



The Compassionate Friends

South Bay/LA Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

June 2025 ISSUE

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

OUR NEXT MEETING

will be June 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. → 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 June 5th meeting will start with **"Summer Time Grief."**

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 May we will meet at Mimi's Café at 25343 Crenshaw. We invite you to join us. 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 June 5th** meeting will start with “**Summer Time Grief.**” With Father’s Day fast approaching and vacations needing reservations, we need to start thinking about how to cope with them while grieving. Be especially kind to yourself as you prepare for the array of emotions you will experience on Father’s Day. The love, joy and pride of being a Dad will always be there.

For some, the thought of planing a vacation seems overwhelming and easier to skip this year. While for others, the thought of getting out and doing something their child looked forward to each year enlists the precious bittersweet memories they shared.

As the weather warms up we need to adjust our life to nurture our bodies and spirits. If grief overshadows the beauty of our surroundings acute depression sets in. When grief darkens our days, then we must keep hope alive. We invite you to come share what helped you to navigate your own Summer Grief.

Father's Day

Father’s Day, not a big holiday like Christmas or Thanksgiving, but one that holds a lot of meaning for those to whom it applies. For first-time fathers, that Sunday in June brings a feeling of joy and pride. For a long-time dad, it’s a reminder of the fulfillment which children may have brought to his life. For those men who have lost a child, it can be a painful time. For those who must endure their pain in secret and in silence, either through their own desire for that approach or through society’s expectations that they must be strong and controlled, it can become a horror. But we in TCF wish to acknowledge the day because the death of a child does not negate the parenthood of the dad who loved him or her.

Love for ones offspring does not die when the body dies and death does not succeed in robbing us of our parental identity. We wish all bereaved fathers a day of peace. In the midst of the grief and loss, may you experience a taste of good memories and remembered love for your child.

--Betty Roehm, TCF Mesa County, CO

The Best Thing I Ever Did

I never really thought seriously about being a father. Seemed it would only get in the way of

other interests, career, hobbies, community interests, going out, whatever. I always felt like I could take it or leave it...the being a father thing. Then I met Sally. Sally was seriously interested in being a parent – and parenting with me. And I was seriously interested in Sally. So to make a long story short, take it or leave it became take it and I was off on my parenting journey with Sally. And an exciting journey it was.

From the start it wasn’t easy. First we knew we needed to adopt and we had to prepare. Make a resume, get cleared by social workers, advertise, find a birth mother looking to place a newborn baby, and work with her through her pregnancy. We couldn’t just go home and turn down the lights. And we got lucky and found Ginger. And Ginger made Ben.

I had no clue what being a parent was like. Probably all of us find out how much work it is – much more than I could have imagined. But you just do it – you’re responsible for this little life.

But that’s just the start of what I had no clue about. I had no idea of the love I would feel raising a child. How much more you could feel by giving love to a child. How much more you get back. I think of Ben and I can literally feel the love. It keeps me going when I miss him. Eight years, almost nine now – and I miss him every day. But now I can remember and feel the love, and not just the hurt. And it keeps me going.

We made it through almost 17 years. It didn’t start easy. We thought Ben was gone before he was born. We were visiting Ginger six weeks before Arizona Ben was due and she began to bleed heavily – we figured this adoption – this baby was done for. After rushing to the hospital, we waited and the doctor came with the news. We had given up on the baby. We just wanted to hear that Ginger was ok.

Well the doctor’s news was that we would be parents in an hour or two. Not six weeks hence, an hour or two. First miracle – we adopted and got to assist in our son’s birth.

I had no idea how much love there would be raising Ben. How much to give and how much to get as he grew up. And despite my ambivalence at the start, I loved being a Dad – I really loved being a dad.

Then at 15, Ben was diagnosed with leukemia, AML for those unfortunate enough to know what that is. After a year and a half fight to cure it, his promising progress all went wrong suddenly



and Ben was gone. With all that love, and a year and a half where we lived with him and fought with him 24/7 to beat that leukemia, I don't know how we got through the hurt we felt after his death.

One big way was I found The Compassionate Friends and found others who had found their way to be able to get over the immeasurable pain and impossible to cope with loss. My Compassionate Friends told me it would get better; it just took time. Ok, you don't 'get over' it, but you can learn to live with it. This loss has subsided somewhat, I can feel the love I had raising him and loving him and having him love me. And without question, my almost 17 years with Ben were the best years of my life. And he's still with me whenever I think about him.

