



# *The Compassionate Friends*

## *South Bay/LA Chapter*

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

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Sept. 2025 ISSUE

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

**OUR NEXT MEETING:**  
will be **Sept. 4th**, the first *Thursday* of the month at 7:00 P.M.

**LOCATION: use this one**  
**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 Sept 4th meeting will start with **“Teaching Others  
Because Our Child Died”**

To participate in our Zoom meetings, contact Leo at (310) 283-6739 or [Liccia79@gmail.com](mailto: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 Sept. we will meet at Chili's restaurant at 21835 Hawthorne Bl. Torrance. 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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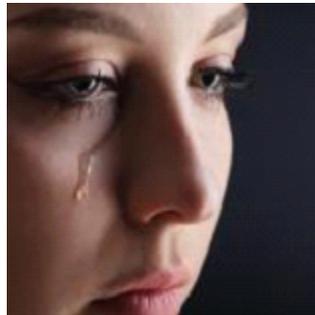
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The Thursday Sept 4th meeting will start with  
**“Teaching Others *Because Our Child Died*”**

After our loss, we try and explain to others what we are facing and why we hurt to the depths of our souls. Many of us attempt to teach others about *some* of the lessons we have to learn in our grief. Reasons are many but, the urge to reach out and explain is sometimes appreciated and sometimes met with guilt. As friends and family members think back to words and actions that they perceived one way, but the bereaved in their emotional state took another way. They will probably wonder if what they said affected our friendship permanently. We as the bereaved have no choice but to go through this pain and misery. They on the other hand, have the luxury of only accepting what they can deal with. Death is still a taboo subject for the majority of people we try to educate. But, who else has the experience to change society's expectations than us? We invite you to join us as we read articles and share our experiences of how **we** deal/dealt with teaching others ***Because Our Child Died***.

## Let Me Tell You How He Lived



I get so tired of crying when I talk about my son. I want to get to that point where I am more at peace... that I can describe him and just smile. I do have those moments at home from time to time. But not around people. Waiting for tires on my car last week, the lady beside me starts up a conversation. She tells a cute story about her grandkids. I smile. She asks me if I have grandkids. I'm never going to have grandkids...I think it, but don't say it out loud. I say no and look down. I wasn't prepared...I don't want to cry right now; I just want to get stupid tires on my car, and I'll probably never see this nice woman again, so why do I have to share? She sees that I am uncomfortable. She asks if I have children.

Damn it. I used to brighten up at that question. Now I pray they won't ask. I'm not ashamed...I just don't want to cry AGAIN. I respond with what I hope will stop more questions: "I had a boy and a girl; they grew up and moved out, and I changed the locks so they can't move back "... (with a convincing sarcastic smile). That's true ...except for the lock part. I say it like I did when I was a brand-new empty nester...14 years ago. It was

funny then... now it's my go-to answer in hopes there won't be more questions.

I've noticed people really don't want to listen...they just want to be listened to, and I'm good with that. I'm tired of crying, even though I fine-tuned my answer over the last eight years...

My son passed. It was an accidental overdose. My son was amazing, but he was poisoned by synthetic fentanyl and passed away. I miss him every day. My son, Andrew, lived to be 26. He was my mini-me, my favorite person. I still can't type the "D" word next to his name. It just destroys me, so I use 'passed away'. I can handle that one better.

Tonight, I connected with my very dear best friend from childhood. We lost touch as young adults, for no particular reason. We found each other on Facebook tonight. I was so excited to get to talk with her. I genuinely wanted to hear everything about her life, her hubby, and her adult daughters that clearly inherited their mother's beautiful smile. She shared and I kept asking questions.

I referred to 'my kids' in general. I didn't say male, female, names, or ages. She didn't ask. I know she will. If I don't get brave and say it first, she will eventually ask. By saying it first, I take control of the narrative...I still cry but I'm talking over the expected 'gasp', and then I continue talking over them as they are saying, "Oh, my god, I'm so sorry." I still get choked up but it's not as bad if I say it first.

But tonight, I just felt relieved that she didn't ask, and I didn't get choked up. I know my Andrew understands. I don't feel guilt or shame...I just get tired of crying. Some thoughtless people start asking more and more questions. When did he pass, where was I then, what drug was he addicted to; that makes me instantly angry. I feel like the car wreck that people slow down to see... it's not concern when they ask those specifics... it's so they can justify the event. Like trying to figure out what type of addict he was so they know whether to care or dismiss him! It's to help them decide if I was a bad parent simply based on his drug of choice!

I've had people ask me which drug he used, and my typical response is, "It doesn't matter, he wasn't trying to die that night, he was poisoned." Yeah, but was it needles or alcohol or what? I finally decided that when I get one rude question like that then THEY are going to be subjected to what I WANT to share.

I get out my phone and go to the “Andrew” album where the first photo is my favorite, and show them his beautiful face and say, “Let me tell you how he lived.”

“He was my person, we understood each other, same jokes, same movies and music. We even liked the same hair care stuff. His face would light up when he saw a baby! He inherited that from me! He loved talking with the elderly. If I suddenly turned and he wasn’t there, I would find him talking to a “grandma or grandpa” asking questions about their life and laughing. I would tell him, “Meet you here in 20”. And many times, he would still be talking and listening in that same spot. What teenager does that, LOL?

At his memorial, so many friends said the same thing: “If it weren’t for Andrew, I wouldn’t be in the band I’m in now.”

