



The Compassionate Friends

South Bay/LA Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

March 2025 ISSUE

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

OUR NEXT MEETING

will be March 6th, 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. → Park In EAST lot. Follow path to back patio. Meetings are held at the **EAST** end of the church. Patio Meeting room is 101 classroom. Follow signs. (Last door, first floor.)

--Please remember to park in the EAST 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 March 6th meeting will start with "Learning To Live As A Bereaved Parent, Sibling or Grandparent"

To participate in our Zoom meetings, contact Leo at (310) 283-6739 or Liccia79@gmail.com for the link.

The TCF Friday Lunch Group offers you a drop-in- place to talk about your grief every Friday at 1. In March we will meet at Black Bear Diner, 24021 Hawthorne Bl, Torrance. All are invited. Please call (310) 963-4646 to let us know you are coming.

For a free Picture Button of your child, call Connie at (310) 292-5381.

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The Thursday March 6th meeting will start with "Learning To Live As A Bereaved Parent, Sibling or Grandparent" After a death of a close family member we need to "learn how" to go on! This learning curve will affect the rest of our lives. Death re-defines our lives. It makes us examine our pain levels and survival techniques. It makes us take a hard look at our inner beliefs, questions our thought processes, our values, and life lessons. We are forced to learn many different ways to mourn and grow. Even with time we do not "get over" the death of a loved one, but rather we learn how to integrate that loss into our lives. We invite you to join us as we ask questions and share what we have learned on our own paths through grief.

Reflection On Loss

Growth from the experience of loss is not a topic easily approached when one is suffering the death of a loved one. We know intellectually that loss is a part of life, but few of us are willing to think about it until it happens.

Most human beings will experience loss in their lifetime. Death can happen in an instant or be a slow process, but it will become our reality at some point. The pain of our grief often overshadows the other side of loss, which is the opportunity for emotional and spiritual growth. Death is our most profound teacher because it lets us know with great certainty that we are not in control, no matter how much we plan for the future. Loss allows us to understand the significance of living in the moment and appreciating life as it is.

There are many aspects of grief work that help us explore our feelings and transition to a new reality. The loss becomes part of our life story and can lead to a higher level of understanding and compassion for others. Opportunities and experiences may present themselves that take life in a different direction. The willingness to move on does not mean we still don't miss our loved ones, but it reflects a decision to embrace life again. Acknowledging the truth about what happened is critical to growth, but the choice becomes ours as we come to understand that we still have much to learn from the experience of living.

Life is constantly changing, and we cannot control that; however, we can reflect on what was,

accept our loss and move forward to a positive relationship with life at this moment.

-- Jill Bellacicco

Triggers That Call Their Name

On the day my son died, something shifted in my soul, something deep inside my being got rewired. As a newly bereaved parent you anticipate that the affects and symptoms of shock will eventually wear off as reality arm wrestles for control of our conscious thought. Shock eventually turns to a functioning numbness and we struggle to survive each day knowing that our child is dead, and that this is for real. The first year anniversary date looms in the future like threatening clouds in the distance. It seems every thought is imbued with thoughts of our child. How will I ever I survive this?

More anniversary dates, holidays, birthdays, and special days will come and pass, each with their sting of pain. As we move through the years, our directed conscious thought eventually does seem to return to a somewhat functional level and for all intents and purposes it appears we have healed and moved on ("He is doing so much better; I am so glad he is moving on with his life; I don't know how he does it.").

Fortunate people that have never lost a child, have no idea of the turbidity of emotions that lay roiling beneath the surface of our everyday persona that we wear. The emotions are always there and can be activated by our own directed thought or by unconscious reaction of stimuli that I call 'sense triggers'. Every one of our 6 senses can trigger thoughts of our child.

Since the day my son Kelly died, I have felt a milli-second off with the rest of the world. I feel at a subconscious level in my interaction with the world, like I am continually watching a movie with dubbed in dialogue, my mind often wandering to thoughts of my son. It has been 17 years and I am feeling joy again in my life, but my thoughts always stray to Kelly. This is not directed thought nor is it subconscious thought either, his name, his image, our journey, and the pain of his loss all flashes by in a milli-second of time through my conscious thought even as I write these words.

To others we may appear normal and even be engaged in intent conversation, driving, walking, at work, at play, in line at the movies. We carry on our normal routine day as best we can the rest of



our lives. We do our jobs and pay the bills. But underneath that 'normal routine' persona, there are still receptors for hundreds of triggers that bombard our psyche forever more; a part of the nature of our new universe. Unnoticeable to most, people have no idea how often our thoughts stray to our child. It's no wonder we have short term memory loss and depend on Post-it notes to survive. Right beneath the surface of our external expression we have thoughts of our child hundreds of times a day. From the moment we wake up there will be triggers that bring to mind our children.

I have not kept my son's name hidden away like some dark secret, nor have I built a shrine in his memory. I always keep him by my side. Even though we are in two different spheres of existence we still experience a common journey together. I strive to keep Kelly in my conscious thought by the way I live my life. That is by choice.

