



The Compassionate Friends

South Bay/LA Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Nov. 2025 ISSUE

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

OUR NEXT MEETING:
will be Nov 6th, 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 Nov. 6th meeting will start with **"Thanksgiving: Anticipation Or Apprehensions"**.

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 Nov. 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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The Thursday Nov 6th meeting will start with **“Thanksgiving: Anticipation Or Apprehensions”**. Those first few years after the death of a child, sibling, or grandchild our emotions are so raw and painful that we may not even realize that Thanksgiving is just around the corner. How can I be thankful, when I can hardly make it to tomorrow? What will you do this year? For some, the choice is to keep the same tradition they have in the past. Others choose to remain home and ignore the holiday completely. There are parents who go on vacation or go out to Thanksgiving dinner at a restaurant. Newly bereaved parents may question "what am I supposed to do?" There is no standard right or wrong answer. Whatever feels the most comforting is the right answer for you. We welcome you to join us at the next meeting as we share our anticipations and apprehensions about Thanksgiving and the start of the holiday season.

Copying With Grief During The Holidays

Holidays are a difficult time for families after the death of a son or daughter, especially when the death has been within the last year. While other people and families are looking forward to the holidays with happy anticipation, those of us who know someone is missing look forward to the holidays with apprehension.



Following are some suggestions to help thru the holidays. I will not promise you no pain, but, perhaps, some of these thoughts will help you feel less alone and better able to face the day.

Cry...Give yourself permission to cry. Tears are nature's way of helping us heal.

Need...Let others know what you need. You don't have to do anything or go anywhere or be anything that forces you to pretend you are feeling better than you do.

Plan...Talk to your family and decide what you will do and what the day will look like. Will you have the usual dinner? Will you go out instead? Who will take care of what tasks? Most of all, remember the person who is gone. Light a special candle, plant a tree, share memories. Create your own special way to remember your son or daughter.

Nurture Yourself...Rest and eat balanced meals. Avoid sugar and alcohol because they tend

to exacerbate emotions by throwing our body chemistry off balance. You may want to take a walk in nature, ride your bike, allow yourself extra time in bed, take a long and leisurely bath or shower, do whatever you find healing.

Be gentle to yourself and to your family. The holidays may be anticipated with dread, but if planned and time allowed for the grief and sharing of memories, you might find some of your tears turning into joy and laughter.

--Author unknown

Thankful... Versus Thankless

This is the time of the year when many bereaved parents start saying out loud what newly bereaved parents have been thinking for weeks and weeks, I am really dreading the holidays. And why not? When your grief is so new you haven't had the necessary time to accept life as it is for you now.

On the other hand there are those of us who have had the necessary time and the proper support, who are able to observe the holidays in a less painful way. We have kept some of those old traditions that warm our hearts and thrown out those that are either too painful or meaningless now. We have created a life that doesn't include someone who was a vital part of who and what we were. We're different now, doing different things because losing a child forces you into that position if you are to survive in an emotionally healthy way.

The words thankful and thankless follow one another in the dictionary; so close together in a book, yet so far apart in meaning. When you think about it the "difference between" the two words is full and less. Though those of us who have had more time do like the more newly bereaved, have less in the way of family, but our lives have fullness again because we have learned to be thankful and appreciate that which we have left in the way of people and memories more so than we ever thought possible.

As you approach this Thanksgiving, if you haven't yet been able to make your adjustment, I hope you will feel what you must for now, because whatever you are feeling is okay. It isn't until you have reached the place in your grief where the ability to make good choices returns to your life that you can make some important changes in how you approach the holidays.

I hope the transition from thankless to thankful will be soon in coming to you, for that will mean

some peace has returned to your life. Above all, I do wish you peace during this holiday season. I wish you more of the same in the New Year.

-- Mary Cleckley, Lawrenceville, GA

Avoiding Thanksgiving?

A very difficult area of functioning is coming to grips with the knowledge that there is absolutely no way of getting around holidays, despite your best efforts to avoid them. And they are horrendous times for many years. Their pain cannot be minimized. But they still must be faced.

One family trying to avoid Thanksgiving - which was the dead child's birthday as well, decided that family gatherings were no longer for them. They would travel or simply ignore the festivities. One day the mother came upon her ten year old daughter crying and asked what was wrong. She was sobbing, reported the mother, "All the children in school had told of their plans and made table decorations for the holiday and Lynn felt completely removed from her classmates. She cried that she was not only deprived of her brother who was dead, but she couldn't even have Thanksgiving dinner and a turkey!"

I listened and held her in her arms and cried. What she was saying made sense. After all, we still had three living children. They also mattered. That night I talked to my husband and we decided that, no matter how bleak and empty it would be, we would have a traditional Thanksgiving dinner.

The family sat around the table, very quietly at first. The father said grace and thanked the Lord for a bountiful meal. When he was through, their ten year old said she had something to add. "I want to thank Mommy and Daddy for making this very special dinner for our family. And most of all I want to thank you God for having let us have my brother Eric for six years. The mother who will never forget what her daughter said told me there was not a dry eye at the table for a few minutes.