“He introduced me to all my friends.”

“I’ve never met a friend like him, he really listened whenever I was down.” “I’m a better person because Andrew was my friend.”

I try to remember that even extremely judgmental people are still learning and growing... I know I’ve said some really stupid stuff in my life and sometimes people put me in my place. Maybe they will think twice the next time they judge a grieving parent. I swear I feel Andrew smile at me when I’m brave like that. He was my biggest fan and supporter.

I will probably always get choked up talking about my beloved son. Ok. He’s worth every tear I shed for the rest of my life. He’s still my son and I’m still his Mommy. That will never change!

My relationship with Andrew is just that...MY relationship with MY Andrew. I never needed anyone else to qualify that before, so I don’t need anyone to qualify it now. I don’t need family members to reach out on his birthday or the day he passed. It would be nice...but I quit hoping for it...and I feel more peaceful letting go of that expectation. Thank you for listening.

I truly don’t think I could have survived without the parents here. You are my tribe and I value you. If I’ve shared something that rang true for you, then hold it. If it doesn’t ring true for you, then let it go. I do not grieve alone. I know we walk this path of grief together.

-- Joie Law from The Compassionate Friends website /Kirkland TCF

## The Tasks of Grief

Grieving is the process of adjusting to loss. In our grieving, we have two tasks: to re-form our sense of self without what we lost, and to internalize our relationship with what used to be physically present.

When we grieve, we have lost more than a person or a thing; we have lost a part of ourselves. All changes entail a new self-image; a new sense of who one is. [We] internalize what was lost, so that it remains present in our lives, but in a new way.

—Author unknown



We the bereaved, are **STILL LEARNING** about grief as it changes with time. Sharing this knowledge with others is still needed...

“It isn’t right! I go a month sometimes and don’t cry. I actually get involved in something and don’t think about my daughter for hours. I had fun at the company picnic last week.”

“I feel so guilty. Am I forgetting my daughter?” This mother was two years into her grief. She was doing good grief work— leaning into the pain, talking out feelings, expressing emotions and attending Bereaved Parent’s meetings regularly. But she was hurting less.

When parents begin to reap the harvest of their grief work well done, they fear they are losing their children. The truth is they are just reaping the harvest of their grief work done well.

In the first couple of years, pain ties us to our children. During that time we equate pain with love. By the time we are beginning to resolve our grief (and that is what is happening), pain has been our companion for so long we feel lost without it. This is one of the few places in grief where our mind needs to take over for awhile. We need to look at the illogic of prolonged grieving. We need to see that we are beginning to reach the goal we hoped some day to reach.

Self talk can help us rid ourselves of this illogical emotion. Ask yourself: If you believe to keep your child in your heart for the rest of your life, you must hang onto the pain. Will your prolonged misery make your child less dead?

Does the fact that your child is dead mean that you must die also? Does your prolonged misery accomplish anything? What purpose does it

serve? Will hanging onto your pain make you grow and change, or will it make you unhappy and bitter? What effect will your prolonged grief have on your marriage and/or surviving children? Do you really want to stay in the pit indefinitely? Will your continuing grief honor your child?

These questions can help you see that beginning grief resolution is as healthy and normal after a couple of years, as allowing yourself to enter fully into your grief in the early months after your child has died. Rethink your reactions. Let yourself get to the other side of your grief. Let yourself appreciate the peace and comfort that is beginning to be yours. Most importantly, let yourself feel the joy of remembering your child without the deep searing pain you have felt for so long.

--Margaret Gerner, Bereaved Mother  
St. Louis, MO

### Living a Life that Matters

At some of the darkest moments in my life, some people I thought of as friends deserted me— some because they cared about me and it hurt them to see me in pain; others because I reminded them of their own vulnerability, and that was more than they could handle. But real friends overcame their discomfort and came to sit with me. If they had not words to make me feel better, they sat in silence (much better than saying, "You'll get over it," or "It's not so bad; others have it worse") and I loved them for it.

-- Harold Kushner

### Autumn Tears

We look back on September and we realize that somehow we made it through those dreaded first days of school. Whether it was the anticipation or the actual days that were the worst, we survived. We used our faith, our support systems or just plain hard work and made it over yet another hurdle. We watched small children heading for their first day of kindergarten, listened to excited teenagers talk of high school and heard stories of children leaving home to attend post-secondary school. Somehow we rode the waves of grief and found ourselves ashore again.

As these waves subside new ones will build as



we head into the holidays that speak of, and to, children. Halloween will soon approach and for some, painful memories. Thanksgiving arrives to exemplify family and togetherness and Christmas looms ahead. These special days are forever reminders of our loss – the costumes we'll never sew, the empty chair at turkey dinner, the fun and magic we'll never share with someone we love. Forever reminders that our child has died.

To survive when these events and anniversary days come around let's find time to think of the good memories we have – the announcement of our long awaited pregnancy at Thanksgiving dinner, the look of excitement on our son's first Halloween night, the vision of our daughter helping prepare the turkey dinner. These holidays will always be reminders that our child died. Let us also make them reminders that our child lived! They left us memories more precious than any others to hold and celebrate!