I also feel it is important to recognize how often we do think of our child without conscious directed thought. I feel all of our 6 senses have been reprogrammed and sensitized to recognize anything of our child's life and death. Immediately, our thought synapses start firing thoughts of our child into our active consciousness. In the early years of our grief journey these "triggers" are hair triggers and they can initiate tears, anger and even gut wrenching agony in seconds. The first few years are raw survival and everything is a trigger.

What are these triggers? Almost everything in life. The sense of touch: Touching the silky hem of a baby blanket, the rough leather feel of hunting boots, terri cloth jammies, the slimy skin of a frog, the warm forehead of a sick child, the cold wind of winter storm, the hard feel of vinyl on a tightly clenched steering wheel, the scalding burn of cocoa too hot, and endless more can evoke their name.

The sense of smell: The smell of a child coming in out of the cold, the smell of hard work emitted off an old denim jacket, the scent of hair spray, strong perfume or baby powder in the air, their favorite meal cooking from someone else's stove, the smell of a fresh cut Christmas tree, bananas, chocolate, bubblegum, car grease, burning popcorn, burning leaves, drifting sulphur from fireworks, fresh caught fish, fragrant flowers, zillions of olfactory triggers

that can evoke our child's name.

The sense of sight: The sight of any child or person their age or that resembles them at anytime in their life, or even how they might appear if they would have aged. The sight of a hospital, driving by a cemetery, sighting a hearse, a funeral procession, a flower spray, a sunset, a sunrise, a road side marker, a billboard, a red Volkswagen, a Harley, or a school bus. Television shows, movies, a lunch box on the counter, a puppy, a tabby cat, a turkey, a penny on the sidewalk, again countless triggers launched when our eyes are open.

The sense of hearing: Hearing a siren, a telephone ring late at night, a baby's cry, brakes screeching, the ding-ding of a heart monitor, the overhead announcement of a Code Blue, Pomp and Circumstance played in June, the Pachelbel's Canon in D, Amazing Grace, My Country Tis of Thee. "Good night sweetie", "I love you pumpkin", "get home early", "is dinner ready?", "Where are my shoes"? Hearing terms such cancer, malignant, SIDS, SADS, AIDS, tumor, aneurism, blood work, test results, MRI, CT scan, Spinal tap, prednisone, police report, overdose, suicide, and murder. Hearing "there's been a bad accident", "good evening it's the 6 o'clock news", Christmas carols at the mall, or someone whistling down the hall. Every word, every sound you hear can be a trigger.

The sense of taste: A Dairy Queen blizzard, the taste of tears, warm Kool-Aid, soggy Cheerios, the taste of fear, hamburgers, lasagna, grilled cheese sandwiches dipped in tomato soup, Spaghetti-Os, movie theater popcorn, Chicken McNuggets, or cherry Jell-O. Every taste a potential to trigger a memory of your child.

The 6th sense or psychic sense: You may have vivid dreams of your child, you hear your child, you smell your child, you feel your child, and you can even taste their tears. Call it a dream, a vision, a hallucination, a visitation, a psychic connection, a messenger, connecting experience, ADC, or an Angel hug. For you they are a valid experience. When you hear your porch chimes and feel the breeze caress your warm face on an unusually calm and hot summer day, or hear on the radio Neil Diamond singing "Turn on your Heart Light", our soul hears their name. When you see the dragonfly land on your shoulder, the butterfly on your hand, or smell her perfume in the car, or his

"Grief Attacks"

When grieving we can be going along and everything seems to be okay. Then out of nowhere grief hits full force. These are not set backs, they are a part of the grieving experience.

cologne on the breeze, our soul hears their name. We feel and experience a brief moment of our child. And we relish the visit and thank God for the gift.

We shall all experience the triggers of the 5 senses unless physical limitations prevent us from doing so, and our child will always be in our thoughts without our real control. Not everyone will have a profound experience of the sixth sense but it is rather unusual if you do not. Sometime the signs are just not recognized, trivialized, hidden or ignored.

But our children do reach out to us. They reach out to us not out of fear or loneliness, but out of compassion for our aching heart, they feel its anguish, they taste our tears and hear our screams, and they comfort us when we need it the most. We have we been taught by our society to be afraid of ghosts and to be frightened of things we cannot explain. Society has mystified and cannibalized experiences of the supernatural into a Hollywood experience to entertain and frighten little children. The reality of a true experience of the supernatural is scoffed at, yet every major religion of the world is based on experiences of the supernatural.

A connection to our loved one who has died is real, how it happens, as varied as we are. Seemingly real manifestations of our child can be discernable to one or all of our senses courtesy of our 6th sense and our profound love. Our senses have been heightened to an increased level of awareness to the presence of our beloved child around us. Thoughts of our child who has died will bombard our brain 24/7 for the rest of our lives. Is that really a bad thing?