But gradually, as the meal progressed, they made an effort to discuss why the holiday was celebrated. From there, the parents told of amusing experiences at Thanksgiving dinners in their younger years. The mother said she planned to tell the stories to lighten the atmosphere just as carefully as she planned the menu. By the time the meal was over, the parents discovered what had been built up in their minds as unsurvivable had become just another turning point.

There will be many such turning points as you

work your way forward. You have already survived what you were certain you could not live through - the death of your child. Turning points, plateaus, are merely steps in coping and nothing more. As you go through each holiday, each season, each happy/sad occasion, you will gain strength from having passed beyond yet another painful event.

--Harriet Schiff , The Bereaved Parent



Post Traumatic Growth

The shock and the pain blew me out of my world. All of the necessary activity of those days kept me connected with others, those who knew and cared. Then, all of the rituals of death were over. Everyone went home. Their lives returned to normal. Normal no longer existed for me. The regular world felt surreal. Everyone was behaving like they did before, and I was no longer a part of that world.

Surreal – real but not felt as real any more. In most cultures, people are assumed to be in deep grief for the first year after a death, and then they emerge from that state, and slowly reintegrate into their community. Space is given for grief. Grief is honored and respected.

In this Western culture, grief gets immediate attention and then it's somehow supposed to be something to move past. People do not move past their past traumas. They grow larger emotionally to be able to know, feel, and remember their traumas while also becoming more capable of being present in their current lives. This is called Post-traumatic Growth. When people are allowed the space they need to grieve, when their grief is not curtailed, they will learn to hold both the painful reality of loss along with the love they still feel for the person who died. From there, their lives expand to hold both past, present, and future. Their emotional world deepens, compassion and wisdom grow.

I am a psychologist specializing in working with people who have been severely traumatized. What I already knew about trauma helped me enormously when my son died. I let myself grieve deeply. I didn't try to 'move on'. I knew our culture's response to death was inadequate, superficial, and, at times, harmful to the grieving person. I keened, wailed, sobbed, and cried, the intensity coming down over time, naturally. Meanwhile, I knew I needed to integrate this loss into my life and future, so that my son's legacy in

my life would be a good one, in honor of him. Deep grief makes those around us very uncomfortable. They want to fix it, make it better, and that actually makes it harder because it tells the grieving person that they're 'too much'. So, the grieving person has a choice – grieve alone, or stifle the grief and maintain contact with others. This is a horrible dilemma, because when people are traumatized, they need the presence of others. They need good, warm, comforting contact with people who know and care about them. Human contact helps people heal. When there is no one around, the grieving person suffers in isolation, or becomes numb to their own pain in order to stay in connection. Sadness slides into depression. Friendships become distant. Some people may feel the world isn't real any more, or the world is real and they're not. Those are dissociative mechanisms – derealization and depersonalization. They are like circuit breakers in the nervous system, lowering the 'charge' by disconnecting the emotions.

Many people experiencing deep grief are also very familiar with the symptoms of PTSD, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder – intrusive thoughts, avoidance, numbing out, nightmares, problems with sleep. It would be helpful to take the "Disorder" off of that diagnosis. It's Post Traumatic Stress. It's a human response to trauma. It would be inhuman to not have a response to this kind of huge trauma. The responses are normal. The problem is finding ways to help calm the nervous system and integrate the all-too-intolerant emotions of loss, anguish, and try to build a life without someone who is now gone.

One of the common traps for people who have lost others is the "I should have" trap. "I should have known." "I should have been able to stop this." This is a normal first level thought process. It happens commonly right after the death. For a short time, it may be helpful, backtracking in the mind to find clues that may have been missed, or possible solutions that weren't tried, etc. That's a way the mind tries to learn what can be learned to prevent this from happening again. It normally goes away with time. However, sometimes it doesn't. Sometimes it gets stuck. When that happens, it's usually a wish in disguise. "I wish I had known." "I wish I had been able to stop this." The wish is real, and if it is experienced as a wish, it doesn't tend to cause distress. It expresses a truth – a wish that this loss could have been prevented. It can be harmful, however, if it's felt as a 'should'. "I should have known," and "I should

have been able to stop this" turn into an assumption of omnipotence. None of us has that kind of all-knowing and all-powerful control. We are all simply human, doing our best with what we do know and actually can do, and that's limited. We do have influence over others, sometimes a lot. However, none of us has control over others. We just don't. So, we use our influence as best we can, and our knowledge and whatever power is available, and sometimes that's enough. And, sometimes it's not.

The feeling of everything being surreal that comes after the funeral, when everyone returns to their normal life, and we no longer have a normal life, marks the start of a new way of living in this world. We are part of it, and often feel apart from it. The challenge is to expand – to honor our grief, deepen our compassion for ourselves along with everyone else, and notice how we grow. Post traumatic growth is what we can do for ourselves, in honor of those we lost, so that their legacy in our lives is a good one.

