



The Compassionate Friends

South Bay/LA Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Oct. 2023 ISSUE

EDITOR: LYNN VINES (310) 530-3214

e-mail: Lynntcf@aol.com

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

OUR NEXT MEETING
will be Oct. 5th, 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, Oct 5th meeting will start with **"Growing And Evolving Through Grief."**

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

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

South Bay/LA Chapter of TCF
P.O. Box 11171
Torrance, CA 90510-1171
(310) 963-4646
www.tcfsbla.org

Chapter Co-Leaders:
Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla (310) 530-8489
j.mantyla@att.net
Leo & Connie Licciardone (310) 292-5381
ConnieStar58@gmail.com

The National Office of TCF
P.O. Box 3696
Oakbrook, IL 60522-3696
Toll free (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

The Thursday, Oct. 5th meeting will start with “Growing And Evolving Through Grief.” When you are newly bereaved, you often feel like you have a broken heart that will never heal. With time and grief work, we learn how to replace that pain and suffering with hope and a sense of peace that you can probably not fathom at this point in your grief. Life forces us to change from the “old” me to the “new” me. This is all done while we continue to love and miss our dead children. We begin to emerge from the quagmire of pain, loneliness, and despair, as we recognize a small ray of hope. Though small and fleeting at first, when nurtured it becomes the light which leads the wounded parents into a better understanding of their new life. We change and grow through our grieving and we slowly realize we are becoming different people because of our grief. The million adaptations we make as a bereaved parent or siblings helps us form a new life for ourselves and those around us. Join us as we explore some of the many different ways we incorporate and grow after the loss of a child.

What Kind of Luggage Are You Carrying?



For some time the tourist industry has urged us to travel “light” and with more convenience in order to save energy, time and general wear and tear:

- ◆ We can choose soft-sided luggage, “weightless” garment bags that fold, duffels and kits designed for certain items, totes with side pockets and roomy interiors for carry-on or car pack, bags that hang from the shoulders, Velcro and zipper closures, adjustable/removable straps and handles, and plastic bags for layering.
- ◆ We can take less clothing by choosing separates that can be mixed or matched for different occasions and materials that are wrinkle-proof and washable.
- ◆ We can learn from those who do testing how best to pack our belongings.
- ◆ We can also let someone help us carry our bags.
- ◆ It seems to me there are cues in this for us in our grief journey. After all, we choose what we will carry and for how long. What do you have in your luggage? What choices are there for you?
- ◆ Unresolved grief: Feelings left from experiences of the past (fears, anger, guilt, rejections....) You may decide some are not worth carrying any longer and others that cannot be discarded may well be

given another look.

- ◆ Helplessness and hopelessness: They are garments that take much space when you start out, but you may be able to fold them more neatly later on.
- ◆ The “Why” questions: Why this? Why mine? They are part and parcel of this trip, but after traveling a distance, you may pick up the “what” question - What am I going to do with my life? - and then the “how” question - How am I going to do it? These last are important - hold on to them.
- ◆ Expectations: Some are helpful, some hurtful, and you may not be able to sort them out until you are under way. If you have a goal or time table set by someone else, remove it early in your journey and proceed in your own way and at your own pace. If you expect others to understand and meet your needs, you risk disappointment and resentment that will delay your travel. Try substituting a resolution to tell those near you what you need and how they can help you. Then let them do it.
- ◆ Vulnerability: You may be afraid to take this with you, but as you acknowledge and come to understand your feelings, the fear will diminish and lighten your load.
- ◆ The “shoulds”: I should have - and the “if only’s” - if only I had, are heavy to carry, but you will find they are disposable.
- ◆ A stubborn, positive attitude: This will come in handy, but you may not put it out to wear at first.
- ◆ Tears: Have them readily available. Not only is it all right to cry, but to cry as often as you feel the need and on someone's shoulder. If you hold back, you waste energy.
- ◆ Courage and spirit: Summon as much as you are able and expect to add more whenever and wherever you can, to make sure you keep on going - through the valley to the other side.
- ◆ Time: Use it for layering, but be sure it is time you intend to use.
- ◆ Hugs: Carry them in your shoulder bag or outer pocket and have them at the ready several times a day. This is good therapy for the grieving traveler.
- ◆ Patience with yourself and others and real personal forgiveness: A three-piece suit, one you won't wear for every day, perhaps, but it looks good on you and there will be occasions, more and more of them as you discover who you are now; when it will be comfortable.
- ◆ Memories and mementos: Tuck them in the corners and in the spaces between items. They

will even the load.

◆ An understanding of the enormity of your loss: Pack this so you can put it on daily for a while and gradually you will become aware of a new feeling - the wonder of living. If you exclude this, you put your grief on hold and it waits for you.

◆ A sense of hope: If you think you might as well leave this behind because you won't have use for it on this trip, remember: Even Doris Nelson, polio victim who spent 36 years in an iron lung, had "an expectancy to something more."

◆ A Plan: I hope you have room so you can add a plan when you run across one. A plan for some activity you may not consider within the realm of possibility for you now. To miss this would be another grief.

May you have a safe and productive trip.