So as Father's Day approaches, I'll think of Ben coming over and giving me a giant hug and I'll feel the love. And despite his life cut way too short, it was totally worth it. I know that raising Ben and loving Ben is the best thing I ever did.

Life going forward. With the pain of Ben's death, I questioned whether it had all been worth it. Now that the pain of his loss has subsided somewhat, I can feel the love I had raising him and loving him and having him love me. And without question, my almost 17 years with Ben were the best years of my life. And he's still with me whenever I think about him.

So as Father's Day approaches, I'll think of Ben coming over and giving me a giant hug and I'll feel the love. And despite his life cut way too short, it was totally worth it. I know that raising Ben and loving Ben is the best thing I ever did.

--By Dan Zweig

Advice for Summer Healing

Whether you are newly bereaved or you have been on this journey a long time, the change of seasons and the thoughts of coming "events" are hard but it is how you approach them that matters the most. How will we handle vacation this year? How can we go on vacation without our child? How can I possibly have a good vacation without my child? Why would I want to go on vacation without my child? These are some of the questions we ask ourselves either knowingly or unconsciously and the answers are as vast as the way we grieve.



For my family it wasn't a question of whether or not to go on vacation the following summer (we lost our son December 2001) but it became a question of why shouldn't we go? We had vacationed at the same place for 18 years and we started thinking about all the good times we had at the "pond" over those years.

For us it became a desire to "go back" and visit the place where our son had been happy and felt safe and secure—a place where we could go and just let go. For both my husband and I and now our daughter and her family, the pond continues to be a place where we can go and feel close to our son because we know how much he loved it there.

It was hard that first year and even the next as we looked for him everywhere. We chose to have a different campsite than we normally used that first year, but the next we moved back to our favorite campsite—it just felt right. As hard as it was to return to the pond there was and is a peaceful feeling that comes to us there as we allow all of the good memories to invade our waking moments, and we open our hearts and head to those memories knowing that our son had been there and it was one of his favorite places to be...

As you make plans for the summer, whatever they are, know that you have to do what feels right to you—there is no right or wrong. If you can, open your heart and follow it and let those stored memories carry you through.

--Cindi Bolivar, TCF North Shore Boston MA,

Summer

Here are some thoughts that might give you some perspective as you navigate the next few sunny months.

- UNDERSTAND that it's okay to not want to spend the summer months feeling festive and celebratory.
- UNDERSTAND that it's okay to indulge in your favorite summertime activities, even though you are grieving. Enjoy yourself does NOT mean you are not grieving. It does NOT mean that you stopped loving or missing your loved one. It means that you are willing to still try to do what you enjoy. After all, you are still alive.

- UNDERSTAND that healing begins with taking care of yourself too. That includes getting fresh air as well as vitamin D from the sun, taking advantage of the nice weather to take a walk and get moving a little. Fresh air and outdoors can sometimes clear your head too, and make feel a little less heavy

during tough times.

- **BE CREATIVE.** On a good day, you want to take a favorite activity and do it in a special way to honor your loved one. If you spent time playing tennis with him or her, try to play a game or two and do it in their honor.

If the summer included at least one night of lobster rolls or soft ice cream cones, treat yourself to whatever it is that made summer memorable for you. It's okay to enjoy something even if your loved one can no longer do so.

- **TRY SOMETHING NEW.** Decide to start a new summer ritual. Make new memories with new people. If you feel up to it, take a trip. Meet new people. Take up a new activity. It will help lift your spirits in a healthy way.

- **REMEMBER** that summers will get better. Grief feels like it will never end, but it will ease up, lessen, and become less painful as time goes by. Most importantly, let yourself do whatever makes you feel as okay as you can feel.

--North Shore Boston newsletter

Acceptance

One of the hardest things to do is to accept your own time line on your personal grief journey. Be kind to yourself as you make your journey. Be patient as you find your way.

--Manhattan TCF newsletter

Quiet Courage

I have seen much courage in my life. Many types of bravery have inspired me.

I am astonished by the courage of the elderly widow who buries her husband, quietly sells most of her personal belongings, furnishings and home and moves into a tiny apartment so that she can survive until death takes her, too.