As you move through the years in your bereavement process you find out there are no pat answers in processing grief, especially in child loss. The journey is as individual as we are and, you do not get over it, you learn to live with it. I accept that, as well as accepting every trigger no matter how painful, that keeps me closer to my son. We cannot run from our thoughts, so we learn to live with them, even encourage them, and that's fine with me. I will just buy lots of Post-it notes and the world will just have to get used to me being just a milli-second off. Love and light,
--Mitch Carmody TCF Atlanta



Time For Renewal

Spring has wrapped us in the glory of floral bounty with flowers, blooming bushes and trees and wild bluebonnets hinting at a renewal. In the gentle rains we have received a sweet cleansing of the spirit. It is spring that gives us hope for the future. As the season changes, we sense the cloak of our grief lifting in tiny increments. Yes, it is uplifting. For those of us who are newly bereaved parents or siblings, discovering a bit of lightness in our grief mantle is so very welcome.

And that is how our grief will be for the rest of our lives. No epiphanies, no giant steps, just a slight lifting each day, a microscopic rebirth of ourselves and a step further into our lives after the death of our child. There are setbacks, of course. The pain is agony in the first year..... brain pain, soul searing pain, physical pain, anxiety and much more seem to rule our days. But each day is a tiny step forward into hope. To enhance our grief journey, we must do grief work. Just as the gardener tends to the soil, fertilizes, gently stimulates tender roots and removes weeds from the flower bed, we must tend to our grief daily.

Throwing out the negative...the guilt, the anger, the anxiety and adding the positive by seeking our solace in our journals, reading, movie choices, spirituality, friendships kept and friendships left behind. In the garden of our psyche, our grief must be tended as if every day is the first day of spring.

And so it is that with springtime comes a reminder of renewal and the grief work we must do to obtain that renewal of spring. Day by day we change; month by month we make note of that change. One day we will be able to see the blossoming of our renewal as we move forward in life with our precious children in our hearts.
--Annette Mennen Baldwin TCF Katy TX

Losing A Child

The loss of a child is always devastating. You're not just losing the person they were, you're also losing the years of promise, hopes, and dreams that lay ahead. The grief can be more intense, the bereavement process harder to navigate, and the trauma more acute.

As a parent, you feel responsible for your child's

health and safety, so the sense of guilt can often be overwhelming. Whether you lost your child in a miscarriage, as an infant, or after they'd grown up and left home, losing a child carries an additional weight of injustice. It feels unnatural for a parent to outlive their child, making it that much harder to find meaning and come to terms with their death.

Losing a child can also put a huge strain your relationship with your spouse or partner and make parenting any surviving children emotionally challenging.

--HelpGuide.org

*...and I will see you
someday again
in the clouds...*

You Will Be Missed

Every Christmas
Every Birthday
Every Mother's Day
You will be missed.
Every Relay for Life
Every family reunion
Every Thanksgiving
You will be missed.
At my graduation
At my wedding
At my children's birth
You will be missed.
At your church
In your home
In our arms
You will be missed.
Yesterday
Today
Tomorrow
Every day
You will be missed.
In our hearts
In our minds
In our souls
You will always be.
-- Amber Hutcheson



TCF Denver/Aurora, CO

Problems Of Survivors of Murdered Children

1. Isolation and helplessness in a world that is seen as hostile and uncaring and that frequently blames

the victim.

2. Feelings of guilt for not having protected the victim.
3. The memory of a mutilated body at the morgue; "How much did my loved one suffer?"
4. Getting back the personal belongings of a murder victim.
5. Sensational and/or inaccurate media coverage.
6. Lack of information.
7. Endless grief.
8. Loss of ability to function on the job, at home or in school, etc.
9. The strain on marriages (frequently resulting in divorce) and the strain on family relationships.
10. Effects on health, faith and values.
11. Effects on other family members, children, friends, co-workers, etc.
12. Indifference of the community, including professionals, to the plight of survivors.
13. Society's attitude regarding murder as a form of entertainment.
14. Financial burden of medical and funeral expenses.
15. Medical expenses for stress-related illnesses and professional counseling for surviving family members.
16. Financial burden of hiring private investigators, etc.
17. Public sympathy for murderers.
18. The feeling that the murderer, if found, gets all the help; survivors of homicide victims have few rights.
19. Outrage about the leniency of the murderer's sentence.
20. Disparities in the judicial system (frequently punishments for property crimes are as great or greater than the crime of taking a human life).
21. Anger over a plea-bargain arrangement/agreement.
22. Frustration at not being allowed inside the courtroom at the time of trial.
23. Unanswered questions about the crime, such as "What happened?" about postponements and continuous delays throughout the trial.
24. Bitterness and loss of faith in the American criminal justice system.
25. After conviction, the long appeals process begins.
26. Constantly reliving your story through the dreaded parole process.