--Lynette Danylchuk

Suicide Death

It's just...there. It just is. I called my mother to wish her a happy Passover. We talked about the Seder, the ceremonial meal held on the first night of the eight-day holiday. We talked about the weather in Mobile. We talked about how Meg and I and the girls were holding up. "I want you to know," she said, "that I think about Max every day." That sounds more simplistic than she meant it. She went on to describe how someone who is that integral a part of your life, remains a constant presence.

I started to choke up, which made me react, "Seriously? Again? I'm going to keep falling apart?" We chatted a little longer. I hung up and just remained in my car for a minute. I immediately realized the idiocy of my reaction. Of course, I'm going to keep falling apart. I needed to keep falling apart. I just needed to understand that I would keep falling apart so that I wouldn't feel ambushed when it happened.

That's when it began to dawn on me: Max's death isn't going away. Missing him isn't going away. His absence will be, as mom said, my constant companion. Everywhere I go, his



absence will go with me, stand beside me. Actually, I pictured his absence, my grief, my pain, on my shoulder. Not a shadow, just a presence.

This phrase came into my head: It just is. Is as a verb, not as a bridge to another verb. His absence just exists. It just is. I repeated that sentence to myself as I walked across the parking lot into the grocery store.

Coming to that understanding calmed me. It just is. It will always be right here, on my shoulder. Get used to it. Learn to live with it. It's not scary. It's not dangerous. It's just...there. It just is. That thought gave me the first peace I've enjoyed since Max disappeared.

This was my grief. A survivor learns to grieve, to acknowledge the loss, to understand that it is never going away. In a sense, the permanence of the loss replaces the person lost— a poor replacement, initially alienating and painful in its omnipresence, eventually a burden you become accustomed to caring. I don't have Max anymore. I have his loss. Grieving is the vehicle for accepting that transformation.

Eventually, every survivor makes the transformation. The question is, at what pace? Those who choose to stiff arm the grief will find their arms get awfully tired after a while. The force of grief is inexorable, an inflated ball rising through water. It will emerge into open air, either when the griever desires or when the grief desires, which may not be at an opportune time.

-- Ivan Maisel.

Coping With The Loss Of A Toddler

The emergency section of St. Joseph's Hospital. Beige walls lined with unimposing chairs closed in on me. Doctors came and left. Family members surrounded me. Police officers and a priest came to speak with me. Each one repeated the same mantra, "It's not your fault". Unbeknownst to them, this seed of guilt was planted in my heart and spread its dark tentacles into every corner of my soul.

My daughter, Elena, was twenty-two months old when she passed away. I hadn't seen it coming. The day before she passed she'd chased bubbles. I tickled her until she squealed with delight. I read her a book on my knee, tucked her in, and gave



her a goodnight kiss. The next day, she was gone. She slipped through my fingertips like sand. I thought her life was permanent, a fact. She would outlive me. She would have children someday. My world came crashing down, fragmenting at the seams. How could her little courageous heart stop beating?

From the moment of conception, a parent's life changes form; new duties, dreams, and responsibilities. An evolution into a completely new identity with an innate instinct to protect their child. After suffering their devastating loss, there's a sense of failure.

Losing a toddler is a unique grieving experience. Elena was growing healthy and strong. She was learning her alphabet and numbers. She would say "I wuv you" and sing with me. Losing her also meant the loss of her future. A thousand tiny moments I wouldn't have traded for the world.

In this day and age, with such advances in technology, losing a toddler is so rare that people can't help but wonder how it happened. Every time someone asked me "how", it was as if they were asking me to relive my deepest trauma for the benefit of their curiosity. My depressed mind told me they wanted to know if I was the one to blame, but the truth is, my judgment was clouded by grief. When someone asks, it's more than okay to say "I'm not ready to talk about it yet" if that's the case.

During the first few months of my grief journey, I joined grief counseling, and grieving parent Facebook groups. I felt as though no one could relate to my grief. Most people I came across had lost adult children, miscarried, or experienced prolonged illness with their child.

I felt isolated and stigmatized at having lost a toddler. I kept asking myself, "How could I let this happen?" I met other parents who'd lost children decades prior who'd say they felt as though it were yesterday. Everyone's grief journey is unique to them. Every bereaved parent is bonded by the shared experiences of grief, guilt, and love.

No matter the age of a child who passes, each parent has some kind of guilt that torments them. More destructive than grief, guilt tears one apart until shreds of the heart and soul remain intact. It's important to understand that our children come from us but do not belong to us. A parent shapes their child's destiny, but can't control it.

To begin healing and fully embrace life one must let go of guilt. It seems impossible, or even disrespectful at first, but that couldn't be farther

from the truth. After losing Elena, I asked myself, "How can I go on without you?" It felt like my life stopped, and if I moved forward it would be away from my life with her, a betrayal. I resented others for celebrating holidays, for laughing, for living, but I know now that my grief was in control, not me.