-- Penny Young, TCF Powell River, British Columbia

### Companion Sojourners

The dictionary defines the word "sojourn" as a temporary place where one may stop, rest, visit, dwell, abide and lodge. The Compassionate Friends is an organization of fellow sojourners. At our monthly meetings we stop for a while to find respite from a world that does not understand what it means to lose a child. We find a safe dwelling where there are others who are just like us. We don't need to have any special skills to be a sojourner. As bereaved parents, we instinctively reach out to one another. Those of us who have been on our journey for a while are drawn to comfort the others who have more recently embarked on their path of grief. We don't need to say any special words. A discerning look, a listening ear, or a gentle touch can be balm the other person needs to give them a moment's solace. We are companion sojourners, wounded healers and compassionate friends.

-- Janet Reyes TCF Alamo Area Chapter, TX

### What Makes Suicide An Especially Difficult Loss?

Suicide is a reaction to overwhelming feelings of loneliness, worthlessness, helplessness, hopelessness and depression. It occurs when a person's pain exceeds his or her

resources and ability to cope. It is the third leading cause of death for people 15-24 years of age.

The suicide of a loved one raises painful questions, doubts and fears. Cultural and religious interpretations of an earlier day are responsible for the stigma associated with suicide. The knowledge that your love was not enough to save the person you loved, and the fear that others will judge you, may raise feelings of failure, of shame and blame in addition to the sorrow of loss.

Here are things you can do when you have lost a loved one to suicide:

- For those with concerns of a spiritual nature, do try to find a gentle, non-judgmental member of your faith, and open yourself to that person.
- Rather than being concerned about the stigma surrounding suicide, concentrate on your own healing and survival.
- It is important that you confront the word suicide, difficult as it may be. Keeping the cause of death a secret will deprive you of the joy of speaking about your loved one and will isolate you from family and friends who want to support you. If you don't allow yourself to have that experience, you are blocking your healing. Instead of trying to deny or medicate the pain, realize that the hurt is necessary in order for you to heal. Our experience of mental suffering offers us the chance to grow stronger in the process.

--Author unknown

### What Might Have Been...What Is

I want what might have been...  
 And I want what is.  
 I want the child I do not have,  
 And I want the child that has come after.  
 I cannot choose  
 One or the other,  
 My heart wants both.  
 What might have been,  
 A sturdy lad,  
 Baseball bats,  
 Football helmets,  
 Squiggly worms on hooks  
 Dirt and mud and  
 Burps and booms.  
 What is now,  
 A charming girl,  
 Raggedy Anne,  
 Stuffed bears,  
 Curls and ribbons on hair  
 Tea and cookies and



Squeals and giggles.

How can I choose  
 From two blessings,  
 One gone too soon,  
 One here by a miracle?  
 I cannot...

But if I could...

I would want both...

What might have been...

And what is.

Lisa Sculley, In memory of Joey Sculley  
 7/16/92 to 10/7/92 - SIDS

### Newly Bereaved...

**To all of the Bravest souls that are walking this earth without one or more of your children:**

Some of us get a tattoo  
 Some of us move  
 Some of us put it all in a box  
 Some of us keep it all where it was left  
 Some of us don't get out of bed  
 Some of us take antidepressants  
 Some of us take anxiety pills  
 Some of us have guilt  
 Some of us see a shrink  
 Some of us hold it in  
 Some of us blurt it out  
 Some of us sleep with something that was special to their child  
 We all cry in the shower  
 We all cry in the car  
 We all cry so hard it feels like we are no longer breathing  
 We all have the same wish  
 We all want to go back  
 We all have that song, phrase or photo that will bring us to our knees  
 We all put on our mask that is needed for the day or in a moment  
 We all know what's it's like to live with a crushed heart  
 We all have a terrible fear we could lose another child  
 We all want to wake up!  
 We all wish for another moment  
 Just know any way YOU grieve is ok there is no right or wrong way.  
 --Grieving Moms Forever

## Seasoned Grievers...

### A View 14 Years Later -- Facing Grief in the Workplace

Monday morning, I was down. As they say, "Rainy days and Mondays always get me down." But, this Monday was particularly despairing. Susan, our bright, blue eyed, blond haired 16-year-old child had died in an auto accident the previous Tuesday night. Having taken the customary three days funeral leave, this Monday was my first day back at the office.

It was awkward. Awkward for me and awkward for my fellow employees. People seemed apprehensive to talk about anything. How in the world does one co-habit with grief and work? There is no energy, no drive. How did other bereaved parents 'get on' with their lives and grieve?

I remembered Guy. His 16-year-old son died in a car accident. Immediately, he stopped associating socially with those he worked with. I wondered why. They'd had so much fun. Within a year I heard he changed jobs. I remembered Al. He was a banker. After his 18-year-old son died, he threw himself into his work. He was in his office by 7 a.m., and he was at the office or at a community meeting until after 9 p.m. Within a year he was elected President of the Chamber of Commerce and within two years he was President of his Rotary Club. I wondered if this was what "they" called 'denial'? The 'word about town' was that he and his wife were not getting along well. In conversations years later, he admitted that he absolutely refused to discuss the son. But, his wife had the need to share memories. He wished he had been advised as to what to expect.

Within an hour, I was roused from this wondering by a visit from our senior vice president. He is a wonderful and compassionate fellow, and I am convinced he meant well when he determinedly announced, "We have created several new programs and promotions for you to head up." Being a marketing manager, I should have found this an exciting and challenging opportunity. *Wrong.* He obviously felt I should be kept busy so I would not mourn, or grieve. Little did he know what I needed was rest. Or, what I wanted was to have a heart attack. He could not have known getting out of bed each morning and going to work was a major challenge. And, little did I know I should have



educated him and my fellow employees. **Lesson #1.** I do not believe we can hide from or run away from our grief by becoming workaholics, putting on an armor of 'busy' as a defense. I believe we simply delay the inevitable grief.