--Parents of Murdered Children pmoc.com



A Letter to My Daughter One Year Later

Dear Katherine,

It's been a year now since you took your life. A year and 7 days to be precise. The truth is nothing is precise in our lives here anymore. Since that time, life goes on, but is a blur of meaningless activity overshadowed by your absence. Time is irrelevant. Day, night, hours – what are they? I struggle to make sense of it all. I struggle to find meaning in anything. It's not that I am not doing things. It's that everything is less since you've been gone.

I've had to forgive everyone. I mean everyone... past and present. For all the hurts along your path...all the failures of humanity I held in my heart, recognizing even while you were still living, their toxicity, but unable to let them go, for in holding them I felt a fuel, a fire to fight for you. But that battle is done now.

Have I forgiven myself for my lack, for my choices, for my failures? God knows. I confess it would be easy to hate for so many reasons, for all you suffered. How many times I can recall specific people or incidents, which were the worst examples of humanity, yet, we had such a measure of grace along the way as well. Often from unlikely places. For that I am grateful. The rest I leave in God's faithful hands.

Hate is too big a burden for anyone to carry. It's taken many down who are stronger than I. Hate and unforgiveness are unacceptable options no matter how justified they appear by the world's standards. You know this already.

I've had to choose forgiveness or die. And though dying certainly holds appeal, if I knew without any doubt I would hold you again, see your beautiful smile, I would wholeheartedly embrace it...and I will in due time, as God determines. In the meantime, I am here. Without you. And everything is wearisome. I mean, this living out days that used to hold hope, meaning and a measure of possibility. The whole world is lacking without you in it. You hold a piece irreplaceable.

Now, we are left asking the question, what next? But more so, the bigger question, why even bother? We also endure the casual remarks of well-meaning people with their inability to grasp the reality we are living. Can they fathom the depth of this loss? No, and may those who cannot fathom it

thank God that they cannot.

I wish we could go back in time, but how far? How many things could we change to secure a different outcome? Was it one thing, or many? If only love was ever enough. You knew you were loved, but this world, it's not easy, it's not kind, and it favors those willing to play by unseen rules that don't always make sense. I've seen what this world has to offer, and I am not impressed. It takes. That's all it can do.

Too many think it's all that matters...all they can see or hope in. But I know that's not true. As you also do.

But you, my dear child...how I miss you, how I miss every moment with you. How I miss you by my side. How I miss you telling me your struggles. I miss hearing your dreams. And all the hopes you held close but dared not speak. I miss our heated arguments, our debates over big things and small. I miss your brilliance! How I miss the person you were and would have become this side of eternity. For better or worse. I miss how you challenged me ... Lord, how you challenged me! How often you challenged and befuddled many. I can see now how right you were, and sometimes how wrong you were, and how you knew that too.

How I miss your hugs. I am trying to remember the blessings we shared, for they were many. I am trying to hang onto you in a million little ways. In spontaneous drives to your favorite places, in the sunsets, in the clouds, in the quietness of the days. Do you know how often I think of you? It's like you are with me all the time...like a whisper I can't quite hear, like a song I want to remember, like the full moon in winter, like an ache in my heart that never relents. Every minute I live without you feels like a desert. Like I am gasping for air. How I wish I could breathe in your hair, gaze into your earnest brown eyes...just one more time. How I wish I could reassure you, just one more time, cause you to laugh, share the same space with you one more time...and forever.

My love, you were my courage, my strength, my purpose. You gave me a reason to be and to believe, and without you, I struggle to see. But who can argue with God?

So, I go on. I'll continue to hold my place by grace and by faith and by the One who is both faithful and incomprehensible. I miss you beyond words...in a million different ways. Until I see you again, I remain, Your loving mother

--Dawn Paoletta TCF Providence RI chapter

Grief is Like Crocs

I have very tiny feet, like I'm almost 30-years-old and I can comfortably wear a women's 5 ½ or 6. It's sometimes quite frustrating to find shoes because stores usually only order a few boxes in those sizes so once they're gone, they're really gone. I also struggle to find shoes without some Disney character or pop singer on them.

My daughter, Sophie, also had tiny feet. She wore her super cute 12-18 month shoes basically from 12 months until she died at two-and-a-half. Her FAVORITE shoes were her navy Crocs. Whenever we were leaving the house, the Crocs had to be on her feet. She'd bring them to me every time . . . and was always disappointed if I wanted her to wear much cuter shoes. She loved them so much that we buried her in them. Well, we buried her in new navy Crocs because I kept her beloved, well worn-in pair for myself.

I've decided that grief is like Crocs. Crocs are ugly. They feel weird and uncomfortable when you first put them on because they have those bumps on the inside. You inevitably will get a blister from that rubber strap going across the back of your heel. Yes, they come in all kinds of colors and designs but, no matter what you do to them, they're still ugly. Even if you add the cute little characters that you pop into the tops holes, they just still aren't that appealing. Yet you wear them, as if they were a gift from a relative and you don't want to hurt their feelings even though you really want to exchange them for a pair you actually would pick for yourself.