– Helen Way TCF Abilene, TX

Dear Child Of Mine

Dear Child of mine,
 who died before your time,
 I am grateful for your life.
 Though death brought the end of hopes and dreams,
 Still I am grateful for your life.
 Through you I have known joy and sorrow,
 laughter and tears.
 Through you my life has been enriched,
 My compassion heightened and
 I am more keenly aware of the grief of others.
 I am grateful for your life.
 Now I draw upon my memories of you,
 some happy, some sad.
 They keep you close in many ways.
 They are priceless, precious memories
 that help me bear the pain.
 Through them I will learn to live again.
 I am grateful for your life.
 I have been blessed by your life and left with your love.
 I will share that love and strive
 to live to be a blessing to others.
 Dear Child of mine, though you died before your time,
 You are never far away from me,
 I have loved you in my heart of hearts
 and there I will love you through eternity.
 I am grateful for your life...Dear Child of mine.
 --Betty Stevens TCF, Baltimore, Maryland



Excerpts from: **An Arrow Through the Heart**

Try as we might, it is impossible to change the course of nature. We cannot bring back the summer anymore than we can fast-forward the seasons. By focusing on what no longer is, we lose the capacity to find beauty, happiness, or pleasure. If we continue to bang our heads against unchangeable situations, it only increases our feelings of helplessness and futility. Our alternative is acceptance.

The memories of precious times will always be there to warm our hearts, and they will continue to bring tears and pangs of yearning, but realization of the finality of the loss has also occurred. It takes a long time to accept situations that we do not want as permanent. It takes much time and heartache to recognize that we cannot change situations. It is a long process during which evolves a changed concept of ourselves, the world, and our place in it.

It is not that the world has really changed, but with the death of a loved one OUR world has changed. Again, we have a choice. That long and painful middle portion of the bereavement process may remain with us for a very long time as we struggle to maintain our old ways of being, in spite of the agonizing loss. If we become fixed or stuck at this time, there is a double tragedy. Life is lived in the past, and the present is filled with yearning for what should have been and what has been stolen from the survivor. Certainly, we are not "happy" about the situation, but slowly we realize that things will never again be the same and that as survivors, we must go on.

After a time, which varies from situation to situation, we accept the finality of the loss. With this acceptance, the ability occurs to perceive beauty without feelings of disloyalty.

The pain we are feeling is because of the great love we had. The experience of that love will never die, the memory of that love, of that loved one, will live on in our hearts. We must now go on— for the sake of ourselves and our loved one. We must give ourselves permission to enjoy again, even through tears. Let's remind ourselves of the blessings that we have had, despite the deprivation, and let's not deprive others their blessings.

We should seek things that will bring us peace. A snow-covered landscape can be beautiful, glistening, and pure. Any view of the situation takes on the meaning that we assign to it. If we

choose to believe that a scene or a situation is bleak, it will be bleak. If we focus on one aspect of beauty, we see beauty. No there isn't the completeness of former times, but there is today.
-- Susan Arlen, M.D.

James Van Praagh has written a number of best selling books for the bereaved in an effort to give some hope to those left behind in their grieving. Maybe this piece will resonate with you.

When A Child Transitions

Through the years, I have counseled thousands of parents who have lost their children. The loss of a child is perhaps the most difficult of all things to comprehend. Parents are in denial and disbelief: "It is not natural that my child died before me. It doesn't make sense! It is only natural that parents expect their children to grow up, enjoy the jewels life has to offer, and have children of their own one day.

This is what we all know as the normal cycle of life. But when a child dies, parents are unhappily forced to rethink everything they once believed about what is 'normal', because their lives have been irreparably interrupted by tremendous loss – including the loss of innocence, dreams, and hopes.

Yet loss is a part of life's cycle, and no one can escape it. Loss is part of our life experience and, inevitably, we all must face some kind of loss while we are walking on this earth. It is part of what makes us human. Loss can cause many intense emotions - from sadness, to rage, and even hate – but all these emotions are a natural part of our growing and evolving as a result of the loss.

The loss of a child goes deeper because it touches everything in our lives, from our views of the world, to the way we feel about those closest to us. Many parents' grief can be too intense to bear; and they feel thrown into a place of great emptiness, not sure how they will survive. Everyone behaves differently when they lose a child. We all grieve differently, and no one should ever expect to handle their emotional turmoil in the same way someone else does.

I have come to know two kinds of parents: those who use their child's death as an opportunity for growth, and those who remain completely and utterly destroyed.

I remember the first time I met a lady called

Marie Levine. It was in her tiny New York apartment filled with books and photographs. After a detailed reading, that yielded facts only she could know, I thought she would be thrilled by what she had learned from her son Peter, who recently passed into Spirit. Instead, all she could say was: "I can't go on. How am I supposed to live my life? It has no meaning anymore."

Even though Marie was in a dark place at that specific moment, I felt that she had more to give if only she would open her heart and mind to the love of her dead son. I stayed in touch with her and, after many years of prodding, a different Marie emerged. She was able to turn her anger and frustration into something positive.

The loss of her only son forced her to dig deep inside herself to find healing. She turned her grief into writing and became a wonderful healer for other souls experiencing similar situations. Marie eventually wrote about her devastating loss and her hope to survive in a book entitled "First You Die". Marie's words now help many parents face their loneliness and despair with courage. The book became a bestseller and is used in many grief support groups throughout the country.

--by James Van Praagh Courtesy:
Universal Mind Issue 234

Family



We all know that no age is an easy age for the death of a child. The infant, the teenager, the adult child - each of them, precious to the two people whose lives have been intertwined with theirs, however brief that may have been. During the ten years that I have been associated with the Compassionate Friends, I have met and grieved with so many of these families. The infants - born with physical frailty and taken before they utter their first cry. The teenagers - confident and sure that nothing bad could possibly happen to them. The adult children - suffering with illnesses or the victim of an accidental death.