Further, I believe changing jobs and losing whatever support system may be at our jobs could be devastating. It certainly would have been for me. So here it was that really awful Monday. Within minutes I would be asked the same question asked probably a million times to every bereaved father around the world, in every nation, and in every language, "*How is your wife doing?*"

**Lesson #2.** People speak in code. Question: "How is your wife/husband doing?" Translation: "How are you doing?" I believe people honestly care, but they do not know what to say. It is up to us to educate them. In an outstanding article, "Facing Grief" in the April 1996 issue of *Personnel Journal*, it was reported a significant 74% of human resource managers interviewed acknowledged they were at a loss for words or self conscious about what to do for the bereaved.

**Lesson #3.** Acting as if nothing has happened does not work. I could not deny the existence of Susan Stanley. I remember standing in front of a mirror and saying over and over and over again, maybe five or ten minutes at a time: "*Our daughter died. Our daughter died.*" Why? Because in my job I meet new people constantly. And, I'll bet you know exactly the question that always comes up—that's right, "How many children do you have?" or, "Do you have children?" I had to be in a position of telling the truth. So, I had to confront myself with information.

**Lesson #4.** Since we have no control over our emotions and the circumstances, we must learn to accept and manage that change. Managing this change means realizing what is going on. For instance, we bereaved may express a shortness of temper toward our fellow employees when they talk about their children and grandchildren. We may think this completely thoughtless of them, especially about 2:30 each afternoon when office phones light up with sons and daughters calling to tell mom they had a wonderful day at school.

Here we are in an office situation. Our fellow office worker talking on the phone to her married daughter about their newly born grandchild. That afternoon the same coworker asked if we will help her with something. Bingo. The "buckshot effect." We are mad with everybody and everything. We

bereaved are depressed, we scramble to find answers, to find peace, to find the 'quick fix'. Pending holidays are horrible and birthdays and anniversary dates are especially difficult times.

**Lesson #5.** I believe we should meet grief on its own terms, we should take control. This may mean taking vacation days on birthdays and anniversary days. It may mean saving vacation time during the holidays to take a trip. Being in control means calling on our supervisor to establish priorities and communicate exactly how we are doing and what we are feeling. I remember finding it very difficult to concentrate and I remember being fatigued. Being unable to concentrate, I found it helpful to sit with the senior vice president occasionally and review what I was working on and to set intermediate goals and priorities. Is there a possibility of telecommuting from home? Does the company offer flextime, coming to work earlier than others and therefore, leaving earlier? Or, are there others who can pick up some of the more involved duties for a time?

**Lesson #6.** The real paradox: Only by allowing ourselves to feel the most intense and shattering pain can we move toward a life in which pain is not the center.

So how do we co-habit with grief and our careers? Do you remember when you started your career? Or, do you remember your first day on your job? We looked good. Our shoes were polished, our hair fixed. Our clothes pressed. But, at the same time everything was so unfamiliar. Strange. We started, we took those baby steps. We set small goals. Well, guess what? Here we are again. Starting all over. Taking those baby steps . . . trying to learn to live again . . . setting those small goals. There is the knowledge the vast majority of us survive the painful bereavement process, and many find new meaning and purpose to our lives. Many will themselves become the company bereavement specialist, nurturing employees who suffer the loss of a loved one, and advising coworkers on how they can best support their teammate.

--John H. Stanley  
TCF Southern Piedmont NC

**Looking Forward...**

**Onward... Ever Onward...**

It just gets harder. Not

the living so much, but the accepting. For it's the accepting that one has to learn to do – even when you think you have it all together, there's always more.

All my friends have now moved into the 'next' phase of their lives. The grief has been covered over with layer upon layer of life experience. Oh, the grief is still there, but no longer on the surface. Now, like an archeological dig, we find ourselves thinking back through layers.

The last of my old friends' surviving child just became engaged. That means she will soon be a grandmother and despite the fact that she is a bereaved parent, she now has an exciting future to look forward to. All my friends are now grandparents. And although several have offered to share, every grandchild becomes another painful reminder that I will never ever have one of my own. How many of my grandchildren died that day in 1993.

Sometimes I think about how I appear to the world. Pretty together I suspect. I rush to work several times a week. I capably perform all those tasks that are expected of me by people who have no idea about my life. I smile, I laugh. I listen. And sometimes I catch myself actually enjoying life. I used to care about what people thought. It used to bother me that those who have known me through all the years think I'm 'over it'. What's so interesting now, so many years later, is that I no longer care what anybody thinks. If it makes them more comfortable to think I am my 'old self' – that's okay... I no longer have the need to remind them that I am always conscious of my bereaved condition — that I desperately miss my son every single day. That almost everything I experience reminds me of how sad I always am, despite appearances. That even life's little delights – a sunny day, the garden coming back to life after a dismal winter, a friend's family holiday shared along with their laughing grandchildren – everything seems to magnify the pain that is always just behind the opaque window of my soul. I can see it clearly from the inside. I'm glad no one else can.

