



# *The Compassionate Friends*

## *South Bay/LA Chapter*

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

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

February 2022 ISSUE

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

**OUR NEXT MEETING**  
will be Feb. 3rd, 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. → Meetings are held at the west end of the church.

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

#### **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 Thursday, Feb. 3rd meeting will start with "Soothing A Broken Heart".

To participate in our Zoom meetings, contact Leo at (310) 283-6739 or [Liccias79@gmail.com](mailto:Liccias79@gmail.com) for the link.

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

For a free Picture Button of your child, call Kristy at (310) 938-2409.

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The **Thursday, Feb. 3rd** meeting will start with "Soothing A Broken Heart". It's February and the time for Valentines... Little reminders we share with others to let them know we love them and how very special they are to us. But what if our child, grandchild or sibling isn't here to share in those feelings. This month we will start the meeting with ways of soothing our broken hearts. Sharing with each other it sometimes seems our hearts will never fully mend from our loss. No matter where you are on your path through grief, I hope the following articles will help you realize your heart is mending on your own unique time line. Mourning your loss is necessary to end this overwhelming pain. While the struggle to lessen the pain and adjust to your new life **will** take place, it is often hard to see your own progress. Even though it is a slow, difficult journey, with proper grief work and time, our hearts do mend. The intensity of our feelings will soften and we will evolve through this experience. We will discover a different life from what we had imagined, but, it can still be a good life. Join us as we share what helps.

### To Those Who Really Hurt



KNOW... that your grieving is the most difficult thing you will ever have to do. UNDERSTAND... that part of grief is bad days and bad nights. And intense pain and terrible sadness. You must ACCEPT this as part of your healing.

But, KNOW ALSO... that there are gifts in your grief. They are not easy to find. And you will earn them with your tears. As you think about it... deep within your heart, you KNOW that this is true. THIS is why you can endure it.

Slowly... you will find new patterns. You will force yourself to take first steps. You will accomplish little victories (None of us will tell you it was easy). GRIEVE WELL, my friend.

For grief well-grieved is truly life well lived. And once accomplished, you will discover untold new dimensions in your life... BECAUSE a child died.  
--Shirley Melin TCF Aurora, IL

### When Does It Get Better?

Eight months have passed since I have heard my son's voice. I have not been able to find any solace, comfort, easing of the pain and agony, or

peace of mind. I merely stumble through days and nights that can only be described as either bad or worse. There are no good days. My heartache is bigger than anything in the universe. Most days I feel I must be quite mad, barely able to function and certainly not fit for human company. Why does a Father's love have to hurt so bad?

My son did not want to die. He died in a swimming accident. He fought for his life. He had everything to live for. He was a kind, gentle soul, who always sought a peaceful life. Eric's main love in life was music, that magically transported him to another plane of existence. He could be a retroactive hippie one day, and a man of the world the next. His intelligence, imagination and creativity always amazed me, and certainly made him a delightful person that everyone loved. The one emotion or thought that has preoccupied me since Eric's death is the feeling that we and the world have been cheated of what could have been. We will never know what possibilities died with Eric.

For us to survive, we must find a way to live with this awful heartache and loneliness. We keep Eric alive in our memories. But that is never enough. Our only real chance is to divert some of our energies into worthwhile causes that Eric would be happier about than our mourning. Eric would never tolerate us being so numerable, and this can hardly be called a life. So we must learn to be people again and hope for the best.

--Jim Lowery, TCF Sugar Land TX and Houston West TX.

### The Unwanted Job

The job was thrust upon me suddenly, with no forethought, consultation, or preparation. My position title read, "Mourner". And once appointed to the position, no amount of pleading revoked the assignment. The job description dismally read: No coffee breaks or lunch hours, no sick days, personal time, or vacations; total commitment demanded; crying allowed.

How long, I asked, must I labor at this mourning? I get so tired of my daily tasks: looking at photos of Nathan, son of promise and hope; wandering into his room, fingering his pitifully few possessions; watching videos to hear his voice and laugh for fear of forgetting him; mulling over in my mind: the final moments of his life, the sheriff delivering the numbing news, his strong, young

body lying lifeless, the final good-bye for now as the casket lid closed.

Questioning God - Where were you? Can't I trust you? and crying ... and crying ... and crying.

As long as you need to, the disquieting answer came. You will know when your work is done. Until then, you must do the necessary work of mourning in order to heal. Allow family and friends to toil along side of you, spend quiet times, search your inner being for hidden resources, ask your questions over and over again, tell your story repeatedly, be honest with God, He can take it. Acknowledge your anger, be patient with yourself; and cry ... and cry ... and cry.

It is good I did not know the duration of my tenure. I would have despaired. But a lifetime of a year has passed, and I find my load has miraculously lightened. Now I can talk about Nathan without always crying, look at his pictures and videos without longing to die to be with him, some of the time control my thoughts, thinking of his death when I want to.

Now I can see beyond my pain to other's needs, find some hope and purpose for going on living without him, cry shorter periods without feeling hopeless. No wages of dollars and cents compensate my grief; they would soon be spent and vanish.

I'm paid with a deeper understanding of myself, others, and God: discovery of untapped springs of strength; amazement at the God-given resiliency of the human spirit; the value of family and friends who never tire of my story; letting God be God, because there are not always answers. Believing God collects my tears and mourns along with me; trusting I can give up my mourning without giving up my memories.

Others tell me this job requires lifelong attention; it accepts no resignations. But I pray the workload continues to ease and that my healing becomes complete.

I go on with this business of life. And I look forward, in due time, to my retirement gift; Reunion with Nathan in Eternity.