There's a formula I follow to make it through each day. Hope, faith, love. The trauma of her loss is the same, the grief is always there, and there is a way to cope. A. J. Cronin once wrote, "Hell is the place where one has ceased to hope". Hope is the tether that keeps me going. I am learning to tell myself "It's not my fault" and live alongside my pain. I find hope in the little signs I believe she sends me, like a ladybug on a cold winter day, or a bible reference when my grief has a hold of me.

Faith feeds my hope and hope feeds my faith. Spiritually I have faith that she is with me every day and knows the effort I put into honoring her life. I have faith her soul still exists, that she is at peace and beyond all pain. She knows the immensity of my love for her and the immensity of my pain.

Leaning on the support from my local church has helped me find purpose and meaning in life, but it isn't a one-size-fits-all cure. Regardless of one's personal beliefs, the message remains the same; faith is the opposite of anxiety, and hope is the opposite of depression. By finding ways to strengthen the former, you will defeat the latter.

I am learning to love the person I am, and the mother I will always be because of her. Grief doesn't go away in time. Guilt doesn't magically fade away. As I evolve during my grief journey I am learning to forgive myself. I honor her memory daily and share my love of her with those who are still living.

Her life has inspired artwork, poetry, and charity. Her love has bridged broken relationships and brought together communities. I am grateful for the time I had with her and the love I share because of her.

Though my heart is breaking daily, I am not broken. I am not healed, I am healing. I am grieving, I am not my grief. With hope, faith, and love I will embrace another day.

--Milan Lopes Elk Grove, CA

Didn't want to. Knew I wouldn't!
Maybe I can ...

Glad I did! ... Survive

--Val Mason TCF Pocatello, ID

Newly Bereaved...



An Attitude of Gratitude

As Thanksgiving approaches, I find myself thinking of people, events, feelings and things I am grateful for. However, the first Thanksgiving after my

son died I cannot say possessed an attitude of gratitude. My 16 year old son, Cameron, died in an automobile accident on June 4, 1999. That first Thanksgiving after he died, all I could think of was the things he didn't get to experience, the places he never got to go, items I never got to buy for him, subjects we never got to discuss, arguments I wished we hadn't had, finding out how his life would have unfolded, what he would have become, who he would have married, how many children he would have had, where he would have lived, etc., etc., etc.

If you are newly bereaved, I know you can relate to those thoughts. My head was so full of the thoughts of what death cheated Cameron out of. I felt singled out and alone. Life wasn't fair and I felt cheated. I was hurt, angry and in pain. But, along the way, I was blessed to find fellow travelers on the journey through grief.

I found out that it was normal to have these thoughts. I feared that I would forget some of Cameron's ways and mannerisms that made him so unique. I have gained strength, insight and hope from other bereaved parents. I encourage you to go to support groups for bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents and just talk. Tell your story as many times as you need to. Listen as others share their experience, strength and hope. I promise you that, if you do the grief work, and, yes, it's probably the hardest work you'll ever do, you will reach a point in time when you too can have an attitude of gratitude.

This Thanksgiving finds me with an attitude of gratitude. I am grateful that I had a son names Cameron. I'm grateful for my two surviving children, Aaron and Josolyn, my husband, Gene, and my son-in-law, Doug. I'm grateful for all the special people I have met on this unwanted journey through grief. I'm grateful for friends and family who supported me. I'm grateful that we can

talk about Cameron and share special memories we have of him. I'll always miss him and wonder how his life would have unfolded. I'm grateful that I'm at this place in my journey through grief. I can, once again, participate and be a part of life. I have learned to love Cameron in death as much as I loved him in life. Today, I can talk about Cameron, share memories of him and smile.

-- Martha Honn

Seasoned Grievors...

Twenty Years Later, 2025



I began this unimaginable journey when our son Kyle died at the age of 22. My intention in this writing is to give hope to those earlier in the 'process of grieving'. I particularly never thought I'd reach "acceptance", although in a sense that is where I am now. I can't change what happened, so I must go forward without our precious son. My first writing was in March, 2006, just three months after Kyle's death from brain cancer—how random that was. One day he was fine, first year at college living in a fraternity, and on track to 'make Dean's List' at University of Washington. The next, "I have a headache." Roughly three years later, his death.

From 2006, my words: "Can everyone see it all the time, everywhere I go? There is no spring in my step, no beauty in the world even though I know it's still there; it simply is not there any longer for me. My shoulders slump and no one tells me funny jokes to cheer me up."

Much later, I can recall one day riding in our car with Glenn (my husband, Kyle's dad) at the wheel and Megan (who was engaged to Kyle and still living with us) was in the back seat. We went around a corner on the road to Bellevue and Mt. Rainier was out and I said something about how majestic the mountain is, how beautiful. Megan noticed my comment and mentioned this later. It was, perhaps, close to a year after 2006.

