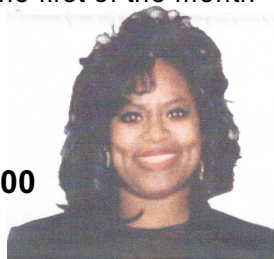
In honor of your child's birthday, we welcome you to submit a birthday tribute. Though your child is no longer here to buy a present for, think of this as a birthday present about your child. This tribute is an opportunity to share your child with us all. (We thank you for any birthday donations that 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: Tamara Boyd December 1965 - December 2000

#### BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY



On December 14, it will be the 20th anniversary since the death of our daughter. That is a long time and the sadness and sorrow of losing a child is still here. There are days when memorable moments and occasions are so prevalent that it seems like a dream and not reality.

However, the pain and grief has definitely subsided and the future does not seem to be impossible without her. When relatives and friends speak of her it makes me feel so thankful that they remember her and that she lived.

Tamara, was blessed to birth a son that is with

us. Oh! some of his; gestures, remarks and features are constantly reminding us that our daughter left us a blessing that we were given a part of her to give us joy and happiness and we are truly grateful and thankful.

The thought always crosses my mind that some good things come from bad and sometimes we don't realize it.

## For Siblings...



### Christmas Shopping: When Your Brother Is Dead

The Hallmark store is dangerous. Both for my wallet and my emotions. While choosing the perfect card for my parents I can't help but glance as the next section over: brother, and the far worse section brother and sister-in-law. I haven't been able to pick a card from the brother section in ten years, and I never got a chance to choose from that last section. And that's when a simple shopping trip to buy cards reminds me of what could (should?) have been.

Christmas shopping for my husband's gift, I'm in the men's section and I see shirts that I think my brother would have liked. There are always goofy stocking stuffer type gifts too. I think maybe he would have enjoyed this one. And in the middle of the store I stop and think, I'm not really sure because he would be thirty-one now, and maybe he would be different.

These shopping excursions and reflections use to affect me much deeper. I use to cry immediately, or would come home and shut myself in my room for a few hours. What I've learned about grief after ten years is that the space between thinking sad thoughts and recovery is much shorter. I'm grateful for that because I'm able to enjoy thinking of my brother more.

Brian loved Altoids (curiously strong mints). He collected the tins. After he died we saved a few but had to get rid of most of them. He would always have a tin in his stocking at Christmas.

Last year I bought some. I never really liked them, but I bought them: because I could, and because I had gone so long without buying them. It is a gift for my brother, and I'm thinking I'll make it a tradition.

--Amanda Greenwood

## Day's in the Valley

An early morning phone call brought news that irreversibly changed my life. My parents called to tell me my younger brother had been killed in a car accident. They wept as I spoke to them. I had never heard my Dad cry before. Numbly, I hung up the phone. I didn't cry. There was not time for tears. Flight plans had to be made, clothes packed. I had to think clearly and act quickly.

The 100-mile trip to the airport seemed especially long and dark as I drove alone that morning. Later, aboard the plane, I looked out the window and tried to comprehend what had happened. Maybe it wasn't him, I thought. Maybe they got him mixed up with someone else. I dreaded the scene that waited me at home, yet I couldn't get there quickly enough. I longed to comfort Mom and Dad, to be with them.

Arriving in Des Moines, I was met by relatives. At last I could let myself cry. When I reached my parents' home I was relieved to finally grieve with them, but a terrible pain was burrowing deep within as the reality of what happened began to sink in.

Funeral arrangements were made. People gave their condolences. Stacks of cards arrived daily. The pain remained. I sensed God's presence as friends and family gathered. Words meant nothing, but those who came and cried with us were the ones who gave comfort. They didn't quote Bible verses. They didn't try to explain why it happened. They just hugged us and cried.

For almost a year, I replayed again and again those events as if they had been stored on videotape. Every sight, every sound, every pain was as vivid as if it had happened the day before. Time has numbed the pain and faded the "tapes" to some degree, but my life will never be the same. There will always be a hole in our family that cannot be filled.

I see life differently now. I've learned things that have made me more mature. Tragic loss demands finding something meaningful in it or retreating into bitterness. When I said good-bye to my brother, I never dreamed it would be the last time I would see him. Words left unsaid echoed in my mind for many months. Now, taking time to say and do the things I used to put off is more important. Treating each opportunity to be with friends or loved ones as if it might be the last time I will see them give me the incentive to resolve conflicts and say the things that need to be said. Problems and disagreements are never insurmountable.