--Ruth Tullock In memory of Nathan Allan Tulloch

## Healing

I don't know when it happened, but I know that I am starting to heal. The pain has changed. It doesn't matter how Sara died anymore, it only matters that she's gone. I don't want to talk about

how Sara died. I want to tell people how she lived. Most of the time memories bring comfort; sometimes memories make me laugh. I don't cry every time I think of Sara, and I can say her name without a lump in my throat. I know that I am a different person now, but that I will always be Sara's mom. I've stopped feeling guilty for being alive; I know there are things I am supposed to do. Sara's death has blended with my life. Instead of doing things for Sara, I do things in honor of her. I'm not afraid of forgetting her; Sara will always be with me.

It has taken eight years to get to this point, and I know I'm not done with the journey yet. I want to thank my beautiful daughter Vera for finding TCF, and for not giving up on me. I want to thank Marty, my husband, for breathing for me when I couldn't do it for myself, and for being my friend when no one else would even come near me. And I want to thank my TCF family; you have helped me want to live again.

--Mardy Burns, TCF,  
Independence, MO



## Phantom Pains

This A.M. when I was in that half-awake, half-asleep stage, I was thinking about what it is like to have your child die. So many people that haven't lost a child cannot possibly understand.

I thought of losing a child as being compared to losing one of our extremities. If you had your arm suddenly amputated you would go into extreme shock. There would be sooooo much pain for a long, long time. As that assaulting, excruciating pain eases, you learn to "get back into life", step by step, but it's a long process of rehabilitating yourself to learn to live without your arm. You start to "get better" and then the phantom pains come and try to haunt you.

Unexpectedly, without warning, there you are again in pain, except now people don't understand your pain as well as they once did. So you feel guilty for feeling this phantom pain. There are some friends out there who are more wise and do understand about the phantom pains and will still love and be there with you. Others will leave.

Your hand itches but you can't scratch it. It's not there. The longing to hold your child is there, it's real, but you can't hold your child again while we are still here.

Some unwise people will tell you, "You have other children." Yes, you love your other children just as you love your other arm and legs, but they can't take the place of the one you lost. We, as parents who have had a child die, have had part of us amputated. They were born out of us, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, carried in our wombs, and nurtured at our breasts. And even those who have been adopted into our lives and knitted into our very souls.

So, how can the death of a child even be related to the death of a father, mother, sister, brother, spouse, or friend? These are great losses but having our child die is having part of us taken away. The grief is different; it's not "normal." We are supposed to die before our children. Then, I thought about the amputated arm. If that wound isn't cleansed and lovingly taken care of, it will become infected. Bitterness and anger (which are normal in grief) can lead to an infection in your soul if you get struck in it and it is not dealt with. Friends can be loving healers helping to bind up the wound, or they can rip open the wound, making it deeper, by insensitive remarks due to a lack of understanding.

We are all at different stages in our journey through this loss and hopefully are healing. But there will always be a part of us that is gone until we are in heaven with them. We will get the phantom pains, but we can make a choice each day to go through the pain until we find some hope for our weary souls.

We will never be the same, but we can survive and maybe we will even turn out to be better people, more in-tune with others. Become "wounded healers." We are already more gifted than a lot of other people in this world because we KNOW what it is to truly love our child. There are a lot of people out there who take their children for granted, just as a lot of us have taken for granted that it is normal to have two arms and two legs. But what if that were different . . . ?

--Written by Carol Mudra, Walnut, California

From *Prodigy Medical Support Bulletin Board/Death of a Child*

## Reconciliation

Long ago it was thought that in order to heal, one should detach, completely, from the one who died. Upon reading this I wondered if that was why there are those who still push us toward such a thing. We've likely all experienced that person who

suggests we get rid of all their belongings, or perhaps asks how long we will hold onto something. ("Something" that is more dear to us than they could ever imagine.)

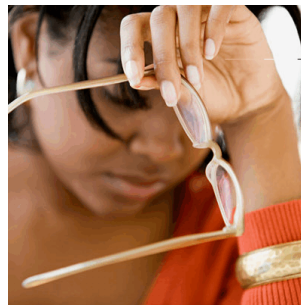
Thankfully we know better today. Humans are created for connection. Our days, our lives consist of interaction, intimacy and relations. We form bonds. And so we should.

Though we have many relationships over the course of our lives, the bonds between us and our children are the deepest. Death may remove them physically from us, but it does nothing to sever the emotional connection. I believe a big part of the reconciliation process is learning to integrate our past with our present, our losses into our ongoing lives. Having built several houses, and thus moving multiple times, I have found that I need to keep and bring a few familiar items to each new place. It seems I need a piece of the past. It anchors me. When we lose a child this need is far greater. Necessary to survival. Will others understand why we keep their favorite ski jacket, stuffed animal or skateboard?

Possibly not. Does that matter? No. Experts call these "linking objects", and they tell us how crucial they are. No one knows but you what your needs are, what your path will look like, what will see you through each tomorrow. I'm so grateful to TCF, where we all share an understanding of the need to support one another, to make space for different approaches, and to extend grace and kindness on this path we never would have chosen.

Hugs to all. May you hold close a special item and feel the warmth of your beautiful child. They are with us forever.

-- Michelle Thomason, TCF, Portland, OR



## About Feeling Guilty

Do you blame yourself? Are you strangled by the burden of things you think you "should have done," as if these were the things that killed him.

Dear Griever, take time to realize that death is not in your hands, and blame is not the answer. Try to relinquish this relentless torment. Hold your heart now with the tenderness that human grief deserves.