I have described my own journey in this way: At first, I felt as though a terrible weight was directly on my head and shoulders. I walked with a slump—something quite new to me and the world was foggy. I cried almost all the time, and of course this is normal and the opposite of pleasant. Virtually nothing felt okay in any way. Food didn't taste good, nothing was right.

Slowly, very slowly for me (we only had one child, and will have no grandkids), I could manage

to move that dreadful weight of grief from my head and shoulders and it would walk at my side. I'm sorry I can't give time frames, but everyone is different so the time doesn't really matter—when you begin to resurface it will be in your own time.

But this *will happen*. Much later I felt as though that heavy weight would walk behind me instead of weighing me down so heavily. It was still there—just further back. And then further, although the sadness will never end. If I allow myself to feel that wrenching grief I can cry at a moment's notice. I'd likely make a great actor now, since I can cry any time, right on cue.

That last line was a joke. Joking is something I have been able to return to. I went to a party with my husband—one that we have been to annually for 45 years. We couldn't decide if we really wanted to attend in 2006, just 7 months after Kyle died, but went anyway. I was glad we did because our wonderful friends were all there, and they were kind and caring, just as they were this year.

I must say this year, our joining that event was a mixed gift. Now, we are seeing our children's toddlers and young adults chasing after their own little ones - as we did about 40 years ago. I am a bit jealous, yet glad for them at the same time. We are fortunate (still don't use the term "lucky" to describe anything about my life), to have so many amazing friends.

From 2013: "I can sing along with my radio when I am alone in my car again; I remember how much my car-singing bugged Kyle, so naturally I sang louder and with more goofiness. I even make jokes out loud, when I am alone..."

2025: Now I sing very loudly. I can say funny lines that make people howl with laughter and now remember, I was funny first. Before Kyle came, before I even met my husband. I was a "middle child" so I learned when I was little if I could make people laugh, good times generally followed. My sense of humor has returned. Seemed impossible once, but happened on its own. Yours will too, though presently that may feel impossible.

One of my coping techniques, and this is totally something I didn't exactly think of, I simply started doing: I am kinder now than I have ever been and I might have always been a kind person. If I see someone struggling with anything, I ask if I can help and generally that help is gratefully accepted. Tiny acts of kindness toward others has helped me to continue to move forward. Kyle was everything I had hoped for in a child of my own, handsome, funny, whip-smart, popular, and an athlete. Yet the

best part of him was his extraordinary kindness. I may have begun my own thoughtful kindness to honor him? I am not sure, but glad I do everything and anything I can for all people I am around.

I wish I could better explain the how of what I'm writing here. It's been almost 20 years, so a long time, and a very long unthinkable journey. I never thoughtfully said, "I'm done, I'm going to live my life." That simply wasn't me, yet somehow I am living my life, imperfectly as always. There really isn't a 'how', or even 'how long'. My wish is to give parents earlier in their own process some source of comfort or solace, to know that all will be okay for you too.

There is more than one way to be "okay". You will find yours one day, and yes I am sure.

-- Sheryl Charvat Eastside Kirkland TCF, WA

Friends And Family...

Permission To Grieve

Give yourself permission to hurt and *ask others to understand*. It will be much better for all of you, if you keep from being too brave, too polite. That makes others feel more helpless, more distant from you, perhaps even a bit rejected. If you can, talk very briefly to your immediate family, especially to your partner, and ask for patience, promising yours in return.

Because we all react differently to great emotional strain, this can be a time of temporary estrangements in your family – this is also the time to remember all the reasons why you loved each other in the first place. Don't worry about feeling 'nothing': your mind has been dealt a terrible blow, and your old feelings will need time to return. Do let others give you evidence of their devotion, concern, warmth, attention, empathy – after all, these are the finest gifts we can give to each other. And believe me: honesty in sharing your feelings is a gift from you to them, showing your friends and your helpers that you trust them, that they are important and that they are appreciated.

—Alexandra Sascha Wagner



Book Review...

Renewing Your Spirit A Guide for Holidays and Special Days by Sherry Williams. A season filled with joy can become a burden to people who have

recently experienced a loss in their life or are caring for a loved one. However there is a way to cope with the constant reminders and memories on these holidays and special days. This book that will help grieving individuals learn creative ways to integrate the memories of a loved one into new holiday traditions and rituals.

Order online at www.centering.org or toll free at 1-866-218-1010 (tell them you are from TCF for free shipping)



Helpful Hint...

"Grief isn't a problem to be solved; It's an experience to be carried. If you're going to survive your grief, you'll need to find ways to inhabit grief - to live between those two extremes of "all better" and "hopelessly doomed." You need tools to build a life alongside your loss, not make that loss disappear. As impossible as it may seem, you can survive your grief. It won't be all sunshine and roses, and it's not going to be easy. You need to come into a relationship with grief, to learn how to carry it, and most of all to come to yourself with kindness – for all you've had to live through.