Grief is the same way. It's uncomfortable and ugly when you first put it on. There are bumps and it will rub a blister on you that leaves you limping and feeling raw. No matter what your grief looks like or what you do with it, it's still ugly. You can cry, rage, ignore it, go crazy, stay busy, or lay in bed for days . . . they're all ugly. Yet, you wear it and the Lord wears it with you. He is wearing the Crocs, too. He feels the blisters. He is the Band-Aid that will soothe the raw skin. "Surely He has borne our grief and carried our sorrows," Isaiah 53:4.

Crocs, like grief, are not my first choice and I'd exchange them in a heartbeat. Nevertheless, all new shoes have to be broken in. When you wear Crocs for awhile, you eventually start to get comfortable in them. You can bear the bumps and



your skin is a little thicker so a blister can't form as easily. You still don't really like them and you still think they're ugly, but you start to appreciate them.

No one chooses the life of a grieving parent. God didn't ever want that as part of our lives. Death was never supposed to be in the picture. The world broke long ago and our Father took on the role of the ultimate grieving parent so He could help us in our grief and promise us an eternity with Him and our lost children. Matthew 5:4 says "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."

He comes alongside us in our ugly grief and raw hurt and he helps us break in the Crocs.

--by Shelby Skiles www.herviewfromhome.com

Newly Bereaved...

To The Newly Bereaved

As the years pass, we see new members come into the chapter, and we try to help them with their grief as we progress in our own. Over and over again I have seen newly bereaved parents come to their first meeting totally devastated and convinced that their lives are over. Through the months (and years) I have seen them struggle and suffer and try to find meaning in their lives again. And they do! Through all the anger, pain and tears, somehow the human spirit is able to survive and flower again in a new life – perhaps a changed life and possibly a sadder one, but a stronger one nevertheless.

We feel so weak and crushed when our beloved children die, but I know – because I have seen it countless times in the years I've been involved with The Compassionate Friends – that we can make it together. When you walked through the door for the first meeting, you were frightened and nervous; but with that step you made a statement about your life. With that first step through the door, you said you wanted to try; you wanted to find a reason for living again, that you weren't willing to be swallowed by your grief. You wanted to go forward, and those first steps into The Compassionate Friends began your journey.

The journey will be a long one, for you loved your child with all your heart and soul. When that child died, a part of you was ripped away. It takes a long time to repair that large hole. The journey will not always be steady or constant; there will be many setbacks. Those of us who have taken the journey before you can assure you that, while there

may be no rainbow at the other end, there is indeed “light at the end of the tunnel.” We want to help you as we were helped, but in the beginning and in the long run, you must help yourself.

You have to want to get better, to talk about your loss, to struggle through the grief. We will listen, suggest, share and laugh and cry with you; and we hope, at this time next year, you’ll be several steps along in your personal journey through grief...Then you can begin to help others.

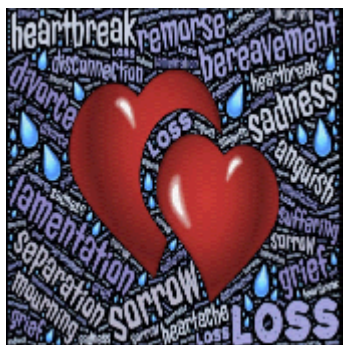
--Karen Schendel TCF Houston, TX

Seasoned Grievors...

What I have Learned in Ten Years

In the ten years since my 18 year old son passed away, I have learned a lot of things that I wish I didn’t have to know.

1. The club no one wants to be a part of, Parents Who Have Lost Kids, has far more members than I would have thought. I meet people pretty regularly who have lost children— whether they are young or adult kids, or somewhere in between. I have met them right after it has happened, and years down the line. What they both have in common is that it always hurts.
2. Emotions always ebb and flow. There are times when it’s easier to talk about. There are times when talking about it hurts so much that you just wish people would go away. And sometimes you don’t even know how you’re going to feel about talking about it until you’re right in the middle of it. I have learned that since emotions are like the ocean—rising and falling like the tides, it’s important to be aware of where they are at all times.
3. Talking about it is so important. Everyone should have someone they can talk about the important stuff with. Everyone can’t handle hearing about our kids who passed away. It makes some people uncomfortable. That’s ok. It’s important to find your people who can handle it.
4. When someone’s child is going through something that mine didn’t get to, I compare. I’m sorry, but I do. Recently a friend’s son got married. I cried when I looked at the photos, because mine didn’t get to that point. I didn’t get to have a mother/son dance. And yes, I’m happy for you, but I’m also envious. I would give anything to have



those moments. I have learned to love the little moments that aren’t even mine.

5. I have learned that I really just need to be a mom to a boy. I still have my daughter. But over the last few years, I have sort of become “mommish” towards some of the young’uns in my life. It just happens. I imagine it’s much the same as a mama dog whose puppies get taken too soon.