~unknown

TCF Front Range CO Chapter



## Alphabet Grief

**A**llow & express your feelings  
**B**e patient with yourself & others  
**C**ry without shame—tears are healing  
**D**on't compare the depth of your feeling w/other mourning styles—don't waste energy trying to measure someone else's pain  
**E**nergy might be low or absent  
**F**ight to survive—one day, hour or minute at a time  
**G**ive forgiveness a chance—forgive yourself, your child, the circumstances, your God  
**H**ope hides but will emerge just when you need it  
**I**gnore the dumb & inappropriate comments of others—they don't mean to hurt you  
**J**oin a support group—Compassionate Friends understands  
**K**eep searching for your sense of humor—once found, laughter will help you cope  
**L**ive each day as best you can—take time to take care of yourself  
**M**ake only small goals—baby steps are OK  
**N**ote that you are still standing  
**O**vercome your expectations of yourself and others  
**P**ray, if it is part of your belief system, otherwise meditate or spend some time in solitude  
**Q**uiet silence & calm  
**R**ealize your love for who you lost, and theirs for you, did not die with them  
**S**leep as much as you can at night, napping in the day is fine also  
**T**ake time to grieve and mourn. Don't dive into extreme business or make hasty decisions  
**U**se a compassionate friend, family member, counselor or God to vent and express how you feel  
**V**eer away from expecting others to grieve the same way you do  
**W**rite about how you feel and how much you miss your child  
**X** out feelings of guilt, know you did the best you could as a parent  
**Y**ou are not alone—remember and take comfort in that  
**Z**oo: Yes, it feels like you're in a zoo. The world keeps moving despite your loss. Be gentle with yourself and don't get stuck and caged in your grief.  
 ~ Author unknown



## Roses On The Snow

What is the point of laying eight yellow roses on the February snow?  
 What was the point with seven of them last year?  
 And when there were six the year before?  
 What about the others back to the very first two dropped on the snow six years ago?  
 What's the point in leaving rosebuds to freeze and turn brown atop the wintry glaze sealing her grave?  
 The bushy arms of a stern cedar overhead can't protect them.  
 The fall of a soft hill only funnels winter's icy winds more cruelly across such fragile flowers.  
 And despite warm promises from daylight's westerly sun,  
 Nightfall's mortal chill always gets its way.  
 Why indeed keep an annual birth date with the florist just to abandon a handful of teardrop roses on the February snow?  
 Because while the trees will fail,  
 and the hills and sun alike,  
 a father's tears care forever.  
 And like roses on the snow,  
 they die only in form, never in spirit.  
 --Gary Grant TCF, Piedmont, VA



## A Valentine for Mom

As we grow older, we find that the simple reflections of our children are often the best memories we have. One such memory most mothers have is a valentine...maybe many valentines. These special valentines were made by our children just for us. They were made when mom was the most important person in their world.

Some of us have kept each little memento of our child's years....from the first little hand plaque to the handmade gifts and cards to the special gifts that our children purchased with their own money. Each one is a part of our child, a part of us and a part of our shared history.

My first valentine from my child was a handmade red construction paper heart glued to heart shaped white lace paper... On it he had written "Happy Valentine's Day to my MOM. I love you. Todd." Shyly he asked if I liked it. I told him I loved it, and that his valentine was the most beautiful valentine a mother could receive. It is a treasure I have always kept. "I just wanted to be

sure," he whispered.

In my office I have a gift that Todd bought me five years ago. All grown up now with an MBA, bright future, important corporate job, family of four children, a beautiful new home, and major responsibilities, precious little time was available for finding the perfect gift for his mom. His life was busy; his free time was limited, but a something special caught his eye and he thought about me.

He decided to buy it. A few weeks later, he gave me a brightly wrapped package containing a beautiful plate picturing a Sioux Indian princess. "She's beautiful, just beautiful", I told him. "Do you really like it?" he asked. The detail, the essence of her heritage and her outlook were captured perfectly. I told him, "I love it, Todd I'll keep her in the office so I can see her every day. I think she is beautiful." And she is in my office today, another treasure I will always keep. "I just wanted to be sure," he whispered.

Much has happened since my three year old son gave me that handmade valentine and my adult son gave me that special gift. The years have raced by; my son has been dead for over two years. And so this month I will open another special gift that my son bought me when he was still in college: my cedar chest. I'd always wanted a cedar chest for the special keepsakes marking our lives.

That cedar chest contains pictures, cards, handmade gifts and other things that only a mother could hold in her hands while watching the movies play in her head. There are many movies in that cedar chest, but only I can see them. That is the beauty of memories.

Each of us has our memories of our child. Whether our child was 5 days old or 55 years old, we have special memories that are as much a part of us as our faces. Valentine's Day was always a special day for our family. We exchanged valentines and sometimes give a special gift.

This Valentine's Day I will send my son a special handwritten valentine, carried on the wind to the cosmos. The message will be simple. "Happy Valentine's Day to my SON, Todd. I love you. Your Mom."

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

Memories are a legacy of hope and courage, left to help us go on when the giver is gone.

--Sascha

## Seasoned Greivers...

### Out of the Blue

How is it several years down the road?" I am sometimes asked.

Maybe they want to hear that I'm "all over it" and that everything is hunky dory in my life now that this much time has elapsed. I have to admit in all honesty that, though it is so much better where I am now as compared to way back there where fresh, raw bleeding grief abides. I do still have to deal with the remnants of grief from time to time. It comes and sits on my shoulder and says, "Here I am. Deal with me again." And I do, for denying the remnants doesn't work anymore than denying the fresh grief works.