So who cares what anybody thinks. I've learned I must find my own comfort, my own salve. I'm most comfortable with friends who know exactly how I feel – because they have had the same experience. We can laugh even while we commiserate about our shared sensibilities. We have no need to explain ourselves to each other. We just know. We give ourselves permission. Permission to laugh and to learn how to go on,



even while we grieve. We make choices – the choice to continue – to live our lives the best we know how while treasuring the memories of what we once had and what we once were.

I knew this trip wasn't going to be easy. I didn't know it was going to be as difficult as it actually is. But having made it this far I can dare to stop and assess my progress. I'm not unhappy with who I've become. It's a life I never expected but it's the hand I was dealt. And as they say, it's not so much the cards you're dealt, but how you play the hand.

--Marie Levine

## Friends And Family...

### A Survivor's Alphabet: Empathy

"Where were you when I needed you?" Ever find yourself saying words like that? Ever look for comfort at a point of greatest need and wonder why it doesn't come or help? Family and friends try their best to let us know they care. It never seems enough for just what we need at the critical moment.

What's going on? Family and friends, in expressing their sincere words of comfort and love, are relieving their own anxiety. In their attempts they often bypass our more critical need. It's like two trains passing each other in the night. They meet but quickly go their separate ways.

What we have received is sympathy which, by itself, gives temporary comfort and relief but has little long lasting effect. It may or may not touch the point of hurting with enough impact to relieve. What is better is a sensitivity to hurt where it is and a response to that hurt that mirrors the crisis itself. What is needed is not sympathy but empathy.

Empathy is made up of the following:  
Listening. What do you hear when you hear? Isn't it amazing how often we hear but we do not listen. You and I hear the concert while the violinist listens for pitch and tone. We tell a mechanic the engine runs "rough" while he listens and notes that something is wrong with the valves. Developing the skill of listening enables us to be more sensitive to actual need where it occurs. A cry for help may be more, or less, than what we think we hear. Someone is hurting and needs relief, now. Being with that person we listen and are given clues of what to say and do that will bring the greatest relief. It's not for us to set the agenda; the other person in their hurt and pain does.

Understanding. By careful listening it's amazing

what we can learn that we only surmised before. We learn that our agenda can be put "on hold" while the hurting person is considered as top priority. We learn that words do not always have the weight we give to them; a touch will do far more. Maybe just being there without thinking that we have to do something helps. Whatever it is, we are there for the other person and they know it; they are given just what they need at that given moment.

Value. This tacit understanding gives strength for building trust. A bond is created whose value will be noted long after the crisis is over. Friendships are developed that are long lasting. New understanding between family members creates a climate of love. Personal self esteem is given a boost which has a value of its own. We understand others and they understand us and a network is established of support and caring.

Empathy is "LUV" actively supporting and sustaining to develop strength for times of crisis. It goes beyond in creating long lasting relationships that give personal vitality to each of us.

--Jesse Baker Port Orange, FL.

## Book Review...



Surviving The Death Of A Child by John & Frances Munday. This book is about enduring and surviving the most painful of all loses. It is the story of a journey from grief to healing. But more importantly, it is a story of faith and love told so that others may find comfort and understanding when faced with this most devastating loss.

## Helpful Hint...



**The love and** pain you carry for your precious child will be woven into your very being. It will fuel you to do things you never dreamed you could do.

-- Angela Miller Mother of Noah

## 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.

## Steering Committee Needs Your Input...

The Chapter would like to invite all TCF members to attend our Quarterly Steering Committee meeting to see if you could join us in the running of the South Bay/L.A. chapter. Please be willing to be an active participant. The Steering Committee is all volunteer, and is an integral part in planning how the group is run month to month, and the Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony. Our next Steering Committee Meeting will be held on Oct 7<sup>th</sup> at Leo & Connie's house. Please consider helping our chapter find new ideas, topics, and memorials to honor our children and help other bereaved families. Call (310) 283-6739 for more information. Thanks, South Bay/L.A. TCF

**Save The Dates...** Steering Committee Meeting on Tue Oct 7<sup>th</sup> & And World Wide Candle Lighting Program on Sun., Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>.

## Grief

It comes like a huge thunderbolt — shocking and deafening you, to all else around you. Suddenly the world that had been so bright is black and desolate. There seems to be no hope. The tears come like torrential rains. The winds of reality come and you are torn by the pains and fears caused by the storm. Even when the tears stop for a while, the dark clouds loom over you, threatening you with more tears and more pain. Most passersbyers can't help you through the storm because they have never been caught in one like it- and some don't seem to care. There are a few who will reach out their hand and try to pull you from the storm, but the storm must be endured. And then there are the special ones—the ones who are willing to walk with you through the storm. Usually these are people who have been there before and know the storm can be survived. After a time, the torrential rains turn to slow showers, and then the showers come less often. But the clouds don't go away. The sadness and pain remain, but they become more bearable. Eventually, as the clouds begin to part, there may even be a rainbow—a sign of hope.

And as the sun begins to shine a little more, flowers of memory will be enjoyed.

I don't think the showers will ever end, but I believe, as they get farther apart, the sky will get bluer; we will see more rainbows; and the flowers will bloom more and more.

Perhaps it is even good to have a shower now and then—to cleanse our souls and to revive those special flowers of memory.

--Mary Jo Pierce TCF, Tuscaloosa, AL

## Are You Still Here

When someone you love dearly dies this is a very important question to ask yourself. And to answer.

Especially if you want to make peace with life.