I am distressed by the youthful courage demonstrated every day by soldiers who were high school kids heading for homecoming last year but who now serve in dangerous, hostile places fighting an enemy who is invisible in the crowd. The law enforcement memorial in Washington, D.C., speaks of the many brave men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty to keep anarchy at bay.

The EMS and fire fighting people who hold strong to tradition and put themselves in harm's way each day to save others amaze me with their dedication and devotion to duty.

The single mother who works two jobs, raises her children, cares for them in times of illness, keeps a home, cooks, cleans and still finds time to bake cookies for the PTA fundraiser is a heroine who is doomed to remain faceless and unknown. Yet the courage to start each new day in the hope of making a better life for her children drives her forward.

There are all types of courage in this life. All are impressive, all are worthy of praise and all set standards for us to emulate. But the deepest, most compelling courage I have seen in my life is that of the parent who has lost a child to death. Each has experienced total helplessness and real physical pain in their loss.

Raw in their grief, they join our Compassionate Friends group. I am struck by how weakened in spirit these parents are, how tenuous their hold on sanity must surely be. Yet these parents quietly enter our meeting room and face the unknown with tears in their eyes and tremendous weight in their hearts. Their world is upside down, their children have died and the pain and loss seem insurmountable. They have been snatched out of their former reality and slammed into the depths of hell by a cosmic force more intense than a tsunami. These moms and dads who have lost their beautiful child listen quietly as others talk of children who have lived for years in their parents' hearts. Each parent tells a story, each voice breaks, each heart breaks as a lost child's name echoes in the quiet room. The courage to acknowledge and face this new reality and look for hope in the midst of this infinite despair is a pure wonderment.

What pain is in this room? What deep, agonizing loss is systemic within this group? What will I say? How can I relate when I cannot even remember what day it is? How can I go on for one more day? These are the agonizing feelings of the newly bereaved parent.

The Compassionate Friends meeting is the place they have chosen to begin their journey into what they perceive as a hideous, horrible, dark and unknown future. Yet their courage to face this, the greatest loss any human could possibly endure, is extraordinary. The power of the mind to begin to see reason, to begin to seek hope, to climb this mountain of trauma and travail cannot be



overstated.

This power is pure courage, raw courage, desperate courage, but courage in its purest form. Each meeting brings the dread of facing the reality of their child's death. Yet the parents who have lost so much return to talk, to listen, to understand, to move into the light of hope. Gradually an understanding develops. Slowly each parent learns we must continue to live and honor our child.

They light candles, visit cemeteries, fund scholarships, write poetry, raise funds to help others....all in memory of their precious children. They reach out to other parents who are newly bereaved, listening, talking and listening again with their hearts. Occasionally they smile. Then one day they laugh. The journey is long, the grief work is difficult, the pain is forever, yet they keep on moving forward into the light. There are no medals, no press releases, no television appearances, no accolades, no parades. The deepest, soul-permeating, life changing and amazing courage is found here. As I look at my Compassionate Friends I am awe-struck by the rare and quiet courage that fills this room.

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

The Sounds of Silence

The sounds of silence are everywhere— it is the silent pain of the loss of our son Andy, it is the silence of our home because one of our children is gone, and it is the silence of the sudden quiet that comes over people when we mention Andy.

We have become both better and worse in the six years since Andy died of cancer at the age of 22. We are better because we are able to get on with our lives and even enjoy ourselves occasionally. We have gotten worse because, as the years go by, we feel his loss more deeply. We feel his loss every time we participate in a celebration marking some milestone of our friends and relatives or their children. We feel the loss because any celebrations of our own will always be incomplete— one person will always be absent and not there to celebrate with us or to enjoy his own milestones. The pain of his absence is always present at these events.

When Andy died, the pain of his loss was a sharp acute screaming pain that tore a hole inside

of us. Now, the pain is a silent quiet steady pain. The hole is still inside us, covered by a scar, but it is still there. It doesn't scream out loud any more but instead just remains as a quiet steady and never-ending ache and sadness— a silent pain. The silence of our home is a different kind of quiet.

By now, if Andy had lived, he probably would have been out on his own. We would have been "empty nesters" anyway. But, when a home becomes empty because of the death of a child, it is a different kind of empty nest. Our daughter Lesley is married and out on her own, the way it should be. But, Andy is gone for a different reason.