The main difference is that I have had eight years to learn about my needs on those yearly special events, such as birthdays, death days, Mother's Day, holidays, etc. and I know how to handle those times. Practice hasn't made me perfect, but it has helped. Those days don't devastate me as they once did. I don't anticipate them weeks ahead of time as I did when I was learning to create a life without my child. I, long ago, created my new life, my new normal.

The things that cause me to deal with the pain again are not things I am able to anticipate. Instead, they come out of the blue to mow me down... not kind enough to give me warning. For example, occasions such as the birth of a baby boy... to my brother's son and his wife, seeming to assure that with good luck my family's name would be perpetuated. Although I knew intellectually that my husband's family name would die with him, since our son had not married when he died, I had not dealt emotionally with that fact. As I looked at that beautiful baby boy there in the hospital nursery, there was no way in the world I could have anticipated that we would never have that particular grandchild to carry on my husband's family name.

It is a one-time experience. Once you have dealt with that "Out of the Blue" event, it becomes, like the yearly special days, familiar. So much so that when my nephew's second son was born two years later, there were no remnants hanging about. So I know this was yet another first I had put behind me. I also knew there would be other firsts I would have to face.

--Mary Cleckley TCF of Atlanta, GA



## Newly Bereaved...

### Escape



It is not the intent of The Compassionate Friends to impose rules upon you, nor do we assume the right to determine your moral values or life styles. What we do try to do is point out potential problem areas during the most painful part of your grief so that you can, hopefully, recognize and avoid some of these pitfalls. When a child dies, the pain of the loss is so deep and ever present that the people who are grieving for the child sometimes seek ways to escape that pain. If you have been to our meetings, read our newsletter, or talked to our telephone friends, you know that we encourage you to face the fact that there is no real way for you to escape permanently from the pain of losing a child. You loved; therefore, you grieve. You may succeed in postponing your grief for a time, but it will resurface some day in some way. You are encouraged to deal with it now so that it won't be waiting ten or fifteen years down the road for you.

One of the most obvious ways for some to attempt to postpone or escape the pain is to turn to drugs, such as excessive amounts of alcohol, tranquilizers, mood elevators, and sleeping pills. You may even find that your physician will prescribe some of these things for you in an effort to make you "better." We do not speak, of course, about those who have medical or emotional problems that are separate and apart from the normal pain of grief. We speak, instead, of the process that normally follows the death of a child, and in this instance, these drugs do not cure or make you better; they simply postpone the grieving process. They may even make it worse. Alcohol, for instance, is a depressant, as are tranquilizers for some people. What can happen then is you go from the normal depression of grief to an even more depressed state. The mood elevators give you the false impression that you have things under control. When you finish with all these things, guess what is waiting for you? Your unresolved grief, and it may then be complicated by a drug dependency or disguised as mental or physical ailments.

I am simply suggesting here that you recognize that grief is normal and necessary when you have lost something or somebody important to you. The pain, depression, hopelessness, inability to sleep,

frustration, anger, guilt, loss of your goals and aims, loss of the ability to maintain an organized pattern in your life, and confusion are all a part of the symptoms of grief. You can't have softening of these symptoms until you have allowed yourself to feel whatever is necessary and normal for you under these circumstances. When you do allow yourself to hurt and feel these things, it hastens the day when you can emerge on the other side of the most painful part of grief, having survived in an emotionally healthy way. There are no shortcuts, only postponements, and you will do yourself and your doctor a favor if you resist asking for prescriptions to relieve these normal symptoms.

The hurt you are feeling is a sign that you are dealing with your grief, and that means you are making progress. It takes time and patience. If you have already tried to escape and found that it doesn't work, please seek help from organizations that work with drug dependencies.

IT WILL BE BETTER! But you have to hurt before you reach that place. Truly this is a time when the kindest thing you can do for yourself is allow yourself to feel the normal symptoms of grief. Running and hiding doesn't work, but patience does.

--Mary Cleckley TCF, Stone Mountain, GA

## Friends and Family...

### When Good Friends Walk Beside Us



When good friends walk beside us  
On the trails that we must keep  
Our burdens seem less heavy  
And the hills are not so steep.  
The weary miles pass swiftly  
Taken in a joyous stride  
And all the world seems brighter  
When friends walk by our side  
-- David Lilly

Editor's note: We need to remember that reaching out, and accepting help, are both necessary, if we are to recover from the loss of a child. Letting friends and family know what you need on a daily basis really can help.



## Helpful Hint...



### What's Love Got to do With it? Valentine's and Journaling

My oldest was talking about her new position at work and how much it takes out of her. This morning she said to me before heading to her job, "I didn't really want to, and for some reason, I put it off, but when I did write in my journal last night, it helped so much. It was freeing."

Yes! All that chaos in our brains... from work, or grief, or just from the daily situations life hands us...can make us worry, doubt, and become even fearful. Yet, unleashing it onto a blank page is liberating! We don't have to carry the load alone in our hearts. When we put pen to paper, it's like sharing problems with a trusted friend. The page carries the weight of our emotions for us. We've literally, taken it off our chests.

It's almost Valentine's Day, the day set aside to show love. Show yourself some love by giving your heart needed attention— write!

Writing is healthy, inexpensive, stress-reducing, and can be done just about anywhere. And yes, it is freeing! Make writing a way of life. Start with just five minutes. You might be surprised all that you have stored inside your heart that needs to come out.

Keep in mind:

- \* Freely write, no censoring allowed!
- \* Writing to music helps many write more honestly
- \* Don't worry about messy handwriting or spelling—this is for your eyes only
- \* You don't have to share with anyone
- \* Writing about real issues has been proven in a study (by Professor James Pennabaker) to lower blood pressure and heart rates
- \* After some time, you can develop a healthy habit of journaling

"Pick up your pen and see how grateful your heart will become."