-- Megan Devine "How to Carry What Can't Be Fixed: A Journal for Grief"



Welcome...

We, as bereaved parents, help grieving families rebuild their lives following the death of a child! Please join us at one of the meetings as we all work toward healing from the death of our child. Grief shared is grief diminished. You are not required to talk and this is not a group therapy session—just parents sharing in a safe environment. Come see how much it can help.



The World Wide Candle Lighting...

The Worldwide Candle Lighting is held annually the second Sunday in December, this year on December

14th. Join us as friends and family around the globe light a candles for one hour to honor and remember children who have died at any age and from any cause. Candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, creating

a virtual wave of light, as hundreds of thousands of people commemorate and honor the memory of children in a way that transcends all ethnic, cultural, religious, and political boundaries.

Our Chapter's Candle Lighting...

Friends and family are invited to join us and candles will be provided. Because our regular meeting site is unavailable on the 14th, we will be holding our Candle Lighting Event at American Martyrs OLMM Room 1431 Deegan Pl Manhattan Beach, CA 90266

Leo has volunteered to create a slide show of all our children to play during the ceremony. Start looking for a picture of your child that you would like to be shown. Send photos (max 3) to his email at liccica79@gmail.com Write "Candlelight Photo" in Subject line. Provide name of child, year born and died, name of parents. You may submit a poem or a song request. Leo will work it into the program of possible. The **Deadline** to be included in the slide show is **December 5th**.

The event will **start at 6:30**. The actual **Candle lighting is at 7**. For those wishing to read a poem in memory of their child, bring it with you. We will also have copies of poems available from previous events that you can customize as a tribute to your child. Your contribution of finger foods for after the ceremony are welcomed. Drinks will be provided. Since space may be limited, we ask families to indicate how many will attend when submitting their photos.

The Birthday Table

No rustling tissue paper,
scattered ribbons, or burst balloons.
No shouts of Happy Birthday,
break the silence in this room.
Nonetheless, a birthday has rolled round again,
though the beloved children who reveled in the
cheer no longer blow the candles out at the turning
of the year
Loving hands may bring a photograph of that
precious life to share and place it on the Birthday
Table with utmost tenderness and care
For though the world may not recall the laughter or
the joys, we treasure every memory
of our birthday girls and boys.
--Frankie Wilford, TCF Carrollton-Farmers Branch

Death brings you a choice.
It can lead you to the edge of the abyss.

Or you can build a bridge that will span the chasm.
Your love is still part of your life.
Whatever it was that made your beloved dear to
you, you can make real for others.
The memory of the dead can indeed outlast the
monuments we erect for them."
--Earl Grollman



As requested: **A Thanksgiving Prayer for Grieving Families**

Dear Father who art in Heaven Please join our family on this Thanksgiving day and bless each one as we sit down to pray as we remember those who have joined You above so dearly missed and deeply loved.

Please provide us strength on this Thanksgiving day
bless us with memories of those far away...
Please grant patience to family and friends as we grieve and help us reach out to others who are bereaved.

We give thanks to You on this Thanksgiving day...
for Your presence in our lives each and every day.

For Your comfort, guidance and never ending love...
and for taking care of our loved ones...in Heaven above.

As we light this candle on this Thanksgiving day...
and it glows in memory of those in Heaven today...
May their lights always shine down on us and give us light...
and may we feel their presence along with Yours tonight.

May the peace and tranquility of this Thanksgiving day
Be an everlasting light within each of us along the way...
Let's bow our heads and give our Thanks to God above..
For our blessings, whether on earth or in Heaven above...
Amen.

**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
Castania, Grandparents:
Richard & Ann Leach

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

Vanessa Roseann
Castania
Born: 2/97 Died: 7/05
Parents: Frank & Debbie
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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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
Match
Born: 5/02 Died: 7/18
Parents: Mike & Shirley
Match, Grandmother:
Dorothy Match

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: Desireé 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**

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

Remembered

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. Birthday and 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.)

Sorry, no tributes were submitted this month

By Siblings...



Turkey Talks: Thanking the Man Who Comforted My Brother

I gathered the courage to call the man who sat in the car with my brother while they waited for the ambulance to arrive. The man was a fireman, and he was off duty, painting a house to earn extra money, when he saw the accident. He jumped off of the ladder and rushed over to the car. He crawled inside the car and knocked out the windshield, because the driver was panicking and felt claustrophobic. The driver was my brother, Chris, and he died in the hospital about 30 minutes later from internal injuries. But while he waited for the ambulance, scared and struggling to breath, the fireman sat by him and comforted him. We couldn't be there, but he could, and it means everything to me that Chris wasn't alone during the last minutes of his life.