So, the silence of our empty nest is not the silence of knowing we raised two children and now they are both out leading their own lives. Instead it is the silence of a home that is empty because one child is gone forever— of having to deal with the reality that phone calls only come from one child, not two; that only one child stops by for a visit, not two; that one child is forever gone from the nest. There is a silence in our home that often seems to pervade every space. It is a sad silence, not the temporary quiet of a happy home.

And then, there is the silence of relatives and friends when we talk about Andy— not about his death but about the things he did while alive. It is as if Andy has become a forbidden topic because he died, as if his death wiped out the 22 years he did live. It occurs when a relative whispers that our son died when someone asked how old he was— like his life and what happened to him was a big secret. It occurs when people suddenly get a funny look on their faces and don't know what to say next when you mention something about Andy. It occurs when you get the feeling that people want to avoid you because you remind them of a horror that could happen to anyone. It is a silence that reminds you that your emotions and feelings are different from that of others and that you will always have to live with the sounds of silence resulting from your son's death.

--Mel Winer In Memory of my son Andy. We Need Not Walk Alone TCF newsletter



Suicide, Our Children and Grief

That first night, as I looked at Tim and begged my husband to save him, I entered a parents worse nightmare. His lips were already blue, but still, in my shock, I thought he could be saved. Denial is the first emotion and would continue for weeks and

months to come. There are still moments, not hours, but moments when I realize he is gone all over again. The pain is quick, sharp and devastating, but now it moves on instead of sitting tight on my chest. It comes back at odd times and I have learned to breath deep and wait for it to pass, for pass it will.

I was saved from the soul searing question of why this had happened. I was there through it and I and knew why. Knowing does not change the fact that your child is gone. It does not ease the pain of loss. But it does relieve you of having that on your heart along with the rest of what you will go through.

We are taught from a young age that suicide is a sin punishable by hell. I do not believe this and never have even before I lost my son. The bible was written by men who had their own agenda. It is not that I don't believe in God, it is that I feel he has been misrepresented. The bible, in its own way is just a learning tool, the same as history books. If you look at it that way, history is misrepresented also. It is usually the victor who writes history and are notorious for spinning their tales to put themselves in a good light. Every time something in the bible is questioned, the answer is usually that you should not question but have faith that it is so. My response is that God gave me a mind, free will to choose. He did not make me to blindly follow the sheep over the cliff and not question why they were going over the cliff in the first place. I am not putting down others faith, that is their choice and what they need. I do not question one's beliefs, I ask that they don't question mine.

That night, after finding Tim, brought out the first of many phobias to come. I could not sleep of course, but I also could not abide the dark. I still can't so a light stays on at all times. When the shock wore off a little, other small things started coming to light. I was cleaning out the dishwasher and ran across the coffee mug he always used. It brought me to my knees. I almost broke it. It sits up in the cupboard, away from my eyes for now. His clothes, his hand writing, his voice on my phone mail. It is an endless list of things to run across that will leave me breathless, tearful and sad. I won't go through all the phobias, it is enough to know that there are many. I hope one day that most will recede back to where they came from. I know some won't.

I have searched the suicide sites and bereavement sites looking and begging for relief from an agony I never knew existed until I lost Tim. That is where I learned that each one of us suffer differently, and the same. It is when I realized that the agony would never cease, that it was mine till the end of my time. I lost hope then. I understood why some parents suicided out after they lost their child. I knew that I could not go, year after year with this kind of sorrow and pain. I did not understand those that said they have lived with it for 10 years, 20 years, 30 years. How was that possible? Some were as deep in the pain as they had been from the first day they lost their child. I told myself, in the early days, that I could not do this. Yet, I have. It is not from being strong. There is no strong when it comes to the death of a child. Strength has nothing to do with it and when people

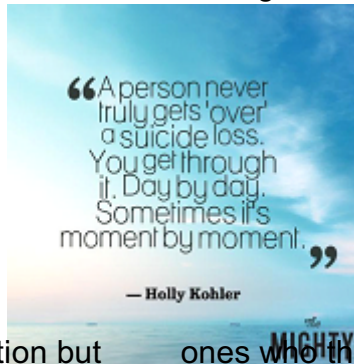
tell you how strong you are, all you can do is look at them sadly. It is not something you can explain to them. They have to experience it to know.