-- Alice J. Wisler



## Welcome...

### About Being Strong

Many people are convinced that being strong and brave means trying to think and talk about "something else."

But we know that being strong and brave means thinking and talking about your dead love, until your grief begins to be bearable.

That is strength,  
That is courage,  
And only thus  
can "being strong and brave"  
help you to heal  
--Sascha

Editor's note: This poem is all too true. It takes tremendous strength and courage to manage to rebuild your life after the death of your child. We at Compassionate Friends understand the need to talk about your loss in order to come to terms with it. We encourage you to attend the meetings where you will be with other bereaved parents who talk and share the love and the pain of losing their children with one another. By sharing the pain, by talking about the loss, and by being in a supportive and understanding atmosphere, we all heal together.



## Book Review...

### *150 Facts About Grieving Children* by Erin Linn (In our chapter's library)

The first question asked of bereaved parents by well-meaning family and friends is "How are you?" Most of us usually struggle to answer this question in a somewhat truthful way, but reluctantly conclude that the real truth would be a shock and thus we frequently answer with half-truths. The second most frequently asked question is "How are the children?" This question is more difficult because it strikes at the heart of our greatest fear—that our children will be scarred for life. This book by Erin Linn is a first step in dealing with the needs of surviving children. It is an easy-to-read, one-sitting book which contains a wealth of information about grieving children.

The author writes: "Children do grieve, and with an intensity that would astound many adults. We cannot shelter them from death anymore than we can take their grief away. But we can obligate ourselves to learn more about child bereavement. We must begin to understand their world, their feelings, and their hurts." This book offers



guideposts for parents, useful information for family and friends, and essential information for professionals who work with grieving children.

Linn confirms the importance of giving honest information about death to children at a level they can understand. There are grief-related problems that most families must contend with: survivor guilt, over-or-under protectiveness of parents, displaced grief, and anger. These issues are presented in easy-to-read numbered statements.

It is often said that children are the "forgotten mourners" as family members and friends focus on the needs of the bereaved parents. For grieving parents who are called upon to be the most effective at a time when they have little available energy and resources, this book addresses a critical need for information.

--Review by Margaret Green

### Random Reflections

It's been a year now  
 And the books say I should be  
 Getting back to "normal."  
 But I still can't pass your picture  
 On the bookcase without  
 Touching your face.  
 I still was up in the night sometimes  
 And can almost  
 Hear your voice in the quiet.  
 I still run to the window when the  
 Dogs bark at night with the hope  
 In the back of my mind that somehow  
 You've wandered into the yard.  
 I still whisper your name into the wind  
 When I walk down our lane in the still  
 Of evening and strain to hear an answer.  
 When I'm troubled and upset  
 I still talk to you like  
 I always did and  
 Imagine the advice you'd give me  
 I still stop on our dark country road sometimes  
 And turn off the car engine  
 And lights and wait and hope that  
 I can see or hear you.  
 It's been a year now and the  
 Memories are still so vivid  
 That I can almost touch them.  
 It's been a year now and I now know  
 With all my heart that your  
 Presence will never fade in my mind.  
 --Tammy Walmann TCF, Miami County, KS

### A Poem from the Heart

Let no man say they are gone, although physically  
 absent, for they remain with us forever.

They live on in us and are as much a part of our  
 lives as any living child.

They became a part of us the moment we knew a  
 child was to be born.

And every day thereafter, they have been an  
 influence on our lives.

Their suffering has been our suffering, and their  
 joys have been our joys.

The smiles they wore are still undimmed, and their  
 goodness bright as gold, not dulled by time or  
 distance but forever filling our hearts and minds.

We are so much richer for having been blessed  
 with their lives for whatever time we had together.

We are strengthened through their having endured  
 the hardships accompanying their illness with such  
 valor.

They are with their Lord now and yet are not gone  
 from us.

Their lives are our lives, and while we live they  
 shall continue to live, safe and secure within our  
 hearts.

Urging us on when we falter, and laughing with us  
 when the world shines round about.

No, they are not gone. They live within.

--Alice Longwell, TCF Greenville, SC



### He Never Gave Us A Valentine

He never gave us a valentine.

He never learned how to write.

He never gave us a valentine,

Although some day, I thought that he might.

No long stemmed roses in a white florist box,  
 But some freshly picked dandelions and a fistful of  
 rocks!

No heart shaped package of chocolate covered  
 candies,

But a mud pie offered with little hands all sandy.

No pearls for me, or necktie for Dad.

But the bear hugs he gave were the best to be  
 had.

He never gave us a valentine

On red paper doily with crayoned art.

He never gave us a valentine.

He merely gave us his heart!

--By Kathie Slief



## Our Children Remembered



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

Joseph Isaac Alvarez  
Born: 3/04 Died: 6/27  
Mother: Elizabeth Eenteno

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: 12/01 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

Sean Michael Denhart  
Born: 3/88 Died: 12/20  
Mother: Janna Denhart

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 Trillegi &  
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

Shawn Eric Fillion  
Born: 12/82 Died: 8/21  
Mother: Lise Fillion

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

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 Guerreva  
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



# Our Children Remembered



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

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

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

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

Bishop Michael Hernandez  
Born: 3/98 Died: 6/21  
Father: John Hernandez

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

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

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

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

Margareta Sol Kubitz  
Born: 9/05 Died: 9/09  
Parents: Maria & Bill Kubitz

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

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

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

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

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

Blanca Isabel Meza  
Born: 9/21 Died: 9/21  
Mother: Angela Azurdin-Meza

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

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

Jesse Robert Martinez  
Born: 1/89 Died: 9/21  
Father: Harry Martinez

Mathew Scott Mikelson  
Born: 44/77 Died: 4/20  
Mother: Dorthy Mikelson

Taylor X. Hyland  
Born: 8/06 Died: 7/20  
Mother: Tessa Hyland

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Emma Nicole Lerner  
Born: 11/99 Died: 7/06  
Mother: Nancy Lerner

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Joshua Lozon  
Born: 6/91 Died: 6/21  
Mother: Tracey Gentile

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

Christopher Murphy  
Born: 11/92 Died: 4/18  
Mother: Deborah Murphy

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

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

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

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

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





## Our Children Remembered



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

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

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

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

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

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

## Our Children Remembered

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) 963-4646 and leave a message.