Your life.

If you are not certain, I invite you to get really quiet.

To get still.

And then ask the question

To the one who left his/her physical body.

Are you still here?

Are you still by my side?

Can you hear me?

And then listen. Listen. Listen.

With new ears and a new heart.

-- Tom Zuba from his book "Becoming Radiant"

TCF Chapter Miami Valley, Kettering, Ohio

## The Butterfly

Butterfly, don't pass me by.

Stop and light for a little while.

Soothe me with your soft sensation;

give me hope and consolation.

Butterfly, don't pass me by.

Stop and light for a little while.

Help me to release my sorrow;

deed me strength to meet tomorrow.

Butterfly, don't pass me by.

Stop and light for a little while.

Oh, lift me up and let me feel the peace and freedom you reveal.

Butterfly, don't pass me by.

Stop and light for a little while.

Remind me to thank God above

for cradling me in His great love.

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted - Psalm 34:18

--Written by Connie Wade, 10/25/1990, for Lori Kern in memory of Emily Elizabeth Ellis



Our

Children

Remembered



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

Larry Broks Jr.  
Born: 7/88 Died: 9/17  
Mother: Thessia  
Carpenter

Matthew Hales Clifford  
Born: 1/80 Died: 3/15  
Parents: Bob & Melissa  
Clifford

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

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

Scott Vincent Buehler  
Born: 3/80 Died: 2/08  
Mother: Elizabeth  
Buehler Miller

Aaron Christopher  
Cochran  
Born: 11/90 Died: 9/12  
Mother: Julia Carr

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

Brandon Armstrong  
Miscarried: July 1995  
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Julian Burns  
Born: 12/18 Died: 1/19  
Parents: Daniel & Marta  
Burns

Tiffany Lamb Corkins  
Born: 7/70 Died 8/05  
Mother: Nancy Lamb

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

Connor Aslay  
Born: 5/99 Died: 7/18  
Mother: Erin Aslay

Frank Christopher  
Castania  
Born: 8/94 Died: 7/05  
Parents: Frank & Debbie

Hannah Elizabeth Cortez  
Born: 9/92 Died: 7/13  
Parents: Rafael & Shari  
Cortez

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

Jeremiah Bell  
Born: 1/88 Died: 6/15  
Mother: Angela Alvarez

Castania, Grandparents:  
Richard & Ann Leach

Mike Sebastian Cortez  
Born: 5/97 Died: 6/17  
Mother: Rita Cortez

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

Scott Berkovitz  
Born: 5/88 Died: 1/16  
Parents: Carl Berkovitz &  
Maria Moore

Vanessa Roseann  
Castania  
Born: 2/97 Died: 7/05  
Parents: Frank & Debbie  
Castania, Grandparents:  
Richard & Ann Leach

Scott Curry  
Born: 8/59 Died: 7/08  
Mother: Marilyn Nemeth

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

Noah Bernstein  
Born: 6/87 Died: 2/17  
Mother: Beth Bernstein

Carina Chandiramani  
Born: 5/86 Died: 9/18  
Mother: Norma  
Chandiramani

Michael N. Daffin  
Born: 2/85 Died: 4/17  
Parents: Michael & Diana  
Daffin

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

Cheiann Jayda Berry  
Born: 12/01 Died: 7/16  
Mother: Kristina Berry

Blair Chapin  
Born: 4/82 Died: 5/18  
Sister: Elizabeth Chapin

Daniel Elijah Day  
Born: 4/93 Died: 5/16  
Mother: Kristen Day

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

Sam Boldissar  
Born: 10/91 Died: 3/17  
Parents: Jeeri & Frank  
Boldissar

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

Michael David Deboe  
Born: 12/75 Died: 5/09  
Parents: Dave & Judy  
Deboe

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

Alex James Bonstein  
Born: 11/91 Died: 7/16  
Mother: Cynthia Sanchez

Michael Edward Clapp  
Born: 2/93 Died: 4/18  
Mother: Patti Clapp

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

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

Tamara Lynette Boyd  
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/00  
Parents: Gloria & Gayle  
Jones

John Francis Cleary  
Born: 12/74 Died: 8/93  
Mother: Pauline Cleary  
Basil

Luke Edward Devlin  
Born: 12/07 Died: 12/07  
Parents: Jacqueline &  
Tom Devlin

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

William Joseph Britton III  
Born: 3/62 Died: 7/85  
Mother: Jean Anne  
Britton

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

**Our Children**

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

**Remembered**

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 &  
Cydney 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

**Our****Children****Remembered**

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

**Our Children****Remembered**

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

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



## Our Children Remembered



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/Anniversary Tributes...

In honor of your child's birthday or anniversary, we welcome you to submit a tribute. Anniversary tributes show how important our children still are to all of us. 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 or anniversary donations that help offset chapter expenses.)

Dear Andy,

I still miss you all the time. It's been a decade already since you departed. Your Father passed; no

doubt you are together. Your beautiful, clever daughter, Maddie Lynn is in her third year of college here in San Diego, California. She is doing very well and enjoying her life. She drove up for Easter respecting our family tradition that your family would come West for that holiday and your sister, her kiddos and I would come East for Thanksgiving.