There are many faces to suicide and it is as individual as the grieving process is. Yes, there are those who chose that way to teach others a lesson, or get even. There are the

ones who thought someone would save them before it was too late. There are those who were just plain done. We do not know the depth of their pain, physical or mental. We do not know the thoughts or lack of them that goes through their heads. We do not know the circumstances, usually, that lead them to their path.

Yet we would stand judgement on them and call them selfish, self-centered, uncaring. I asked an attempted suicide once why he tried it. Did he not think of those that loved him and would be so terribly hurt? He looked at me blankly for a little while and I could see he was remembering. Finally he told me that love had nothing to do with it. That the mental pain, the physical pain, the sorrow is so great that it crowds out everything in your mind. You do not think of those who love you. You do not think of what it will cause. All you can think about is stopping the pain once and for all. All hope is lost, all reason gone. There is no future if that is what they have to look forward to.

I grieve my son. My pain is greater than anything I have ever experienced, yet I see a light. The sharpest edges have dulled. I know that I will carry my loss, but it becomes manageable. It is up



to the individual person on how they will carry that sorrow. You can keep it in front of you as a shield against the world or you can hold it in your heart as a memory and tribute to the one who is gone. You can let the pain rule you insane or you can rule the pain. It is nothing to feel guilty about to carry on after they are gone, it is wrong to not do so. I don't cry all the time now, but yes, I do cry. I do not talk about him all the time, but he is in my thoughts if only as a shadow sometimes, stronger than that at others. I do not forget nor will I ever. He is my only son, my second born. 33 years with him. Even if had only been a day, I would not forget.

I feared that I would carry this for years to come. I know now that yes, I will always hurt for my lost son, but the horrible, paralyzing pain will not be a part of that. There is life after loss, but accept that you will be different.

I see the little boy who took my hand in trust. I see the young man who's last spoken words to me were, "I love you mom." Yes he did, he loved me as I love him.

--Barbara Mason

...a father's point of view on The Loss of an Infant Son

How does it feel to be a father that has lost his first-born son? At first it was like the world was the worst place to be. The pain and anguish were so great that I just could not bear it. Many men have said to me, "I don't know how you can bear it." They make it sound like I have a choice. All I really wanted to do was die with him.

My son was only two months old, but I can tell you in those two months he taught me the importance of family and love and how precious life can be. At the same time, he taught me how fragile we are and how vulnerable we are. He touched me so deeply that he was able to physically and emotionally change who and what I am.

People who have never experienced this type of loss will never know how it can change a person. When you lose a child you lose all of your hopes and dreams. People can't understand that your life is forever changed.

When you lose a baby people can be very cruel. They feel that you could not be emotionally attached, since you do not have many memories of his life. You should have another child and the

pain will go away. People do not realize that it is not how many memories you have of a child, but that bond you have from when you see them for the first time. That bond is why it hurts so much whether he is a baby, child, teenager or adult. It does not matter. You have lost something so precious that only people that have experienced it could understand.

As a father who now has a beautiful two-year-old son, the pain does not go away. Sometimes it can be worse. Every step and every thing that my son does is wonderful, but it also reminds me that Brandon did not get a chance to do the same things. Time has helped me reach an understanding of how short life is and not to take my new child for granted. Brandon has taught me to cherish every breath and every smile Ethan has to offer. By my doing this I will continue to honor Ethan's big brother Brandon David Orozco.

--Gerardo Orozco, TCF Potomac, MD

Newly Bereaved...

There's No Wrong Way to Grieve

Death comes in so many shapes and sizes. Sometimes it's quick and extraordinarily tragic circumstances. Sometimes it's slow, painful, and drawn out. In all the different ways death affects our lives, grief is the same. Grief is an angry beast unlike any other, and let me assure you, there is no wrong way to grieve. There is no wrong emotion to feel. In fact, you will most likely feel everything and nothing at the same time.

You will feel angry, like the universe stole something so precious from you while simultaneously ripping out a piece of your heart, leaving a gaping void that not even Duct Tape can fix. You will feel the most intense sadness rush in, attacking every happy thought, crushing them with Hulk hand fury. This sadness may last minutes, hours, days, or weeks. But hold on, because just as quickly as it began, it will end. Breathe.