Experts say the grieving process should end with the acceptance of death. Instead of accepting my brother's death, however, I have only acknowledged it. Death, like an unwanted visitor, doesn't have to be catered to, but it does have to be acknowledged for the healing to begin. I can't say I understand why my brother was killed, but God has given me strength to go on. Though at times it appeared that there was no way out of the valley, time has brought me renewed strength. Time does not heal all wounds, but it does bandage those it cannot heal.

--Rick Bunkofske, TCF, North Central Iowa Chapter

## For Grandparents...

### Happy Birthday, Jesus



It's just a few days before Christmas, God, and I really need to talk to you about my mother. Her name is Stephanie. About two months ago I saw her all dressed up in a beautiful gown. She was a bridesmaid at her sister's wedding. She had the prettiest long red hair that she wore in a ponytail, and she seemed so happy that day. She said she didn't feel well, but she didn't look sick.

Well, God, you know the rest of the story, how she kept going to the doctor and was told she only had a cold. But she didn't get better and even after she was in the hospital for a long time, she didn't get better. She died, God, and I don't understand about that.

I saw her in the hospital the day before she died, and she didn't open her eyes. She didn't know I was there. My sister, she's eight, said something to her, and I saw a tear run from my mother's eye. She must have heard Ashley even though she seemed to be asleep.

The next day, I was talking to my dad. He was crying. I asked him if he was sad and he said, "Yes." I told him I was sad, too, and I was going to be sad until Mommy came home. He told me Mommy wasn't coming home. I said, "Then, I'll be sad forever."

My sister was in her bedroom with my grandmother. They were talking and crying. My grandmother said that she was sad, too, because my mother was her little girl. I knew my mother was 28. I guess I never thought about her being somebody's little girl. She was my mommy.

You see, God, I'm just too little to understand why everybody says that Mommy is in a better place now and that she has no pain. They say that she is

an angel and that she is with you and that she will always watch over me. But, God, I want her back. I want her here with me. I want her to tuck me into bed, to hug me, and kiss me.

Everybody is singing Jingle Bells and Santa Claus is Coming to Town, and people are happy all around me except in my house and my grandmother's house. Everyone is trying to make things happy for me and my sister, Ashley. But we don't know how to feel or what to feel, God. We just know that we want our mommy back.

I'm too little to understand about the funeral, and I am not going to go. I do know that Mommy's going to wear that beautiful dress that she wore for the wedding, and when she gets up there to heaven, God, you will know what I mean when I tell you how beautiful she is.

I'm sad, God, because she won't be here for Christmas. But maybe she can sing Happy Birthday to Jesus up there and pretend.

Someday, when I grow up, maybe I'll understand.

Stevie

--Virginia Yurqevich sent a note that said, "I have an aunt (also my godmother) who lives in Jacksonville, Florida. Because of the holidays and football play-offs, she could not get a flight to be at Stephanie's funeral. She wrote this, poem from my grandson's point of view (he was only 4 last year when Steph died and turned 5 on Christmas Day)."

## From Our Members...



### When You Awaken on December 25, What Will You Be Prepared to Meet? Christmas Morning or Mourning?

The inevitable awakening lies ahead for each of us, that moment when we open our eyes and face the climax of weeks of colored lights, carols, frenzied shopping, social gatherings, accumulating gifts... even if we have not taken an active part in all of the preparations. Now the prelude is over and the day itself is upon us. However we have anticipated it, with apprehension or dread, with courage or resolve, this is the moment when we confront the ultimate reality of dealing with the holiday without our child.

Will it be morning or simply mourning? Whether this is our first Christmas since our child's death, or one of many, this is far more than a cute play on words. For the answer lies within each of us and

not without. The quality of our Christmas is but another in that long series of countless decisions we each confront when our child dies.

The holiday is more than just another day, but like every other day it does afford moments of grief and occasions for joy. It is simply more intense, more culturally bound in rituals that establish significance for certain parts of our lives.

Without a doubt, we will each remember our child's anticipation and excitement for holidays past, and we will hear the unnatural silence of absence above numerous other sounds. Allow yourself to cry and let the hurt course through you as you dress. It is your own grief...it belongs only to you...and it must not be denied. Wash, brush your teeth, feel the hollowness without being consumed by it, for there are others in your life. Even if you are alone, you are an "other", a personality apart from your deceased child and a great deal more than a life summed up in a denial of living. Therefore, grant yourself moments to grieve, but leave room to sandwich instants of joy between.