Staysea continues to brilliantly expand the "Reveal Wellness" center she created as an expression of the priceless love you shared. She consistently amazes me with her generosity and the limitless extent of her skill and talents. Your son, Andrew Jr. is in High School now. He still lives in South Carolina with his Mother. I'm sure you visit him regularly. I hope he knows. Sometimes I feel your presence when the room fills with Love Light, perhaps it is that way for him as well.

New generations have arrived. There have been weddings and births. I think the last one will be your cousin Danielle this year. Staysea will attend the event back East. She is bringing your wonderful nephew Conor, your niece, Olevia and her boyfriend. It will be a short visit to catch up with family and tour together.

I can only imagine what it might have been like if you were still Earthbound. Time is passing quickly these days. I am happy and well still living near Staysea here in paradise; the South Bay of California, beside the ocean. I wouldn't be here if you hadn't ventured out and then invited Staysea to join you. You were always courageous and braved new possibilities. I well remember many times you got lemons and made lemonade. You are probably co-creating magnificent adventures on the other side. Please continue to visit. Your continued existence makes a glorious difference in my life ~ it always has.

Thank you for being born, my delightful, brilliant son. I love You Forever and ever, Amen.

Heartfelt Hugs, Mom XOXOXO

## By Siblings...



## The Greatest Loss

The other night I spent a moment with my sister in a dream and it bothered me more than anything. She'd never want me to be upset by her presence, but the thing is I haven't seen her in over two years – at all. In this dream she was healthy because I recall thinking to myself, "Wow, she's healthy and she has all her hair."

One thing I lived for since I was little was to make her laugh, and it took hardly any effort to make her laugh in general, but especially at me. I still always wanted to perfect it though, find new ways, new cynical/dark phrases or new dance moves to surprise her with just to hear the sound

of her laugh. On the phone, in person, even over text she would crack up at me.

Back to the dream, I can't remember what I did, but it was the way I was saying something and she was just laughing so hard at me and it felt so good! That was it.— In a flash it was over, and I woke up feeling sick to my stomach. So many reasons ran through me, but mostly because it hit me that I have not seen or felt that feeling in over two years.

Many people thought it was great that she "finally visited me," but as griever we often hear comments we don't align with. In my life now I have the ability to find new versions of 'happy,' and I certainly still have my quirky way of making things funny, but as I said before – I lived to hear Maureen laugh with me, at me, and I have not felt that. It shocked me when I woke up.

Someone in my brain tumor group recently asked us when was the last time we felt happy, and I said without even thinking July 27, 2017 – the day before Maureen had a seizure at the gym 3000 miles away. He said, "Yea, my life ended on (blank) and then my new life began." That date was when his wife was diagnosed, and we all just knew what he meant.

I say the day before Maureen was diagnosed rather than the day she died because, putting it mildly, brain cancer wreaks havoc on everything anyone ever once knew as normal. Maureen was never sick a day in her life, and in the blink of an eye, her brain cancer immediately began to take everything away from her that she could once do. Throughout her illness though, her laugh thankfully still remained and I could feel happy. Losing this feeling from this amazing person is in itself the greatest loss.

-- Katharine Heaton, Sister of Maureen

## A Decade

In the beginning I didn't know how I was going to survive to the next day, my first thought when I awoke was, oh no my brother is dead. The physical heartache, tears, lethargy, fatigue, loss of concentration—my body even forced me to stop eating gluten and dairy. There was a deep heaviness within me and how I saw the rest of the world. Some days it felt like a depressive cloak over me that I couldn't remove.

As time moved forward, the 22nd, Chris' death day, protruded out in my mind and on every calendar I looked at. The anticipation of another

month or year of my brother not being in my physical life. How could this be? Chris has been gone 3 months, 9 months, 4 years, and now 10 years and 9 months to the day.

The difference in a decade—I decided in order for me to move from survival into some form of thriving I had to be a more active participant in my own grief process. I went to local grief coalition meetings. Attended the monthly TCF chapter meetings. I started back in individual therapy. I became certified as a grief specialist and grief educator. I learned the language to help advocate for myself and other griever too. The difference in a decade—when I felt well enough to give back to the same organizations that had given me compassion, understanding, validation and allowed me to find my voice again in my early YEARS of grief.

Actually, I was able to remove the depressive cloak through being an active participant in my own grief journey. I no longer feel the debilitating heartache because of the death of my brother. Of course, I get sad. Of course, I will miss him to my last breath. This is the difference in my first decade without Chris. It will be interesting to see what my second decade of grieving my brother looks like. I know one thing, he is always within me, encouraging me from beyond.

--In honor of Christopher Daniel Bauer who died by suicide August 22nd, 2012  
Written by his little sissy, Maggie Bauer, April 22nd, 2023  
TCF, Minneapolis, MN



## For Grandparents...

### Letter from a Grandma's Heart

Dear Aaron,  
I'm writing you to tell you Grandma loves you  
And I'm missing you today.  
I know that you can't read these words  
But somehow that's okay,  
Because the postman can't deliver what  
I'm feeling anyway.  
I'm sorry that we didn't have more time;  
We barely got to say hello before we said  
goodbye.  
But it was that day in May a miracle came true,  
A Grandma's love was born that day and  
The miracle was YOU.  
Don't worry, I'll do the best I can  
To help Mommy and Daddy through  
The rough times they'll both have.

I know you see their sadness and  
It hurts to see their pain.  
But time will wash away their tears 'til only love  
remains.

In closing, I just want to say I'll see your smile  
In every child that passes through my day,  
And when each day has ended  
And twilight turns to night,  
I'll look above and feel your love  
For your star shines twice as bright.