You will feel nothing. Numb. Lifeless. The simple acts of feeding and dressing yourself should be commended. You will find that it takes superhuman strength to get out of bed and face the day.

Some days you will feel happiness. You will remember the good times and wonderful memories you made. You will laugh at their quirks you miss most, like the annoying way they would slurp the



last bits of melted ice from their favorite Sonic slushy, or how they insisted on singing along to every song in their favorite songs. You would trade anything to hear that slightly off-key harmony just one more time.

More often than you might think, you will forget they are not here anymore. You will go about living your normal everyday life, need to ask them a question and as you pick up the phone to call . . . BAM! Reality punches you square in the face with epic force. The pain will rush in again, crippling you for a moment until your brain can negotiate with your heart and allow you back into the present. This will leave you with crippling anxiety and depression for which there will be no cure.

The emotions and feelings you will experience are innumerable, but rest assured, you will get through each one and each one will make you stronger. You will reconcile your overwhelming pain and have more moments of peace. You will overcome your bitter sadness and experience joy. But you must never forget these feelings. Truly embracing your emotions is a powerful tool that takes courage and time. Use them to allow yourself to keep living. And most importantly, never forget that the beast of grief has many faces.

There is no wrong way to grieve, so never apologize for what you feel in the moment. One day, you may even be able to help someone else with your voice.

--Jessica Grillo www.herviewfromhome.com

Seasoned Griefers...

Heeding the Call of Life

There is tremendous wisdom that is accumulated in one's encounter with grief, and it needs to be shared. Healing takes place when we turn our pain into a positive experience and we realize that helping others is the key to helping ourselves. When that happens, our problems don't look so big. We expand on newfound strengths and we discover that as one door closed, many others have opened. The road to recovery from grief, therefore, is to take time to do things which will enable us to give new meaning to our lives.

That's when our journey through grief becomes a journey of discovering ourselves, our potential, and our resources in the encounter with life. That's when we become BETTER people, rather than BITTER people. In grief, no one can take away our

pain because no one can take away our love. That call to life is to learn to love . . . Again.
--Father Arnaldo Pangrazzi TCF Muskegon, MI

Looking Forward...

"A Gift of Hope: How we Survive Our Tragedies"

Human pain does not let go of its grip at one point in time. Rather, it works its way out of our consciousness over time. There is a season of sadness, a season of anger, a season of tranquility, a season of hope. But seasons do not follow each other in a lockstep manner. At least not for those in crisis. The winters and springs of one's life are all jumbled together in a puzzling array.

One day we feel as though the dark clouds have lifted, but the next day they have returned. One moment we can smile, but a few hours later the tears emerge... it is true that, as we take two steps forward in our journey, we may take one or more steps back. But when one affirms that the spring thaw will arrive, the winter winds seems to lose some of their punch.

-- Robert Veninga

Friends And Family...

"Remembering"

Go ahead and mention my child,
The one that died, you know.
Don't worry about hurting me further.
The depth of my pain doesn't show.
Don't worry about making me cry.
I'm already crying inside.
Help me to heal by releasing
the tears that I try to hide.
I'm hurt when you just keep silent
pretending he didn't exist.
I'd rather you mention my child
knowing that he has been missed.
You may ask me how I'm doing,
I may say "pretty good" or "fine"
But healing is something ongoing.
I feel it will take a lifetime.

--Elizabeth Dent





Book In Review...

Don't Take My Grief Away A guide for those left behind by Doug Manning. Addresses the painful, often disorient aftermath of the death of a loved one. It helps the bereaved cope with the emotions and confront the decisions that are an inevitable part of adjustment. In our chapter's library.

Helpful Hint...



The Brain Must Follow the Heart

Some survivors try to think their way through grief. That doesn't work. Grief is a releasing process, a discovery process, a healing process. We cannot release or discover or heal by the use of our minds alone. The brain must follow the heart at a respectful distance.

It is our hearts that ache when a loved one dies. It is our emotions that are most drastically affected. Certainly the mind suffers, the mind recalls, the mind may plot and plan and wish, but it is the heart that will blaze the trail through the thicket of grief.