A single smile, one quite laugh, a gentle moment of fondness for the delight of another, even if only from memory...these are all it takes to turn mourning in morning. You cannot and should not smother or suppress grief, but you must also remain open to the light that still can enter your life.

In my own memories of my son at Christmas I will find both reasons to cry and irresistible urges to laugh. His life was sunshine in mine. In the holiday his memory should not become a shroud to hide away my love for him. On the 25th, as on every other day, I will remember him and long for him, knowing he has forever marked Christmas for me with his own happiness, and it is only his permanent physical withdrawal that chills these moments with a seemingly endless sorrow.

If we decide, if we are willing to work for it, we can mix remembrance with mourning and turn it into morning, thus enriching our lives by continuing to feel the laughter and joy our children gave to each of us. This is our lost child's Christmas gift to us this year and in all the years to come. Take it with the same grace and gratitude with which we accepted all the others from holidays past...from other Christmas mornings.

--TCF, Bridgeport, CT 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.

**Z**OOM... We will be holding our next Zoom meeting on Thursday, Dec 3rd @ 7:00 p.m. We will be having virtual meetings until we can meet in person. We send out emails to our members with invitation information. If you didn't get it, please message me and I will add you to the list. You can click on the link in the e-mail to join the meeting. Or contact the Zoom hosts, Leo & Connie for help at (310) 536-9305 or [ConnieStar58@gmail.com](mailto:ConnieStar58@gmail.com), or Leo at [Liccica79@gmail.com](mailto:Liccica79@gmail.com). We hope to see you.

**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.

**Birthdays Table...** In the month of your child's birthday, a Birthday Table is provided where you can share photos, mementos, your child's favorite snack, a birthday cake, a bouquet of flowers or anything you'd like to bring to share.

We want to know your child better, so please take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate the wonderful day of your child's birth. This is your chance to tell us a favorite story, or whatever remembrance you choose, in memory of your child. Our child's, grandchild's, or sibling's birthday will forever be a very special day and we at TCF know how important that day is and how helpful and healing it can be to share with others. Please plan on attending the meeting of your child's birthday month and filling our Birthday Table with pictures and/or mementos.

**Newsletter 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: Dec. 1st for Jan. birthdays). If you miss the deadline, call Lynn at (310) 530-3214 and let me know. I will try to fit them in. Otherwise they will appear in the following month's issue.



**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, call Ken at (310) 544-6690. You can mail him a photo for each button you would like (color photo copies work great) and Ken can make them for you. There is no cost, but donations are welcomed. 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.

**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.)



**Our Website...** Leo Licciardone 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.

Lori Galloway(chapter leader).....(760) 521-0096  
Linda Zelik (former leader).....(310) 370-1645  
Mary Sankus.....(310) 648-4878  
Kitty Edler.....(310) 541-8221  
Richard Leach (grandchild).....(310) 833-5213  
Joey Vines (sibling).....(424)488-9695  
Nancy Garcia (Spanish speaking).....(310) 406-5163

#### LOCAL TCF CHAPTERS

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

**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. CCZ offers FREE one-day family programs, community programs, and 3-day weekend camps. All programming empowers children to grieve, heal, and grow in healthy ways.

Our weekend camps provide children with the opportunity to break their isolation and realize they are not alone in a fun and healing environment. Grief evolves with each developmental stage a child reaches, so learning to manage grief in a healthy way is important at every age. Whether the child's loss was ten years or three months ago, encourage them to attend – you may have an opportunity to change the course of their life.

#### Other Grief Support Websites...

<a href="http://thetearsfoundation.org">thetearsfoundation.org</a>	<a href="http://childloss.com">childloss.com</a>
<a href="http://goodgriefresources.com">goodgriefresources.com</a>	<a href="http://griefwatch.dom">griefwatch.dom</a>
<a href="http://bereavedparentsusa.org">bereavedparentsusa.org</a>	<a href="http://opentohope.com">opentohope.com</a>
<a href="http://healingafterloss.org">healingafterloss.org</a>	<a href="http://webhealing.com">webhealing.com</a>
<a href="http://survivorsof suicide.com">survivorsof suicide.com</a>	<a href="http://alivelone.org">alivelone.org</a>
<a href="http://taps.org">taps.org</a> (military death)	<a href="http://angelmoms.com">angelmoms.com</a>
<a href="http://save.org">save.org</a> (suicide/depression)	
<a href="http://pomc.com">pomc.com</a> (families of murder victims)	
<a href="http://grasphelp.org">grasphelp.org</a> (substance abuse deaths)	
<a href="http://www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub">www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub</a> (Suicide)	
<a href="http://Griefwords.com">Griefwords.com</a> (for grandparents)	