But what about the middle years? Why does it shock us to hear of the 5 year old who died from cancer, the 9 year old who was hit by a car on his bike, the 12 year old who drowns. Maybe there is some false sense of security about the middle years. We have made it through infancy with its uncertainties and we are not yet at the stage when our children take flight and leave us even temporarily. They are safe in our care, dependent

on us... or so we think. But it really isn't that simple. Young children are vulnerable - and we as their parents are just as vulnerable.

Summer vacation at the mountains, the trip in the car, the ocean with its power, the crowds where someone can get lost... how my mind races with what can go wrong. But we can't lead our surviving children to this scary place. We must lead them to their future with confidence and calm, with hope and faith that no tragedy will befall them. So, I take a deep breath, say a prayer that God will watch over my children, and then just go through each day as carefully as I can. The rest is out of my control and that will have to do.

--Lisa Beall Bereaved Parents of the USA
Anne Arundel County Chapter

The Mask of Grief

As the beautiful colors of fall surround us and the air is sweetened and chilled, we, the brokenhearted parents and families of those children who left us too soon begin to find the strength and perseverance to face another season, another anniversary, another rush of memories. Perhaps Halloween brings with it visions of little candy grabbing goblins and gossamer-clad fair children.

Perhaps those memories aren't available to some of us. All of us pick up our masks right around this time of year and we put them on. Our masks are different, though. When our children died, we discovered that the raw and horrible pain we were in probably showed up on our faces, in the way we stood, in the way we walked and talked. We soon discovered that, even though we had many close and loving friends and family, they were not very comfortable with watching us bleed to death from the inside out...So we constructed a mask.

Masquerade Balls and Pagan ceremonies are ancient rituals. The idea of "masking" one's identity for a short time and celebrating with wild abandon is as appealing in our society as it was in those ancient times. Unfortunately, the bereaved have a different reason for donning the mask. We force our mask to smile when the lump in our throat and the heaviness in our chest threaten to choke us. Our eyes leak profusely, despite the waterproof mascara and pancake makeup we women keep applying...Men put on a stoic and strong facade, sometimes failing miserably and breaking down

with terrible beauty.

I urge you to be gentle with your mask. Put it on thoughtfully and take it off with great care. There are safe places to leave it and one of those places is with those of us who travel this path with you.

--By Kerry Marston

But For Now

I once again find myself sitting
in darkness.

There is no reason to have lights on.

Children will be coming to my front door

But for now, they'll think I'm gone.

Again, it's time for the Halloween season to begin.

Children dressed in costumes and attire.

I want to see their smiles and hear the laughter...

Oh but for now, it still sets my heart afire.

I haven't always been the way I am tonight.

I once had a child that did the same.

I would decorate the house and yard with goblins.

Oh my child loved to share the game.

Then, one day my child went away to Heaven;

Oh, I was left in pain wondering why.

I pray everyday to somehow find my way.

But for now, I do nothing but sit and cry.

Then, I will have to face other holidays.

Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year.

Only a Mom who has walked this pathway truly
understands this dreadful fear.

For I once cooked a full course meal.

I could have fed an army here.

Smells of the holiday season filled the air.

And, family came from everywhere.

Then, there was the Christmas Season.

Oh the days were filled with fun.

I once enjoyed the days shopping for gifts.

But for now, I just want to run.

I want to be happy for others at this time

But I have yet to learn the plan.

I truly want to share the holiday season..

But for now, I don't think I can...

And ... I know you understand.

--Kaye Des 'Ormeaux



Walking the Path of Grief

The greatest tragedy of my life happened two years ago when my son died by suicide at the age of 24. I suddenly find myself on a journey of grief with no compass and no guidelines. In the first

year of grieving, I am a ping pong ball, whacked around every which way. When searing grief shows up — a song, a thought, passing the funeral home — it stops me in my tracks, grabs my heart, and makes my chest burn with the physical pain of losing him. I am so overcome with thoughts of missing him that I collapse on the ground in the middle of a road, clinging to my husband's ankle as I sob. We watch a stupid sci-fi movie about a character who dies a painful, fictional death, and I run screaming into the bedroom, burying my face in a pillow to shriek my rage about losing my past, my present, and my future in a moment.

I walked the path of grief that first year by being in shock. Two days after his funeral, I go back to work as a musical theater summer counselor at a camp, staring up at a surreal blue sky. Eight weeks later, I am back at work full time during the worst of COVID-19: hybrid teaching, everyone masked, Americans sick and dying. As an English teacher, I regularly teach topics and themes of death, and I do so with a cool outward demeanor. Shock serves as a protective shield; it allows me to function outwardly day to day, while inwardly the grief builds up until it must be let it out, somehow.

At the same time, I come to learn there is no judgment when it comes to grieving. My mother has not cried since losing her first grandson, whom she adored. My husband tears up and has his own set of triggers, such as listening to the lyrics of a particular song, but he does not sob loudly like I do, although I can see that he suffers quietly. A lesson that settles in is that we all grieve differently, in our time and in our own way.