--Carol Staudacher in *A Time to Grieve: Meditations for Healing After the Death of a Loved One*

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.

Other People

Every so often you hear about other people losing their child.

Sometimes there is a horrible accident you find out about on television.

Sometimes it is a senseless murder or suicide you read about in the newspaper.

Sometimes you learn about a deadly illness over the telephone, because, this time, the child belongs to someone you know.

When such a tragedy happens, to other people, Your heart goes out to them.

You feel deeply saddened and, perhaps, you shed a few tears.

You then continue your charmed life, going about business as usual.

You don't forget, but, you don't necessarily remember either.

It is something that occurs in the lives of other people.

Unless, God forbid, the television story, or newspaper article or telephone call is about your child.

Unless, one terrible day, heaven and earth and hell become one.

Unless your life loses all meaning and nothing makes sense anymore.

Suddenly, by a random twist of fate, or the hand of God, you have become other people.

-- Madelaine Perri Kasden

Written in loving memory of her son, Neill Perri

The Ache We Hold Inside

When these children we loved are taken, and the years pass slowly by.

You feel the grieving is over, but the ache is still inside.

This life of ours must continue, and the tears we must learn to hide.

But you know it will never leave you, this ache we feel inside.

Their siblings go on with their future, and you know this is how it should be.

You share in their joys and sorrow, but that ache won't let you free.

Where they rest, you visit less often, and their voices are not as clear.

And our zest for life is returning, but the ache is always near.

Our friends and families tell us how well we handled our grief.

If they only knew deep within us, from this ache there is no relief.

When alone we talk to them often, for we know they are still by our side.

And the warmth of our memories comfort, but the ache will always abide.

As we continue this earthly voyage, and the calm and the storms pass by, we will cherish our precious memories, and this ache we hold inside.

--TCF Cincinnati Chapter



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 Brooks 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
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

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

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

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...



Outside His Bedroom Door

I look into his private world,
 Outside his bedroom door.
 A place where he once laughed and lived,
 a place he lives no more.
 The friends who came to visit,
 the bed where he did seep...
 tears begin to cloud my eyes,
 I stand as I do weep.
 The desk where he did his homework,
 the clothes that he did wear,
 his life that he was living
 without a single care.
 Some pictures that were special,
 a girlfriend's secret note.
 His television he did watch,
 on the table, his remote.
 His hats sit on a rack now,

his helmet from his bike...
 the memories are painful.
 A life I do not like.
 His cologne no longer lingers
 as it did once in our home.
 Visions of him by my side
 but I just stand alone.
 His pillow and his blanket
 still sit upon his bed.
 Waiting for him to come home,
 lie down and place his head.
 How I long for him to be here
 in the safety of his room.
 Nothing to ever harm him.
 Our lives could then resume.
 I look into his private world
 outside his bedroom door.
 A place where he once laughed and lived.
 A place he lives no more
 --Lyndie Sorenson,
 in memory of her brother Joey Sorenson

Sibling Relationships

Brothers and sisters often have strong and ambivalent feelings for one another. Relationships among siblings tend to be very complex, characterized by a mixture of anger, jealousy, and a fierce closeness and love. What was your relationship with your sibling? I'll bet it wasn't entirely simple.

The reason that sibling relationships are so complex is that while we are growing up, siblings are both friends and enemies, teammates, and competitors. We play with our siblings and we fight with our siblings. We share our parents' love. We enjoy being part of a family and we struggle to be seen as individuals. And as teenagers, we are developmentally tasked with separating from our families – casting our sibling relationships in a new light.

Sometimes we carry our childhood rivalries and differences into adulthood, and our ambivalent feelings toward our brothers and sisters remain. Sometimes we separate from our siblings completely as adults. And sometimes we become very close friends with our grownup brothers and sisters.

Yet, no matter what your present-day relationship with your sibling was, his or her death is a blow because part of your story has died. You shared a history with your sibling. Your stories

began together and were intimately intertwined for years. Who else knew you so well?

At any given time, an estimated 25% of Americans have experienced the death of a sibling. This means that nearly 100 million people in our country have suffered the death of a brother or sister. Yet why do we hear so little about sibling grief?

-- From the introduction by Alan Wolfelt of his book, "Healing The Adult Siblings Grieving Heart - 100 Practical ideas after your brother or sister dies.