## Birthday Tributes...

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

Sorry, no tributes were submitted this month.

## For Siblings...

### Sibling's Grief Fuels Change

On October 29, 2017, my life changed

forever...when two state troopers came to my father's house to notify him his son, at the age of 44, had been killed by a distracted driver. His son who was an avid weight lifter, ate a strict healthy diet and never sped or forgot to put sunscreen on. He should have lived to be 100 due to his dedicated positive lifestyle choices. Jean Claude, my brother, instead died because of someone's else's erroneous choice while driving.

A pain and sorrow like I've never known before enveloped my soul that day, like no other grief I had ever experienced. I have had several devastating deaths in my family—grandparents from cancer, an aunt from cardiac arrest, a friend's child from childhood cancer...and the most painful, my mother due to Ovarian cancer ten years ago. I have experienced this pain of loss and living with grief. My brother's death though; was a loss like I've never felt before. It came blinding and forceful, out of nowhere.

Knowing something else, someone else's selfish choice to drive negligently and distracted was the cause of my siblings random and tragic death caused me a slew of emotions I still grapple to deal with today...resentment, anger, survivor's guilt (why him at the wrong place and wrong time), sadness, confusion and deeply embedded sorrow have remained.

One day, four months after my brother's car crash, I read by chance in the newspaper about a group of distracted driving victim's advocates who were utilizing their grief and pain to push for change in our Minnesota laws. Their purpose was to create laws to keep drivers and pedestrians safer on our Minnesota roads. This group has become my life link, the very vital component to how I deal with my deep convoluted grief.

One and one-half years after joining this group, one of our goals to make MN a Hands Free cell phone (while driving) state... came miraculously true! (Some members in my group had been fighting for this law for almost ten years since they lost loved ones.) It finally came true on April 12th, 2019. I stood with my other families victims, and we watched Governor Walz sign the MN Hands Free bill. We became the 17th state in the USA to join the crusade all over the world in taking cell phones out of the hands of drivers because they just keep killing people and contribute to distracted driving. Our group made a difference in our state by fueling our grief into something more impactful that will save future lives.

Next year, I will be back to testify again in the MN congress, to make tireless phone calls, and

send a litmus of emails and letters to our legislators, all while sharing my brother's tragic death and imploring them to push for stiffer penalties for distracted drivers who cause great bodily harm and fatalities.

I will do it because it feeds my soul and releases my relentless sorrow. This is how I deal with my unsurmountable grief that has stricken me since October 29, 2017. We all deal with grief and loss in different ways...it is a personal journey and this is my journey through my grief for the sudden loss of my brother.

--Danielle Wishard-Tudor TCF Sibling Group,  
Minneapolis, MN

*Dr. Heidi Horsley, licensed psychologist, social worker, and bereaved sibling answers sibling questions which appear in TCF's national magazine, We Need Not Walk Alone.*

**Q.** I miss my sister very much. I often get emotional because she won't be here anymore. But I also think I'm getting upset because of how all this is affecting me. Then I feel guilty because I know I should feel bad that she is no longer here. Why do I have so many different feelings?

**A.** It is not unusual for you to think about how this is affecting you, as well as missing your sister. You are being confronted with a lot of uncomfortable situations as a result of your sister's death. You are watching the rest of your family grieve, you are watching your friends going on relatively unaffected, you are mourning the loss of your ability to believe that nothing like death could ever touch someone close to you. Your feelings are only natural given the situation. What you will find is that over time it is not so uncomfortable. You will always miss your sister, and particularly at big life events you will feel her absence acutely, but it will get easier to create a life that both allows you to go on and includes her through your memories and your love for her.

## The Bitter Tears of Love Lost

Because of my status in society  
I can look below to poverty  
and realize no matter how frustrated I get,  
I will always be very lucky to have a family  
who loves and cares for me.

But still the tears roll down my face  
and my cheeks are forever stained  
because I know as long as I live  
my heart will always be pained.

I was left in shock, pain, and fear,  
left with your unspoken words which I will never hear  
But in my days of sorrow when I feel that I will fall  
I can only repeat the phrase to myself,  
"It is better to have loved and lost than to never have  
loved at all."