In honor of this, my mother takes a full Thanksgiving dinner to the local fire department each year to thank these courageous and thoughtful people. It took me over ten years to be able to speak to the man who knew the details of my brother's final moments. I wasn't ready to know for a long time, but I could thank him right away in a letter, and our family found a way to thank his profession for all of the sons and brothers they've saved, protected, and even mourned. It might not be perfect, but it makes us feel better. The firemen don't mind a day off from cooking, either.

You could write a letter, donate your time or your expertise, help another family get through the holidays, post your coping ideas on a blog, do something crazy or silly, work on a project together, take a vacation, go for a goal you've been denying, ask friends to help you create a memory book ... Find what works for you, and don't apologize for it. You deserve to do something that makes you feel better.

-- Scott Mastley, TCF, Atlanta, GA

Siblings

The loss of a sibling – no matter how old, no matter how close or not, and no matter how often death has occurred to others we know, is like losing part of our own lives and part of ourselves. Who will be left now to remember us as the

children we once were? Who will be able to remember our parents the way we do and as only their children can? Who will there be who lived in the same house, tasted the same foods, heard the same stories, were taught the same lessons we were? We still have our own memories of course, but without someone who shared them and can relive them with us, they become mere ghosts.

When we lose a sibling, we lose not just the particular person or relationship, but perhaps the last remaining link with our past. Our siblings are special people in our lives, i.e. sometimes they are supports and sometimes they are stresses or even strangers to us. But it does not really matter because regardless of whether we like each other, we have intimately shared and shaped each others' past and been shaped by them. So when our siblings age and fail, our own lives are changed too.

And when our siblings die, we know there is no one else – no matter how close to us they may be – who can bring back the particular part of our life we have lost.

-- Lillian Hawthorne, Senior World Magazine

From Our Members...

The Isolation of Grief

Now, I've never been a stranger to the isolation that comes from feeling like you just don't fit into your surroundings. But I've never felt as isolated in my whole life as I have after the death of my daughter.

As a child, I was a shy, introverted person and often felt different than the people around me. At the time, I never really knew why. While I didn't like the feeling of isolation, I didn't understand what caused it so it just became a fact of life. Over the years my shyness has lessened, but I still prefer interacting with small groups or one-on-one in-person conversations, and still look forward to time alone. I've learned to accept it as my personality, and it works for me.

After my daughter died, my sense of isolation grew exponentially as a result of grief. In the immediate aftermath of her sudden death, our house was filled with family and friends who were showing their support for us and helping us do what had to be done: planning the memorial, visiting the cemetery to secure a plot, working with our insurance company requirements, etc. They prepared meals, made sure we were left alone when we needed our space, gave us hugs, and shed tears with us. The phone rang

often, and I found myself doing most of the talking when the other end of the phone was uncomfortably silent as people struggled to find the right words to say. Even in my numbness, I was able to understand the dilemma of "I'm sorry" doesn't seem to be enough when someone has just lost a four-year-old little girl.

A few days after the memorial service, everyone went home. Less sympathy cards arrived in the mail until there were none. The phone stopped ringing. Our daughter's preschool arranged a weekly meal donation and then my work did the same, which was a huge help...but eventually those stopped coming too. We were left alone to figure out how to pick up the pieces of our shattered hearts and shattered lives. We went to counseling and support groups. But we were forced to accept the fact that life was going to keep moving forward without our precious girl in it. It was devastating.

That devastation led me to a self-imposed isolation from a world I could no longer stand to be a part of. I didn't want to talk to people who couldn't understand my pain because I didn't want to have to explain myself. The sound of laughter or gossip produced outright anger in me. The everyday acts of going to work, chores, grocery shopping, or even something as simple as showering were agonizingly painful and almost impossible. I wanted nothing to do with any of it. I found myself not answering the phone and not returning messages. I turned down invitations to get together with friends who weren't sure how to help me.

I managed to make sure that I fed my surviving kids and took them to school and practices, but I was no longer the mom they were used to. They stopped wanting to talk to me about how they felt because they knew it would make me even sadder, and they were frightened that not only did they lose their sister, but there was a potential that their mom was losing her ability to take care of them.

Over that first year or so, the suffocating pain began to lessen, though not by as much as I would have hoped. I got better at doing those everyday tasks that didn't seem so impossible anymore. I began to adjust to the "new normal" any grieving person must accept.

Then the isolation of grief began to change. While I started answering the phone and accepting some of those invitations, I felt isolated in the sense that I continued to think of my



daughter and experience the pain constantly, but very few people talked about my grief or even mentioned her name any more. I felt completely alone.

Support groups and counseling helped. So did reaching out to other parents who had lost children, and I preferred their company over others. I found myself part of the secret society of grieving parents who mostly keep their grief to themselves and only share it with those who understand because they are faced with the same loss and pain. I found that sharing my feelings with these people helped me immensely.

Now that more time has passed, I am learning how to balance becoming fully reinvested in life while respecting my continuing needs for grief support. I still look forward to support groups and talking with other bereaved people, but I also appreciate that when I allow myself to enjoy and appreciate everyday life, joy will come even without my daughter being physically here.