In the second year of my grieving, the shock wears off and is replaced with the harsh, cold truth. I react with wild emotional swings — good day, bad day — good week, bad week. I start out my morning feeling stable, and I am angry and exhausted at sundown. I am a pendulum, swinging to its farthest extreme, and then to the other way. I remind myself that my grief has no time line, no rules, and no judgment, but I know that I need to think more about what is healing and helpful for me. I start to listen and look around for more, and I am open to whatever comes through. I have always known that the best place to feel and to heal is by taking walks, as my son always lets us know he is with us. He is a gorgeous red cardinal singing his glorious soundtrack on a branch above

my head. He is a bold dragonfly that circles, passes close to my face, and lands on my hands, allowing me to stroke his wings. He is the young deer that lives around my home that locks eyes with me before running off into the woods, always with one last look over his shoulder before he disappears.

On my worst days of just wanting to lie in bed, I force myself to go outside to see the sun, the clouds, the trees. When I am in nature, he is most dearly with me, and I am grateful for his presence and his playfulness as my feet connect to the earth and my head is tipped to the sky.

In dreams, I see him as my beautiful boy who looks into my eyes, talks to me without words, and hugs me. The dreams of visitations are filled with the presence of love and an absence of pain on his



sweet, angelic face, sometimes as an adorable child, a bouncy preteen, or handsome young man. Although they are rare, I treasure each visitation dream as my greatest gifts, carefully recording them in my journal. I do not want to lose or forget these dreams, as they keep me going during my toughest times.

I increase self-care, self-love, and my understanding of what has happened to me, to him, and to our family. I read books on grief, death, and spirituality. I purchase yoga props to inspire a restart of my home practice. I commit to and deepen my daily meditation practice. I make a career change from teaching to writing. I attend weekly virtual therapy sessions and make a commitment to travel to Kripalu, a beautiful retreat in Lenox, MA, where I take live yoga classes, participate in heart-opening, mind-expanding workshops, and meet other spiritual seekers.

Early on, we set up a cabinet in the family room to proudly display mementos and achievements to honor our son's life. Two years went by with our not making any kind of home improvements, as we were just getting by, surviving day to day. Now, we are in the creative process of renovating and redesigning spaces that need greater beauty, for our healing.

There is a lovely walking path created in honor of my son on the side of our house with flowering plants, bright, hand-painted stones, and a bench that faces the morning sun. I walk the path every day... and think of my son.

-- Jean Robinson

Going to a Support Group for Help

Perhaps the best explanation of why a support group can work so well comes from the mother who wrote: I never will be able to take Bryan or Dougie to the park or zoo, but I can take them to my support group and be able to talk about them very openly without someone saying, "When are you going to get over this?"

Think about it: Some parents who have experienced a stillbirth themselves are uncomfortable to hear other parents talk about it at a meeting. Can you then imagine how cold most people who have not experienced a stillbirth can be when the subject of the stillbirth is brought up by a parent?

"When are you going to be over this?" This is the kind of insensitivity these parents are dealing with on almost a daily basis. There simply has to be a place to talk openly and honestly, and for many parents that place is at a meeting of grieving parents. One beautiful aspect about the group is that everyone is in need and everyone is helping. It is paradoxical, in a way. But each parent brings a slightly different set of problems, and each brings different ways of approaching a solution. Sharing these ideas helps each person become a little better at coping. The greatest benefit: we all need as many friends as we can get in this mad world.

--From Stillborn: The Invisible Death

Editor's note: Stillborn and infant death are just as painful and confusing as losing an older child. As bereaved parents you will find a caring, non-judgmental and compassionate atmosphere of parents who know how deep the pain goes. TCF is a place to get support, comfort, advice, and ideas from others who are also grieving the death of a child of any age...The loss of our dreams, the future we envisioned and the depth of our loss is universal to all bereaved parents. We welcome you to join us.

Newly Bereaved...

A New Normal

I wanted my life to return to normal. Then I realized what I wanted was for my life to return to what it once was.

A year ago I found hope one night when I heard my wife and my youngest son laughing in our

bedroom. I thought my life was returning to normal. I played cards with our youngest son after supper, with much fun and laughter. After a few cartoons, he and my wife were off to bed.

It was then that I realized my life was not returning to the normal that it was when Greg was alive, but changing to a new normal. I cannot return to what I once was, because all of the parts are no longer there. I have the choice, consciously, and subconsciously to carry on with my life, thus creating a new normal.

Hope lies in accepting what you now have – looking with joy, not sorrow, looking ahead with optimism not pessimism.

--Daryl Hutson Crawfordsville, IN
www.bereavedparentsusa.org.



Seasoned Grievers...

As The Tide Recedes

It has been two years since our son Nathan died, and I am often amazed at how much our family has changed during that time. I think of our grieving process as being like a stroll along the beach at high tide. In the beginning, when our loss was fresh and new, the waves of pain were unbearably intense, coming at us without pause. They seemed to hit us everywhere at once - in the face, in the stomach, in our hearts - knocking us down to the ground. The grief and anger we felt swelled up over our heads; we were drowning in emotions we could not understand. And we began to wonder if we would ever be able to breathe normally again. "How can life go on," we asked, "when it hurts so much?"

But time passed, and the tide receded. The water dropped to the level of our knees. The waves seemed to strike with less frequency, and when they did hit, their power was diminished. And yet, we sensed that we were still not free. Sometimes, when we least expected it, a huge wall of grief seemed to rise out of nowhere, pounding us with the memories. We stumbled but did not fall.

One day we looked up and discovered that we were walking only on wet sand. We had been battered by the waves, but still stood erect. And we recognized that our loss had given us an enduring strength.