A Sister Is Forever

A sister's a sister forever,
a bond that diminishes never.
A friend who is kindly and caring.
A sibling God chose for sharing.
Few ties are as deep and so profound
and with so much affection abound.
Though some thoughts are seldom expressed
love endures and survives every test.
Of the constants that rest in the heart,
a sister is a primary part.
She'll always be there when you need her,
you listen, you value, you heed her.
As growth, independence you ponder,
your feelings grow deeper and fonder;
and life tells you one thing that's true,
a sister's a large part of you.
--Bruce B. Wilmer, TCF, FL

For Grandparents...



Grandparent's Grief

A grandparent's grief can be a complicated journey. Your grief is twofold. Not only are you mourning the loss of your grandchild, you have also lost a part of your son or daughter that will never be the same. Many grandparents feel a sense of helplessness because they are unable to prevent the anguish their own child feels. Life may now seem more fragile and unfair than ever. It is normal to feel unequipped to adequately support your child while also experiencing your own grief.

The relationship between a grandparent and a grandchild can be incredibly special and unique. A grandparent's grief may not always be recognized or supported, but it is there. It is vital for grandparents to give themselves permission to

grieve and to focus on their own needs. You are also grieving your personal relationship with your grandchild, and their death has created a hole in your life that cannot be filled by anyone else.

No one expects to outlive their own children, much less their grandchildren. Reactions of guilt and anger can be intermingled. Grandparents may experience survivor guilt because it seems unnatural to outlive a grandchild, and they may express the wish that they "could change places" with the deceased child.

Grandparents may also experience generational differences in the expression of grief or struggle with limited support systems of their own as people in their community may not even be aware of the death. As a grandparent, it is important for you to acknowledge your grief while separating it from your child's grief. Seeking out support for yourself will help you in respecting and supporting your child as they grieve in their own way.

"From this tangle of emotions, one truth emerged: As long as I choose to embrace the miracles around me, my heart will dance. Whether in the slow dance of grief or skipping to the beat as I cuddle and coo with grandbabies yet to come, hope and joy will emerge in the rhythms of the dance."

--JoAnne Rademacher



From Our Members...

What Can a Father Tell His Son on Father's Day?

I lost Jacob on Nov. 30, 2019. He was twenty years old. I talk to him every day, of course, because our relationship is ongoing. Here is our latest conversation:

"Jacob, yes, I've lost your physical company which I miss terribly. Especially when I read all your lovingly homemade Father's Day cards you've given me over the years. But I keep reminding myself that now we have a spiritual relationship. I feel your spiritual love for me very strongly. And I know you feel my deep love for you as well. There is such peace for me in realizing this. The best part of our relationship, our mutual loving kindness, is still alive and well!

And it's good to know, on Father's Day, that you're with my dad now, your grandfather Bell. The family in heaven is growing! And I take great

comfort in knowing on each side of eternity we have a never-ending, ever-mending circle of love.”
 --Mike Bell TCF Chapter Nashville, Tennessee
 submitted by Linda Cortez

The 48th National Compassionate Friends Conference... Will take place in Bellevue WA from July 11th to 13th, 2025. The National Conference is almost sold out. TCF's National Conference is an enriching and supportive event for many newer and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Attendees come and find renewed hope and support, as well as strategies for coping with grief. Participants create friendships with other bereaved people who truly understand the heartbreaking loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. Lifelong friendships are often formed and rekindled each year at TCF conferences. There are still a few spots available. More information on www.compassionatefriends.org

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: June first for July 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

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: (800) 821-6819

Walk with Sally: Cancer loss bereavement & art therapy for children. (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
survivorsofsuicide.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	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





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

No Donations were submitted this month.

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.

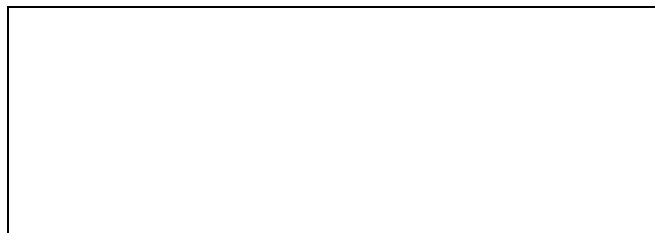
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June 2025

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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.