#### 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: Lori Galloway  
CHAPTER ZOOM HOSTS: Connie & Leo Liccaridone  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines  
SPANISH TRANSLATOR: Albert Garcia  
PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks  
TREASURER: Ken Konopasek  
WEBSITE: Joe Zelik

#### STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Linda & Joe Zelik	Loir Galloway
Marilyn Nemeth	Crystal Henning

Cheryl & Bill Matasso  
Nancy Lerner  
Kitty Edler  
Sandra & Eddie Myricks

Lynn Vines  
Ken Konopasek  
Susan Kass

the response envelope. Since our chapter depends upon voluntary contributions to cover operational costs, donations are very much needed and appreciated,

#### 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.

**Online Support (Live Chat)** TCF offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. **Please Note:** Times posted on the schedule are based on Pacific Time. Select "enter room" under the chat room you would like to participate in and you will be prompted to register. Once registered you will be able to log-in with your username and password that you have set up. You can keep abreast of any changes by going to: [www.compassionatefriends.org/find-support/online-communities/online-support](http://www.compassionatefriends.org/find-support/online-communities/online-support)

Dear Compassionate Friends,

Each year we try to update our mailing list to make sure you still want to receive our newsletter and to give you the chance to receive it online if you would prefer. ALL OF THIS INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. Please simply fill out the following information and return as soon as possible to P.O. Box 11171, Torrance, CA 90510.

There is no charge for this newsletter. However, The Compassionate Friends runs entirely on donations. If you would like to make a year end donation to help with our newsletter, postage expenses or library materials, please include it in

IMPORTANT: Compassionate Friends is a "support group", which means that we help or "support each other". The best way our chapter can survive is for bereaved parents to help other bereaved parents. If you feel that you have reached a point in your own grief where you might be able to give of yourself, WE NEED YOU! Please consider volunteering to help in some way.

My information is correct on the mailing label and in the Our Children Remembered section of this newsletter. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If updated needed, please print clearly:

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please add/correct my child's information in the "Our Children Remembered Section" of the newsletter.

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_ Death date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Parent's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I want to help ... A donation is enclosed in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Please e-mail my newsletter. My e-mail address is: \_\_\_\_\_

Please continue to send the newsletter. OR  Please delete my name from the mailing list.

I am willing to volunteer in helping my chapter in some small way in memory of my child. Please call me at \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss how I can help.

I am willing to come share ideas at the next steering committee meeting. (Please send me a reminder e-mail or call \_\_\_\_\_)

Thank you for taking the time to respond so we can update our mailing list. We appreciate your help.

TCF South Bay/L.A.



# 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 pay-pal account for donations. Use the "Donate Link" on our Website at <http://tcsfbla.org/donate/>  
Or if you prefer, you can always mail in a check to P.O. Box 11171  
Torrance CA 90510

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

In loving memory of Jillian Nicole Katnic, March 1987 - October 2018. Merry Christmas to my angel in Heaven.

I love you, Mom

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

When making a donation, please make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. Chpt. Mail to: The Compassionate Friends So Bay/ L.A. Chapter  
P.O. Box 11171, Torrance, CA 90510-1171

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

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

Tribute \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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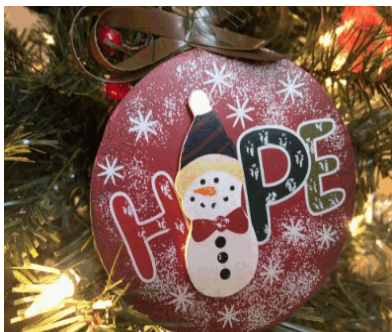
We are always working a month in advance...To include your donation in the next newsletter, we must receive it by the first of the month, other wise it will appear in the following issue.

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

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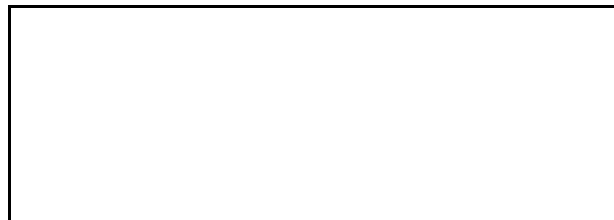
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**As we remember  
our children,  
May the holidays remind us  
of the Joy they brought into  
our lives and the Hope  
their love still bring us  
for the future.**

**–Return Service Requested–**



**December 2020**

## **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.**

**©2020 THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS -- SOUTH BAY/L.A., CA CHAPTER**

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