Scattered on the shore before us were numerous beautiful treasures that had previously been hidden by the deep water. These treasures,

which sparkled like jewels in the sand, were all of our priceless memories of our child that we had submerged in our pain. Now it was possible to gather up our thoughts of the happy times and hold them close to our heart.

Today we walk through the shallow, lapping waves with a new confidence, leaving our wet footprints in the sand. Following behind us, however, there is another set of footprints, invisible prints which are quickly washed away by the swirling water. These are the steps which our child will never take. The past, like the salt of the sea, clings to our skin. We know that the tide will return with anniversaries, birthdays, holidays, and special family occasions - but the grief will never be as powerful or as strong.

We have learned to live with the flotsam which floats on the surface of the water. Ride gently with the waves; let the grief carry you forward, so that you will be ready to stand strong and upright when once again your feet touch solid ground.

--Jeanne Lyet Gassman TCF - Pikes Peak CO

Friends And Family...

The Elephant In The Room

There's an elephant in the room.
It is large and squatting,
so it is hard to get around it.

Yet we squeeze by with "How are you?" and "I'm fine..."

And a thousand other forms of trivial chatter.

We talk about the weather.

We talk about work.

We talk about everything else...

Except the elephant in the room.

We all know it is there.

We are thinking about the elephant as we talk together.

It is constantly on our minds.

For, you see, it is a very big elephant.

It has hurt us all.

But we do not talk about the elephant in the room.

Oh, please, say her name.

Oh, please, say "Barbara" again.

Oh, please, let's talk about the elephant in the room.

For if we talk about her death,

Perhaps we can talk about her life.

Can I say "Barbara" to you and not have you look away:



For if I cannot,
then you are leaving me alone...
in a room...
with an elephant
-- Terry Kettering

Welcome...



Welcome New Members

Attending your first meeting takes courage. We know this and it is always hard for us to say "welcome" because we are so very sorry for the reason which made you have to attend The Compassionate Friends (TCF) meeting. However, we are glad you found us. We cannot take away your pain, but we can offer our friendship, compassion, support, hope, and what has helped us. We ask only that you please try to attend at least three meetings before you make up your mind. Each meeting is different due to the topic, the attendees and the overall atmosphere. With TCF, you'll have a chance to meet others who are making the same journey and you'll discover that special bond that occurs when you are with others who truly understand.

Helpful Hint...



Permission to Backslide

Sometimes after a period of feeling good, we find ourselves back in the old feelings of extreme sadness, despair and anger. This is often the nature of grief, up and down, and it may happen over and over for a time. It happens because we are human - we cannot take in all the pain and the meaning of death at once. So, we let it in, a little at a time.

--from "How to go on living" - Peppers & Knapp

Book In Review...



I Wasn't Ready To Say Goodbye is a book that will touch, comfort, uplift and console. Authors Brook Noel & Pamela Blair, PhD, explore sudden death and offer readers advice on how to endure, survive and grow from the pain and turmoil surrounding their loss. This book is intended for those who are grieving the sudden death of a loved one. Now in our TCF library.

Searching

Closing my eyes, I search for you.
I breathe in the light of love,
and release the tensions
of this physical existence.
I reach with my mind to the spiritual land,
While you watch with an amused smile,
Groping thru the fog and clutter,
I feel for the physical warmth of you...
And "see" you laugh.
"Mom", you say, "you can't feel love with your
hand.
You have to feel it with your heart."
Okay, I think. I can do that...
And once again I breathe...
In with love...out with the physical...
In with love...out with the physical.
"MOM!! Stop trying so hard. Just listen..."
My reply to him pounds in my head
"I AM TRYING!"

I want so much to hear you.
I miss your laugh, your smile.
It has been so long...
In with love...out with the physical...
In with love...out with the physical.
"Mom...I'm here."
I feel his smile
I hear him laugh...
"Who did you THINK you were talking to?"
Silence...
Warmth fills my heart as an
unanticipated smile touches my lips.
"Well... I THOUGHT I was talking to a part of
myself..."
and a soft whisper replies...
"and who more than your son is a part of you?"
Breathe...
in with love...
out with the physical...
In with love...out with the physical...
--Author unknown Portland TCF newsletter



The space between us.
It's about the light in your smile
Finding its way into mine,
And the fire in your eyes
Setting aflame my soul.
With love.
With compassion.
With goodness.
With hope.
It's about you
Your legacy, your light
Your name, your memory,
And love that never dies.
You left me better.
You left me braver.
You left me kinder.
You left me with the best parts of you.
--by Lexi Behrntd, October 6, 2016
<http://www.scribblesandcrumbs.com/2016/10/06/its-not-about-forgetting/>

But it Hurts....Differently

There is no way to predict how you will feel.
The reactions of grief are not like recipes, with
given ingredients, and certain results.
Each person mourns in a different way.
You may cry hysterically, or
you may remain outwardly controlled, showing
little emotion.
You may lash out in anger against your family and
friends, or
you may express your gratitude for their concern
and dedication.
You may be calm one moment – in turmoil the
next.
Reactions are varied and contradictory.
Grief is universal.
At the same time it is extremely personal.
Heal in your own way.
--Rabbi Earl A. Grollman, *Living When a Loved
One Has Died*

It's Not about Forgetting

It's not about forgetting,
Or acting like the scars aren't there,
Or trying not to remember your face.
Or the curve of your smile.
It's not about avoiding
The pain and ache,
The memories I'll never hold,

Working It Out

In grief it seems my tasks are three:
To rethink my faith so it will last,
To live in today and not the past,
But hardest of these jobs to me:
To make sense out of absurdity.
--from *Rachel's Cry A Journey Through Grief* by
Richard A. Dew, M.D.