6. There are days when it’s hard to understand why the world hasn’t stopped with you. You look online at your friends, and they’re still out there having fun and living life. They are still having birthdays and smiling with their family. I think we all love that for them. But somehow it seems so strange to see people be so happy when you’re so sad. Life goes on.

7. People will forget. It isn’t that they are trying to be cruel. But when others’ lives go on, they don’t think about things that didn’t affect them the same way as they affected you.

8. The best thing you can do for yourself when you’re in the throws of your emotions is feel them. Then, get up and move. Do the things you’re supposed to do. If you stay in your bed for too long, you’ll sink deeper and deeper into your depression. You have to push through.

9. Ten years goes by so fast. You can’t take anything or anyone for granted. Tell your people you love them. Say what’s on your mind. Laugh. Cry. Feel your true emotions. In a few years you might just look back and wish you had said something, but you don’t have the chance now. It’s important, because you may never have a moment to make things right again. That next movie or meal or opportunity to tuck someone in may never come again.

10. Hugs help. You can really never go wrong with a hug, even when you don’t know the right thing to say.

--Leslie Evans www.thegriefftoolbox.com

Looking Forward...

It Seems like Eternity

Is it a moment or an eternity? There are days I sit in silence as something deep within me screams out for one more day to find you sitting by my side. There are days where I struggle for my next breath. There are times I find myself having conversations with the sky because I have so much to say but you are not here to listen. There are days where I

am lost in the emptiness since you've been gone.

There are days where memories overcome me and storms rage deep within as I struggle to understand why this life gives us love and then forces us to let it go.

There are days where I look to heaven and wonder if you are there looking down on the life you left behind. There are days where I wonder what do you hear and what do you see and what do you feel.

There are days where the rain fills my face and days where I smile when I recall all the happiness you left in my heart.

There are days I feel your presence and I know that you there. There are days I mourn your passing and days where I celebrate your life.

There are days I see your reflection in the face in the mirror that is looking back at me and then there are days where I struggle to become half the image of the life you were.

So much life that has gone before me and so much life that has yet to come. Sometimes I curse this world and sometimes I bow my head and give thanks for all the blessings that have been bestowed upon me.

I know I was blessed to have you in my life. I know that there is a greater purpose than the air we breathe and I know your life was more than the presence before me and that you had other canvases to paint. So I gently catch my breath as I breathe one more day without you.

I try to live a life of purpose because you would expect nothing less. Years have passed and you are always in my thoughts and in my heart. Life will cease but love lives on long after the candle has been extinguished.

I breathe because you lived and nourished my soul with the seeds of hope that you planted in my life. In loving memory of my son, Chris...

--Lucille Valliere

Friends And Family...

Cry

Do not demand that constant smile from me.

I know you are uneasy with my tears.

I need to cry.

Please do not go away.

I promise you that I will smile again.

Tomorrow I will be as light as air.

But hold me now and let my sorrow be.

Just for today, this moment let me cry.

--by Sascha

Book In Review...



Suicide of a Child for parents whose child died by suicide by Adina Wroblewski. Goes into details about victimization, social stigma, guilt, anger, history and recovery. The main thing for you to remember is You are Not to blame for the death of your child. The decision for death has to belong to your child, not you.



Helpful Hint...

"What gets me up and going each day is knowing that how I live my life and treat others will be the only reflection and definition of my son that people who never met him will ever get to see.

--Tanya Pearce



Welcome...

As members of The Compassionate Friends, we understand what you are experiencing. Like you, we have also lost a dearly beloved child. We share your pain, and while every journey through grief is unique, we are here to support you. We welcome you to attend our meetings and see for yourself how helpful they can be.

Wish I Could

Wish I could live in yesterday

Today's pain seems so great.

Tomorrows start without you

Missing you is such a weight.

Time is different when we grieve

Separated now in two parts

The yesterdays in our arms

The tomorrows in our hearts

I will face all of my todays

In the same way as tomorrow

With love and joy in my heart

Even while I ache in sorrow

And when my todays are done

And tomorrows are no more

I will be running to your smile

As you wait at heaven's door

--Tanya Lord www.thegriefftoolbox.com



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 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

Alexandra Chi
Born: 2/03 Died: 12/24
Father: David Chi Parents

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

Nicolas Frank DiMarco
Born: 9/89 Died: 9/22
Father: Frank DiMarco

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

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

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

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

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

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

Brian Daniel Edelman
Born: 5/86 Died: 8/23
Father: Ray Edelman

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
Brunns

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Zacary Hyun Joon Jeong
Born: 12/24 Died: 12/24
Parents: Ken Jeong &
Cydne Shapiro

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lindsay Nicole Pollack
Born: 6/94 Died: 11/23
Mother: Daphne Carroll-
Pollack

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

David Reade
Born: 4/72 Died: 9/23
Brother of Bobby Reade



Ronald Reade II
Born: 9/69 to 8/23
Brother of Bobby Reade

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

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

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

Christian Saylor
Born: 10/90 Died: 10/24
Parents: Jeff & Coco
Saylor

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

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

Julie Catherine Thomas
Born: 1/80 Died: 9/2023
Mother: Mary Thomas

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

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

Mark T. Vasquez
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/11
Parents: Manuel & Blanca
Vasquez Jr.