--Peter Smith In Memory of my brother, Gregory  
Smith



## For Grandparents...

### My Tribute To Justin

You used to come to our home to stay;  
I loved to watch you run and play.  
Then you'd hide from me and I'd call out in fear and a  
little voice would whisper, "Grandma, I'm right here."  
We'd go to the park or school, side by side-you played  
on the carousel, swing or slide.  
Sometimes you'd disappear and I'd call, "Justin, dear,"  
and a little voice would whisper, "Grandma, I'm right  
here."  
Off we'd go and maybe sing "This Little Light of Mine,"  
or the "Achy Breaky" thing  
And stop by Circle K for your thumb sucking ring.  
You'd hide behind the candy rack and I'd call, "Justin,  
dear" and a little voice would whisper, "Grandma, I'm  
right here."  
We'd go on home for a bite to eat-peanut butter or hot  
dogs to you was a treat.  
Then we'd go out and play until we couldn't see, then  
come in the house to watch TV.  
You'd crawl on my lap; I'd whisper in your ear and a  
little voice would whisper, "Grandma, I'm right here."  
I know you don't want me to be sad or shed a tear, but  
what I'd give once more to hear that little voice  
whisper, "Grandma, I'm right here."  
--Grandma Rappi, Friends & Families of Murder  
Victims Newsletter

## From Our Members...

### For Wheels

A woman who loses her husband  
Becomes the recently bereaved widow  
The girl whose father and mother  
Never return home is called an orphan  
The man who served the same woman for 50 years  
and awoke to her still heart is widowed

The brother whose only brother, returning from snow  
boarding, crashed head-on with a snowplow-  
bears no name





Yet wears an invisible identity and unwillingly  
 Those who walk with the loss of a loved one  
 The recently bereaved in mourning are not granted a  
 title; a role; or a place  
 A year or two passes  
 To others their identity is temporal - never really  
 existed  
 "She's the same old Susan."

Susan is a stranger to herself  
 Balancing a high power lawyer act  
 with the taboo veil of a recently  
 bereaved mother cloaked with  
 secret shame  
 In protecting her living son from their  
 common struggle: how to live  
 again  
 Without her son; without his  
 brother

Days fall to autumn and society  
 forgets their grief  
 How do we name a parent who loses  
 a child? How does one label  
 their grief? Tragic? Unfair?  
 Unnatural?

Following meager days of floral arrangements,  
 sincerely sorry notes, and frozen casseroles  
 They are forgotten

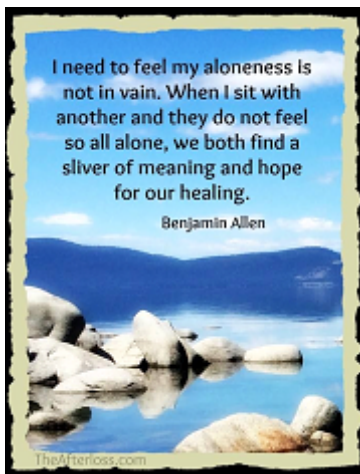
Lost beneath 30 day bereavement leave, sympathy  
 cards and coined words of empathy

Perhaps we should call them Wounded; scarred for  
 life  
 Facial scarification makes more sense  
 A permanent, visual reminder of those who went  
 before us yet won't leave our hearts

A widow is a widow until she remarries  
 So when does a parent come out of grieving the  
 death of a child? When does a sister's scar heal  
 to a faded strawberry? When does a brother feel  
 life is worth living again?

I yearn for a name, a badge, acknowledgment, a  
 black sash to weave over my tattered heart  
 I don't want to walk alone in grief

Sit on my bench and journey, with me  
 In the trail of mourning there's a need to share  
 the aspects of life which scorched our souls and  
 transformed the person we thought we would  
 become



After my brother, Daniel, pressed the gun to his  
 temple there was life before Dan and life after  
 Dan

I desire to shed the skin which claimed me, but want  
 the world to witness and speak what we walk  
 with—invisible grief ...

Casey's mother flew away when she was five  
 Dad says, "Mom lives in the fluffy white clouds."  
 Casey swears she'll never marry  
 Wouldn't want to bring kids into this uncertain  
 life.

Twenty-five year's later the black sash  
 continues to choke her heart

Maya struggles to find hope, meaning—ten  
 years after the murder of her big brother  
 Slain in his sleep—by friends  
 No one knows she's a survivor  
 A wounded warrior

Perhaps this is our daily identity  
 Survivor's of suicide  
 Survivors of losing a child  
 Survivors of the murdered  
 Survivors of death

Is this loss so unspeakable?  
 So disruptive to our concepts of reality  
 So horrible we bury it - nameless with the dead?

If we can't name and speak our pain and loss  
 Can we face it?  
 --Esther Bain

To all the forever bereaved survivor's of the undeniable loss  
 of a loved one I see you, believe in your loss, and hold hope  
 in your healing. In memory of my cousin, Corey Walker and  
 my brother, Daniel Bain

**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.

**Flash Zoom Meetings ...** are called on short notice,

and are of shorter duration. The intent is to check in on each other and share, nothing more. The goal is to meet weekly but if it occurs every other week that's ok. If you are interested in joining, contact Leo at (310) 283-6739 or [Liccias79@gmail.com](mailto:Liccias79@gmail.com).



**Birthday 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: Feb.1st for March birthdays). If you miss the deadline, call Lynn at (310) 963-4646 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 Connie at (310) 292-5381. You can mail her a photo for each button you would like (color photo copies work great) and she 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 Lori 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. 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 co-leader).....(760) 521-0096  
Leo & Connie Liccidone (chapter co-leaders).....(310)

292-5381

Jarmo &amp; Bonnie Mantoya (chapter co-leaders)...(310)

530-8489

Mary Sankus.....(310) 648-4878

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&amp;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

**Alive Alone:** For parents who have lost their only child, or all their children. 1112 Champaign Dr., Van Wert, OH 45891 Newsletter available.

www.Alivealone.org

**Survivors of Suicide:** Support Group for families that have lost someone to suicide. Contact Rick Mogil (310) 895-2326 or 24 hrs: (310) 391-1253