--Rosalyn Hurley in memory of Aaron Farrier  
TCF Madison Area Chapter



## From Our Members...

### Do You Know Who I Am?

I am flesh and blood, torn mind, and broken heart.  
I feel at times like a wise old woman – but then, in  
the next moment like a small child.  
I admit total confusion.

I look in the mirror and see someone I'm not sure I  
know.

I want an answer;  
I want a solution – to a problem that has neither  
on this earth.

It seems that nothing matters anymore and yet at  
the same time

I have learned that everything does.  
That there are billions of people on this earth.  
When one of them dies, it matters.

I ache to a degree that only another who has  
crossed this bridge could gauge.  
And only they can for a moment understand my  
torment.

Do you know who I am?

I am a bereaved mother – the last thing I ever  
thought I would be.

My child has died before me, the most unnatural  
thing in the world.

And my continued being seems the next most  
unnatural thing in the world.

A portion of my heart, spirit, and dreams –  
and all thoughts of total peace, are with Ryan,  
never to be recovered to make a whole until I see  
him again.

The tears I cry are not for me,  
but for the beautiful life that ended far too soon.  
And the utterly helpless frustration of not being  
able to do anything to change that.

--Deborah Wiseman, TCF of Nashville, TN  
Submitted by Linda Curtis

**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](mailto: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](mailto:Lynntcf@aol.com) Tributes must be in by the 1st of the month **preceding** your child's birthday month or at the prior meeting. (Example: Sept. first for Oct. 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](mailto: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](mailto:Lynntcf@aol.com) if you want to do it electronically. Thank-you for your understanding and help. TCF South Bay/LA

**Phone Friends...** Sometimes you want or need to talk about the life and death of your child, 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 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed.

Orange Coast/Irvine: (949) 552-2800 1st Wed.

Orange Co./Anaheim: (562) 943-2269

Pomona/San Gabriel: (626) 919-7206

Redlands: (800) 717-0373 3rd Tues.

Riverside-Inland Empire: (909) 683-4160

San Fernando Valley: (818) 788-9701 2nd Mon.

South Los Angeles: (323) 546-9755 last Tue

Ventura Co. TCF: (805)981-1573 1&3 Thurs.

Verdugo Hills: (818) 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](mailto:Roseydoll@aol.com)

**Alive Alone:** For parents who have lost their only child, or all their children. 1112 Champaign Dr., Van Wert, OH 45891 Newsletter available. [www.Alivealone.org](http://www.Alivealone.org)

**Survivors of Suicide:** Support Group for families that have lost someone to suicide. Contact 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](http://www.comfortzonecamp.org) (310) 483-8313.

#### Other Grief Support Websites...

thetearsfoundation.org	childloss.com
goodgriefresources.com	griefwatch.dom
bereavedparentsusa.org	opentohope.com
healingafterloss.org	webhealing.com
survivorsofsuicide.com	alivelone.org
taps.org (military death)	angelmoms.com
save.org (suicide/depression)	M.A.D.D..org
pomc.com (families of murder victims)	
grasphelp.org (substance abuse deaths)	
www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub (Suicide)	
Griefwords.com (for grandparents)	



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](http://www.compassionatefriends.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

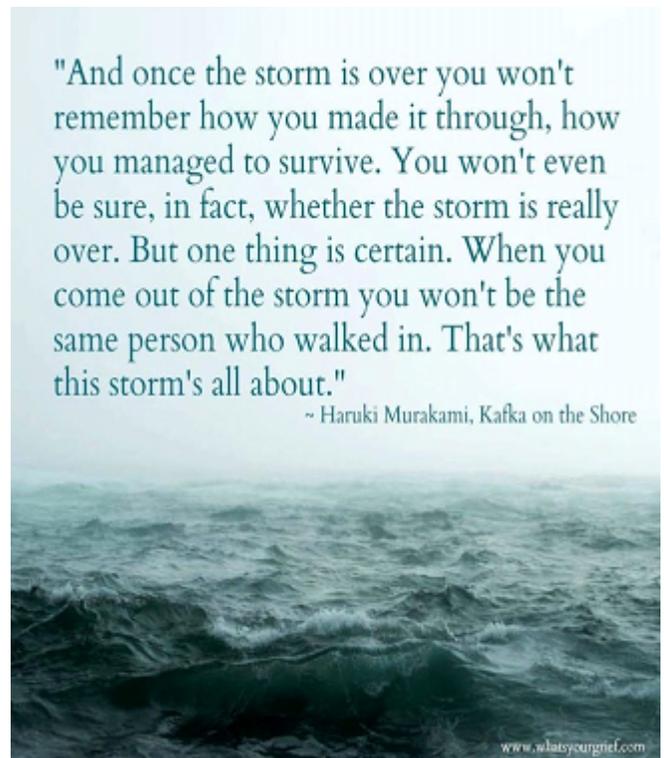
#### Steering Committee Members:

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 once the storm is over you won't remember how you made it through, how you managed to survive. You won't even be sure, in fact, whether the storm is really over. But one thing is certain. When you come out of the storm you won't be the same person who walked in. That's what this storm's all about."

~ Haruki Murakami, *Kafka on the Shore*





# 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.**

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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 \_\_\_\_\_

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

The Compassionate Friends  
South Bay/L.A., CA Chapter  
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**September 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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