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

Adam Michael Wechsler
Born: 3/2003 Died: 11/23
Father: Zach Wechsler

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

Ryan Yorty
Born: 4/81 Died: 5/84
Mother: Denise Gonzales

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

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

Vincent Zuniga
Born: 1/99 - Died: 10/24
Parents: Shonnie Allen &
Eddie Zungia

* 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...



Reflections

With the death of my sister come some painful realizations; that life isn't always fair or predictable; that sometimes even my best still isn't good enough; and that from the day of her death, the happy events in my life would always be tinged with sadness.

Despite the pain and loss, death has also left me with some valuable lessons and precious gifts. As a result of my sister's death, I have a greater appreciation of life and a greater compassion for those who hurt. I have learned to be a survivor and to have a successful career and productive life in the face of tremendous grief and loss. I have been gifted with good friends and special people to help me through the rough times. But most of all, I have been given the gift of time—time to heal and time to replace those painful memories of death with priceless memories of my sister's life.

--Cathy Schanberger

Siblings

More than a thousand days and nights have passed since we last danced in the same place, in the same dimension.

Nearly three years since I last heard your laugh, saw your smile, could give you a hug, and know that I could get a hug back.

Your absence has altered those who knew you, who loved you, and still do.

Laughter is harder to come by, when pained

expressions, and wretched kvetching stand in the way.

The joy that followed you as you danced, sang, enlightened and engaged, still permeates the world over.

The children, whose lives you aspired to nurture, carry your wisdom with you in their smiles.

I too, try to carry your wisdom, when I try to nurture and educate.

Your weightless footsteps still dance among us, hidden within the wind,

on wings of butterflies, and the ladybugs you would catch on warm summer days.

More than a thousand days and nights have passed since we said goodbye and goodnight in this world.

I yearn for decades of time, to help make up for the time we have lost together.

~ Greg Williams, In loving memory of his sister, Kara Lynn Williams



For Grandparents...

Please Don't Tell Me To Move On...

I have a Master's Degree in grief. Not a real one, but believe me, I should have an honorary one. And one thing I know for sure. Grieving stinks. All of a sudden you're invited to a party you never wanted to attend. But there are no balloons, no confetti, the only thing being thrown around are your emotions.

There are no tears of joy, but plenty of tears nonetheless. And what makes things worse are some of the things people will say. "You need to move on." If someone lost a leg, would we expect them to walk anyway? If they lost an arm, would we put a bag of groceries in their arms and still expect them to act as if nothing had happened? Moving on implies that the person is able to. Sometimes they are not. Pure and simple.

The truth is we've been fed a bunch of myths regarding grief. Books have been written with tidy little formulas and time frames. The problem is grief doesn't fit nicely into little boxes. Grief is messy. "I know how you feel." Even if we've gone through the exact same circumstance, because we're all different people, we don't really know how someone else feels. When someone says this, it takes the focus off of the griever and onto the other person.

"You can always have another child." This was actually told to a friend of mine who lost an infant.

Brené Brown has done extensive research on empathy. She said when we are talking to someone and we use the words “at least...” we are minimizing the person’s pain. We are silver-lining their cloud. And when that happens, the person who is hurting no longer feels free in their feelings.

I have found that even those who have faith still can say things that are not helpful to the griever. Perhaps its just that everyone wants the person to go back to how they were before this death. But the truth is, they will never be the same. When you lose someone who was a big part of your life, you are forever changed.

Grief on both sides: When a friend or family member loses a loved one, you will also feel loss because the griever is changed. You miss the person they used to be. You miss interacting like you used to. So, in that sense, you are actually grieving too. But if we would just remember that the griever didn’t choose any of this, maybe it would be enough to get us to pause before anything is said. Job’s comforters did okay till they opened their mouths. But we still have to give them credit for showing up. Sometimes people subtract themselves from the lives of those who are grieving. This results in the griever feeling abandoned on top of feeling great loss.

What should you say? What does a person in grief need to hear? What would help? Let me just say, there are no perfect words. But there are three things you can give the person in grief, three things that may help tremendously.

1. Give them your presence. You don’t have to say anything, but just showing up says tons. Especially if you come with no expectations.
2. Give them grace. Let them talk if they need to, let them sit in silence if that will help. Just accept where they are . And if they pull back, don’t take it personally. It isn’t about you. They are just treading water.
3. Give them your ears. When they are ready to talk, let them talk. Let them cry. Grievers fear their loved one will be forgotten. Maybe you can share a memory you have of their special person. Or maybe you could encourage them to share one. They will never run out of things to say about him/her; they just need someone to share it with.