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

Josue
Born: 3/04 Died: 6/07
Mother: Elizabeth Centeno

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 Albarez

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 Trilegi &
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

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

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

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

Bettina Mia Embry
Born: 8/65 Died: 4/22
Parents: Larry & Elena Bruns

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

Robert Justin Fields
Born: 1/00 Died: 1/22
Parents: Loree & Bob Fields

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

Bryce Patrick Fisher
Born: 10/86 Died: 8/21
Mother: Nancy Goodson

Miles Andrew Gallas
Born: 2/89 Died: 3/21
Mother: Denise Gallas

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

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

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



Our Children Remembered



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

John Paul Mc Nicholas
Born: 12/89 Died: 11/20
Parents: John & Leeann
Mc Nicholas

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jesse Hernandez
Born: 2/90 Died: 11/22
Mother: Joann Hernandez

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reyna Joanne Monje
Born: 9/98 Died: 4/21
Mother: Debbie Trutanich

Jason Christopher Jenkins
Born: 4/86 Died: 11/20
Parents: Alvin & Caprice
Jenkins



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Natalie Rose Nevarez
Born: 5/90 Died: 11/14
Parents: Gregg and Alison
Nevarez

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

Steven Thomas Pack
Born: 8/91 Died: 3/20
Parents: Tom & Lisa Pack

Lilly Parker
Born: 12/15 Died: 1/17
Mother: Nicole Kawagish
Father: J.D. Parker

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 Puliselich
Born: 1/75 Died: 1/18
Mother: Maria Puliselich
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

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

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

Nicholas M Sinclair
Born: 1/80 Died: 2/22
Mother: Suzanne Sinclair

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

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

Jamie Taus
Born: 5/85 Died: 5/21
Sister: Jackie Taus
Mother: Susan Taus

**Our Children Remembered**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Carlos Valdez
Born: 10/90 Died: 1/12
Parents: Antonia & Refugio Valdez

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

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

Christopher Zuchero
Born: 5/85 - Died: 5/22
Parents: Mike & Shelly Rudeen

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

* 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.

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

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...**Denial**

I live life in denial
It's the only way to go
If I had to live it honestly
My feelings I must show.

In denial you're away from home
On some secluded land
Vacationing along the beach
Enjoying sun and sand
You are out on an adventure
You are learning a career
And until you've learned your lessons
I continue to wait here
In denial you have taken work
And now live out of state
And though I'm desperate to see you
I can only sit and wait
You're preparing for your future
For your journey to begin
But without communication
I don't know where I fit in
In denial you are busy
There are many plans to make
You'll come on holidays
Or when you get a break
But the months just keep on passing
And the holidays come round
And although I do expect you
You are nowhere to be found
Anniversaries to deal with
The Beginning - when it ended
No cards can come your way
For I have nowhere to send them
There are times when I see your picture
And I forget that you are gone
I have to stop and make it real
You've been gone for so long
When reality comes crashing in
There's none of the above
Just me still here just waiting
Without you to share my love
My denial is not permanent
I've been there and I find
It's a useful place to visit
To protect my heart and mind
--memory of my brother, John F.
Campbell on the 2nd anniversary of
his farewell. John, remember I am
keeping my love for you in a special
place until we meet again.
Your loving sister,
Laura Williams

For Grandparents...



11 Years Past And Starting Over Again

My son, Paul, at the age of 19 died 11 years ago in an automobile crash and just three months ago my 18-year old nephew, Matthew, died in a horrible incident. At the time my son died, Matthew was only 7 years old. At that young age, it was Matthew who helped me through some of my darkest moments. It was this little boy to whom I could talk about his older cousin, Paul, and not have to pretend that it didn't hurt so much. His child-like questions were fresh and to the point and it allowed me the freedom to speak the truth without feeling I would be upsetting someone by my response.

It was Matthew who helped me decorate my son's grave the first Christmas without him and also the second Christmas. As I stood over my son's grave, this little boy delightfully decorated the grave with colored tinsel, flowers and other items and he was so proud of himself as he shuffled around and around until everything was perfect to him. As I looked over his shoulder I could see that this wasn't the prettiest decorated gravesite, but it was adorned colorfully with his loving hands and that made it more special to me than any other. I thanked God especially that day for sending me someone so special when I was helpless and hopeless those first Christmas holiday seasons. It dawned on me as I was watching Matthew decorate the gravesite that young children possess such magic that as adults sometimes we cannot see. All I could see was the sadness over the loss of my own child and all Matthew could see was the beauty of his work and how proud it made him to do something special for his Uncle Paul.

Now my heart breaks all over again as I watch my sister suffer the same loss as mine. Watching her travel the road as a grief stricken parent takes me back to those years when I too traveled that same road. Someone once said, "What can't be cured, must be endured." Bereaved parents' hearts can never be cured and made whole again, but we can endure our trials and tribulations and grow with the help of family, friends, coworkers and even strangers who reach out to one another. This is called "hope" and is what will sustain us through years to come.

During this holiday season, may someone give you hope and understanding and help you along your hard journey and may God send you someone special to decorate your child's resting place. This may not come in the form of decorating a gravesite, but rather a phone call, a card, or a prayer from someone who loved your child.

May God richly bless each and every one of you.