**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.

**Other Grief Support Websites...**

thetearsfoundation.org

childloss.com

goodgriefresources.com

griefwatch.dom

bereavedparentsusa.org

opentohope.com

healingafterloss.org

webhealing.com

survivorsof suicide.com

alivealone.org

taps.org (military death)

angelmoms.com

save.org (suicide/depression)

pomc.com (families of murder victims)

grasphelp.org (substance abuse deaths)

www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub (Suicide)

Griefwords.com (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 CO-LEADERS: Lori Galloway, Leo & Connie Liccidone and Bonnie & Jarmo Mantoya

CHAPTER ZOOM HOSTS: Connie & Leo Liccaridone

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines

PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks

TREASURER: Kristy Konopasek

WEBSITE: Leo Liccaridone

BUTTON MACHINE: Connie Liccaridone

**STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Linda & Joe Zelik

Lori Galloway

Marilyn Nemeth

Crystal Henning

Cheryl & Bill Matasso

Lynn Vines

Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla

Nancy Lerner

Connie & Leo Liccaridone

Kitty Edler



Sandra & Eddie Myricks  
Kristy Mueller

Susan Kass

6 PM PST: Bereaved More than Two Years

### 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)

### MONDAY--

6:45 PM PST: First-Time Chatter Orientation  
7AM PST: Parents/Grandparents/Siblings  
(open depending on monitor availability)  
7 PM PST: Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

### TUESDAY--

5:45 PM PST: First-Time Chatter Orientation  
5 PM PST: Loss to Substance Related Causes  
6 PM PST: Bereaved Less than Two Years

### WEDNESDAY--

5:45 PM PST: First-Time Chatter Orientation  
7 AM PST: Parents/Grandparents/Siblings  
6 PM PST: Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

### THURSDAY--

5:45 PM PST: First-Time Chatter Orientation  
5 PM PST: No Surviving Children  
6 PM PST: Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

### FRIDAY--

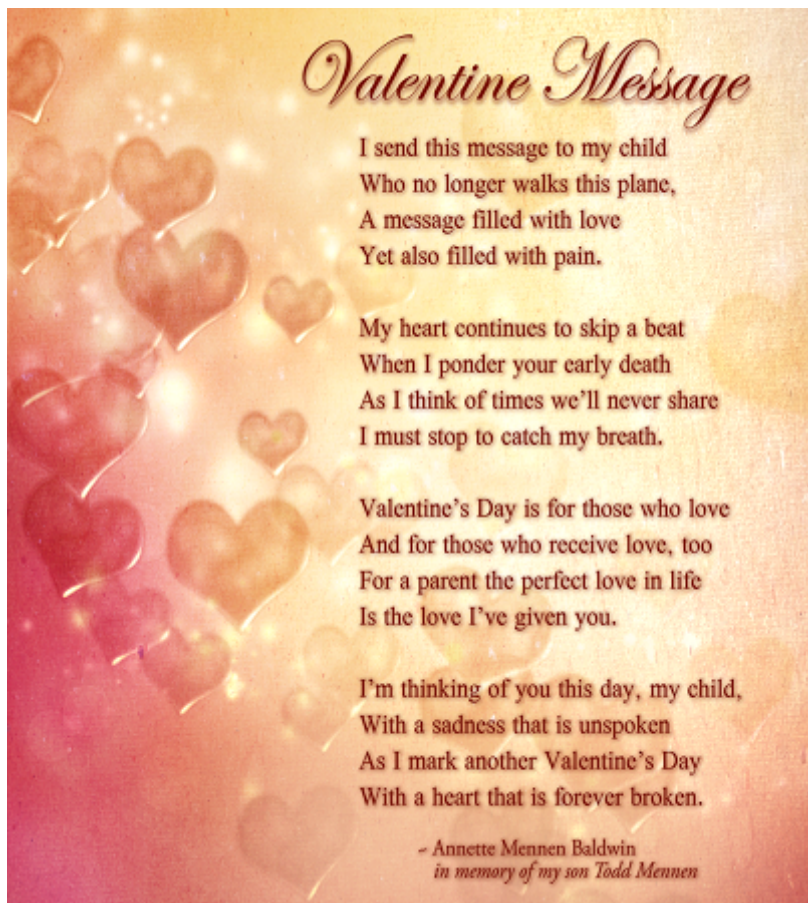
7 AM PST: Parents/Grandparents/Siblings  
(open depending on moderator availability)  
5 PM PST: Loss to Substance Related Causes  
5 PM PST: Pregnancy/Infant Loss  
6 PM PST: Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

### SATURDAY--

6 PM PST: Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

### SUNDAY--

5 PM PST: Suicide Loss  
6 PM PST: Parents/Grandparents/Siblings





# 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. When making a donation, please make checks payable to The South Bay/L.A. chapter of Compassionate Friends

Mail to: The South Bay/LA chapter of Compassionate Friends  
P.O. Box 11171  
Torrance CA 90510

A gift in loving memory of my son, William Joseph Britton III, March 1962 - July 1985.  
Love, Mom

To our beloved son, Jason Christopher Jenkins, April 1986 - November 2020. It was a privilege to be your parents— You are forever in our hearts and souls.  
Love Mom & Dad

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

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

In loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_  
Birth date \_\_\_\_\_ Death date \_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_  
Tribute \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

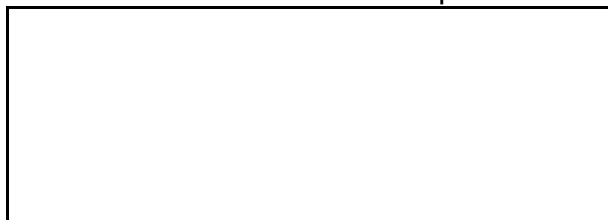
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– Return Service Requested –



**February 2022**

**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.**

**©2022 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.