Despite my continued longing for her to be at my side and the ability to experience the wonder of watching her grow, I know that she will always be with me in spirit. She is forever in my heart, my memories, and my thoughts. And these days, I don't mind sharing that with anyone who cares to get to know me.

-- Maria Kubitz TCF So. Bay/L.A., CA In Memory of my daughter, Margareta

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 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 & Anniversary 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: Nov. first for Dec. 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 (chpt. 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
survivorsof suicide.com
taps.org (military death)
save.org (suicide/depression)
pomc.com (families of murder victims)
grasphelp.org (substance abuse deaths)
www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub (Suicide)
Griefwords.com (for grandparents)



childloss.com
griefwatch.dom
opentohope.com
webhealing.com
alivealone.org
angelmoms.com
M.A.D.D..org

A Special Thanks to Staples for their help in printing our newsletters each month and to The Neighborhood Church for the use of their facilities for our meetings.

Chapter Officers:

CHAPTER CO-LEADERS: Leo & Connie Licciardone and Jarmo & Bonnie Mantoya

CHAPTER ZOOM HOSTS: Connie & Leo Licciardone

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines

PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks

TREASURER: Kristy Mueller

WEBSITE: Leo Licciardone

Steering Committee Members:

Linda & Joe Zelik

Marilyn Nemeth

Bill Matasso

Nancy Lerner

Connie & Leo Licciardone

Sandra & Eddie Myricks

Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla



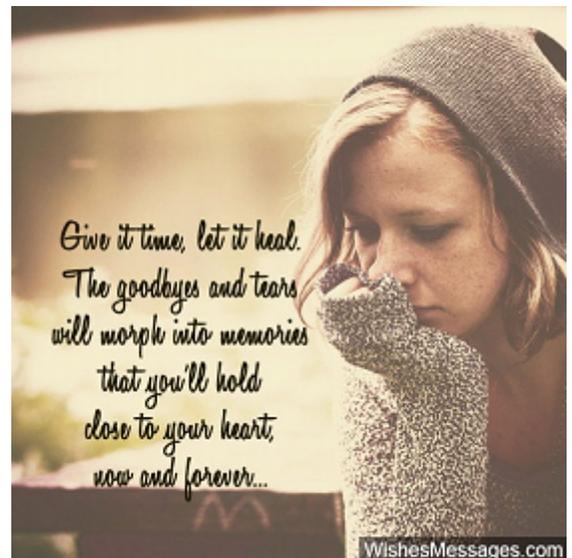
Lori Galloway
Crystal Henning
Lynn Vines
Kristy Mueller
Kitty Edler
Susan Kass

National Office Information: Compassionate Friends E-Newsletter: TCF National Office publishes a monthly e-newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on what's going on with the organization

and its chapters. We encourage everyone use the valuable information it holds to help you in your grief. To receive TCF's e-newsletter, sign up for it online by visiting TCF national website at <http://compassionatefriends.org>. and filling out the request to sign-up at the bottom of the page.

The National Office of TCF... has an ongoing support group for parents and siblings online. For a complete schedule and to register for Online Support, visit <http://compassionatefriends.org> and follow the directions to register. There is also a closed group chat for specific topics that you need to register for.

Online Support (Live Chat)... TCF offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. Please Note: Times posted on the schedule are based on Pacific Time. Select "enter room" under the chat room you would like to participate in and you will be prompted to register. Once registered you will be able to log-in with your username and password that you have set up. You can keep abreast of any changes by going to: www.compassionatefriends.org





DONATIONS TO THE SOUTH BAY/L.A. CHAPTER OF THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

The Compassionate Friends is a totally self-supporting organization. Our chapter is run entirely by volunteers, but we do have operating costs. Your tax deductible donation is what keeps our chapter going. **In honor and in remembrance of you child, please consider a donation to our chapter.**

When making a donation, please make checks payable to
The Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. chapter.
Mail to: The South Bay/LA chapter of Compassionate Friends
P.O. Box 11171 Torrance CA 90510

In loving memory of all our children. Thanksgiving is a reminder of what we have lost, but also of what remains in our hearts. With mixed emotions we will acknowledge Thanksgiving and try to balance the sadness of your death with the beautiful memories of you and past celebrations that make this day a little brighter. We wish you all a peaceful Thanksgiving, TCFSBLA

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

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

In loving memory of _____ Birth date _____ Death date _____

Tribute _____

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

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



November 2025

Time Sensitive Material, Please Deliver Promptly



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.
The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain,
just as your hope becomes my hope.
We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.
We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships.
We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief,
but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful
that they feel helpless and see no hope.
Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength,
while some of us are struggling to find answers.
Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression,
while others radiate an inner peace.
But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends,
it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other
our love for the children who have died.
We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love
to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith
as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.
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If you no longer wish to receive this mailing, need corrections, or
have a new address, please contact us.