Dedicated to the Memory of Matthew Henson,
from Aunt Debbie
Debbie Michael, TCF, Anne Arundel Co, MD

From Our Members...



I recently came across this article and remembered how my grief therapist recommended that for own safety and the safety of others, we think about and incorporate the suggestions below into our daily lives while grieving. I remember how I didn't think it applied to me. But soon I realized how many of the suggestions could be valuable while I was "not all there." I hope you see yourselves in similar scenarios as I did. Submitted by Linda Curtis

Safety Issues In Grief

During early grief, we are preoccupied, distracted, and forgetful. We lose our cars in parking lots, forget pots cooking on the stove and are careless with sharp objects. We are prone to dropping things and falling, all of which make us vulnerable to injury. Routine activities like driving a car now require extra diligence to ensure safety.

Driving While Grieving (DWG)

Shortly after returning to work following our daughter Kandy's death, I parked my car in the faculty parking lot and walked the short block and a half to my building. As I walked, I realized I had been driving more than an hour and had no memory of having made the trip. There I was in a different time and place and didn't know how I got there. I only knew of my actions after I parked the car. Oh, what has happened to my memory? This is scary, I thought.

At my next The Compassionate Friends (TCF) meeting, I shared my driving experience with the group. Kay responded, "If you think that's bad, listen to this. I was driving along and suddenly

realized I had no idea where I was going. In a state of panic, I pulled the car over to the side of the road. I was in full sobbing mode. After crying for I don't know how long, I got myself together, turned around and drove back home. I stayed home until my husband could drive me where I needed to go."

Barbara, a friend of mine, shared with me how she sideswiped two parked cars when she was driving along a busy street. Another friend spoke of how she rolled through a stop sign, realizing only later the red sign meant she should have stopped. You might have your own tale of driving woes. We all agreed that we were fortunate that we didn't hurt ourselves or anyone else. Suffice to say, DWG, as I call it, is not a traffic violation yet but can be dangerous to our health.

Recently, I read that driving while grieving (DWG) is as deadly as driving while intoxicated (DWI).

Sharing these stories made me realize the importance of developing strategies for grieving parents and siblings to become mindful in our daily activities. A couple of things helped me when driving during that first year. I wrote a note to myself about where I was going and taped it to my instrument panel in the car. I also learned to keep the radio turned off because a favorite song or remark on the radio could trigger emotions and blinding tears. It helped me to have tissues handy because the tears always seemed to come when I was driving.

It is advantageous to limit driving in the early months. When necessary, it is preferable to seek a ride with a friend or use public transportation.

In and Around the Home

One evening as I was cleaning up after dinner, I scraped leftovers into the garbage disposal. I pushed the food into the disposal with my right hand and reached with my left hand and turned on the disposal. The grinding sound of the motor brought me to my senses. Only then did I realize how dangerous it was to turn on the disposal while mindlessly putting in food.

Another safety issue involves the use of sharp instruments during food preparation. Take time to use the cutting board and only pick up a knife by its handle. A friend shared with me her unsafe cooking experience. "One day I was cooking, not sure what, but I forgot about it. When I smelled something burning, I was still oblivious to what was

happening. It was only when I got to the kitchen and found the wall near the range singed from the heat that I realized what had happened. The pan was burned dry, and the food turned into a crisp. 'Oh no!' In my absentmindedness, I nearly set the place on fire!"

All of us agree; forgetfulness is serious business.

When cooking, it is important to avoid leaving the pot unattended. If you have to go to another room, turn off the burner. A kitchen timer can be a good cooking reminder when carried with you if you leave the kitchen.

When cooking with oil in a skillet, never exit the room before taking the skillet off the burner. Burns are another danger in the kitchen. Always remember to use potholders when handling hot pots and pans. By the same token, keep pot and pan handles turned away from the outer edges of the stove, where we can bump them.

To ensure safety, in and around the home it is necessary to mindfully focus on one task at a time.

In our fast-paced world, we must avoid the tendency to multitask. Mindfulness is the process of bringing one's attention to the experience occurring in the present moment. Doing one thing at a time and doing so mindfully will help ensure we act in a safe and secure manner. A discussion of mindfulness is beyond the scope of this article, but I recommend a Google search for information on developing mindfulness.

Falls

When using a step stool/ladder to retrieve items from high places or to replace a light bulb, always think safety. Choose one with a hand support to help maintain your balance. Don't use a chair to reach high places, especially one with wheels.

Suzanne said she puts a long strip of tape on areas and items where she had a prior injury. When she sees the tape, it alerts her to proceed cautiously. This advice is good for seniors as well. Spills on tile floors also increase the risk of slipping and falling.

Distraction can also make us vulnerable on our feet. We need to exercise care when walking from room to room if there are throw rugs on the floor. Additionally, we need to beware of door facings and furniture placement. Broken toes are a common injury, as we age, even when we are



not grieving. We can wear closed-toe shoes to protect our toes and feet.

It is equally important to exercise care in crossing streets and highways. Carefully look both ways and cross only when the light says go. Remember passing cars approach quickly.

Carrying and lifting heavy objects increases our risk for back injury. When lifting something heavy, move close to the object, bend the knees, grasp the item firmly and lift with the legs (abdomen and buttocks), not the back.

Safety issues are equally applicable to the workplace. Depending on the nature of the job, the work environment may impose its set of risks for accidents and injuries. We must exercise care when using machinery, chemicals, and bulky items. In short, everyday activities pose increased risks to us when we are in acute grief.