Loss Life has many losses. My brother and I are the only two remaining people in our family. I have lost my sister to domestic violence, one brother to cancer, another brother to a heart attack. I’ve had a miscarriage, lost my father when I was 24 and my

mother when I was 16. Truly, one of the hardest losses was that of my sweet granddaughter, Olivia, who was just 14 months old.

They say a parent should never have to bury a child. The same can be said about a grandparent. Not only do I grieve Livie, but I watch the pain my son and his wife experience, as well as her siblings.

Grief is excruciating. There are no easy answers when those we love are hurting. But we can show up and give support to those we love who are grieving.

There’s a story told of an elderly man who lost his wife. While the neighbors gathered to pay their respects, Johnnie asked if he could go next door for a little while. The parents looked over and saw their son sitting next to their friend and neighbor. When Johnnie returned home, his parents asked him, “What did you say to our neighbor?” “Oh, I didn’t say nothin’,” Johnnie replied, “I just helped him cry.” This little boy had the right idea. All of us can do that.

--Anne Peterson Reprinted from TCF website.
Anne Peterson is a poet, speaker and published author of 14 books. Anne is well acquainted with grief having lost her parents, 3 siblings, and most recently her baby granddaughter. She wants those who are hurting to know they are not alone. Sign up for her newsletter at www.annepeterson.com and receive her free eBook, “Helping Someone in Grief: 17 Things You Need to Know.”

From Our Members...

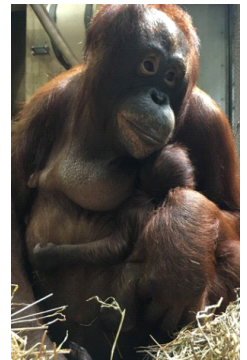
Uncharacteristic Behaviors

When Junior, the National Zoo's resident ape went on his escape travels many years ago, the story was recorded in the local papers.

This was probably because he came close to hopping over his barrier and into the laps of his human observers, many of them children. The press called this "uncharacteristic behavior" and, in a side note, added that his long time mate, Pensy, had recently died.

Now you and I would put all of this into proper perspective and agree, "Of course!" And then we would reflect upon our own "uncharacteristic behaviors" following the death of our beloved children and grandchildren.

Many times these behaviors confound and confuse those close to us. How far will we go beyond our barriers? And will we return and be



"ourselves" again?

I was amazed at emotions I had never felt so strongly before. I thought that anger would become a permanent part of my reactions and I welcomed any kind of release from it. Confronting it and dealing with it was difficult.

Sadness settled upon me like a soggy fleece and I thought that I might never shrug it off! And the apathy with which I met each day was very concerning, indeed! Junior's escapade brought all of my own "uncharacteristic behaviors" up from the not so distant past. Amusing?...a little; but more than that, I wanted to shout with the children who watched him that late summer day, and encourage him to run and run, shaking off the grief and sadness of losing his beloved Pensy.

-- Lorie Hartsig TCF St. Mary's County, MD

Save The Date... The 48th National Compassionate Friends Conference will take place in Bellevue WA from July 11th to 13th, 2025. More information coming soon.

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: March first for April 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.

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 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.



Leo & Connie Licciardone (chpt. leaders)... (310) 292-5381
 Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla (chapter leaders)...(310)530-8489
 Lori Galloway.....(760) 521-0096
 Linda Zelik.....(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) 236-3635, 4th Thurs.

Spanish speaking: Mary Trujillo (323) 347-9469

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
survivorsofselfharm.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
M.A.D.D..org



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 Mueller

WEBSITE: Leo Licciardone

Steering Committee Members:

Linda & Joe Zelik

Marilyn Nemeth

Bill Matasso

Nancy Lerner

Connie & Leo Licciardone

Sandra & Eddie Myricks

Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla

Lori Galloway

Crystal Henning

Lynn Vines

Kristy Mueller

Kitty Edler

Susan Kass



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. **In honor and in remembrance of you child, please consider a donation to our**

chapter. 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 Emily Matilda Kass, June 1995 - March 2006. Always in our hearts. Always in our thoughts. Your spirit and smile live on. Forever Loved. Forever missed.

Love, Mom

In loving memory of Jillian Nicole Katnic, March 1989 - Nov. 2018. Happy 38th Birthday in Heaven. We love you and miss you more than ever.

Love, Mom

In loving memory of my son, William Joseph Britton III.

Love Mom

In loving memory of Andrew Sakura, March 1990 - March 2018.

Love, Mom and Dad

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

When making a donation, please make checks payable to:

The Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. Chpt.

Mail to: The Compassionate Friends So Bay/ L.A. Chapter

P.O. Box 11171, Torrance, CA 90510-1171

In loving memory of _____ Birth date _____ Death date _____

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, otherwise it will appear in the following issue.

The Compassionate Friends
South Bay/L.A., CA Chapter
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March 2025

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THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.

We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.
The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain,
just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.

We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships.
We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief
so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength,
while some of us are struggling to find answers.

Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression,
while others radiate an inner peace.

But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends,
it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other
our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love
to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith
as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.

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