In summary, grief causes us to be distracted and forgetful, predisposing us to serious injury. We are vulnerable to accidents while driving, walking and cooking. When we act mindfully, we stay in the present moment and focus on the one task at hand thus lowering our risk for accidents and injury.
--Coralease Ruff

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, the people and topics change and need to talk or share fluctuates between each meeting. 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. To participate in our Zoom meetings, contact Leo at (310) 283-6739 or Liccia79@gmail.com for the link.

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

Tributes must be in by the 1st of the month preceding your child's birthday month or at the prior meeting. (Example: Oct. first for Nov. 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 our 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.

We also welcome "book reviews". If you have read a book which was helpful on your grief journey, please let us know. Send book reviews and other articles or poems for submission to the newsletter to Lynntcf@aol.com Also, a friendly reminder, if you have books at home you have checked out and are finished reading them, please remember to return them to our library.

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 if you include your name. 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.

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) 963-4646 to update by phone. You can also e-mail Lynn at 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, sibling or grandchild 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.

Connie Licciardone (chapter co-leader)..(310) 292-5381
Bonnie Mantyla (chapter co-leader)..... (310) 530-8489
Lori Galloway..... (760) 521-0096
Linda Zelik..... (310) 370-1645
Mary Sankus..... (310) 648-4878
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 3rd 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

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 (310) 483-8313.

Other Grief Support Websites...

thetearsfoundation.org
 goodgriefresources.com
 bereavedparentsusa.org
 healingafterloss.org
 survivorsof suicide.com
 taps.org (military death)
 save.org (suicide/depression)
 pomc.com (families of murder victims)
 grasphelp.org (substance abuse deaths)
 www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub (Suicide)
 Griefwords.com (for grandparents)



childloss.com
 griefwatch.dom
 opentohope.com
 webhealing.com
 alivealone.org
 angelmoms.com

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: Leo & Connie Licciardone and Jarmo & Bonnie Mantoya
 CHAPTER ZOOM HOSTS: Connie & Leo Licciardone
 NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines
 PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks
 TREASURER: Kristy Konopasek
 WEBSITE: Leo Licciardone

Steering Committee Members:

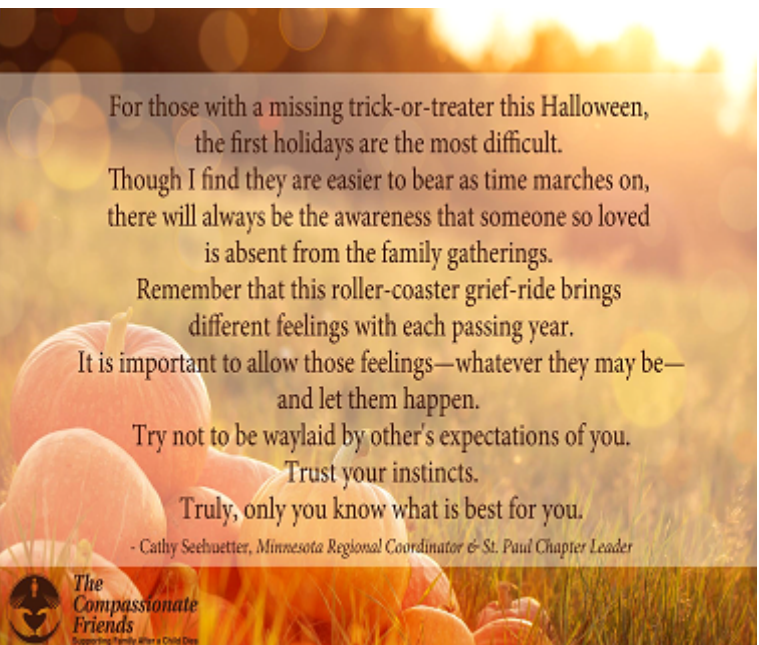
Linda & Joe Zelik	Lori Galloway
Marilyn Nemeth	Crystal Henning
Bill Matasso	Lynn Vines
Nancy Lerner	Kristy Mueller
Connie & Leo Licciardone	Kitty Edler
Sandra & Eddie Myricks	Susan Kass
Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla	

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 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





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 Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. chapter.

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

In loving memory of Jillian Nicole Katnic, March 1987 to October 2018. It has been five long years without you here with us. We miss you more than ever.
Love 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 _____ From _____
Tribute _____

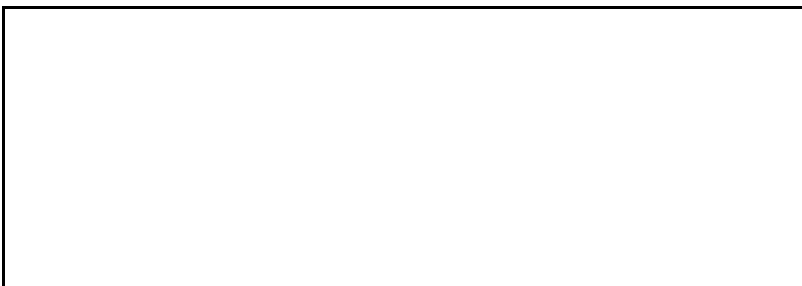
We are always working a month in advance...To include your donation in the next newsletter, we must receive it by the first of the month, other wise it will appear in the following issue.

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

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT 3223
Torrance CA 90503



– Return Service Requested –



October 2023

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.

©2023 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.