



# *The Compassionate Friends*

## *South Bay/LA Chapter*

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

**A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

**JUNE 2026 ISSUE**

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

**OUR NEXT MEETING:**  
will be June 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 June 4<sup>th</sup> meeting will start with "Our Stolen Plans Become New Plans".**

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 place to talk about your grief every Friday from 1-3. We meet at different locations each week so call to let us know you are coming. Everyone pays for their own lunch so arrival times & locations are flexible. Please call (310) 963-4646 for more information.

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

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The Thursday June 4th meeting will start with **“Our Stolen Plans Become New Plans”**. Before our children died we had big plans for our lives. Life was hectic but manageable. Then, in blink of an eye, we are forced into the worst thing imaginable... The death of a child. Life as we knew it was gone. Ripped from our family, the loss of a child forces us to readjust our plans. The overwhelming pain, confusion, sleepless nights, decisions that had to be made and long term life plans change. At first, we resist. Some scream, some cry, some completely believe we will go crazy from our grief... we know we can't survive this! Looking for help, we go to counseling and to TCF meetings. We don't have the energy or the enthusiasm we once did. Nothing seems worth the energy and effort it takes to continue. Then something shifts.

At a TCF meetings I learned that my plans for life now had to be adjusted **BECAUSE** of my loss. Slowly, I tried to get back into the rhythm of life. The empathy, understanding and suggestions by those further down the grief road helps us to readjust our futures, to find new plans that are attainable. With time and grief work, the anguish of grief lifts and hope emerges. As we grow and change and engage in life again, we are able to make new plans for a life we never imagined before. Wherever you are in your grief, we hope the following articles and our meetings will help you readjust to any new plans you may make.

### **“A Gift of Hope: How we Survive Our Tragedies”**

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

One day we feel as though the dark clouds have lifted, but the next day they have returned. One moment we can smile, but a few hours later the tears emerge... it is true that, as we take two steps forward in our journey, we may take one or more steps back. But when one affirms that the

spring thaw will arrive, the winter winds seems to lose some of their punch.

--Robert Veninga

### **The Myth of Closure**

When will I begin to feel better? When will I return to normal? When will I achieve some closure?" grievers often ask. Closure, our culture tells us, will bring about a tidy ending, a sense of completion. Some grievers hope that the desired magical closure will occur after the funeral or memorial service. Others are confident it will come once they have cleared out their loved one's room. Or maybe after a special personal ritual. Or perhaps after the first anniversary comes and goes—"surely then, we will have closure," we think. We pray.

The reason we long for closure, of course, is because we would like to nearly seal away all of this pain. We would like to close all of the sad, confused, desperate, angry feelings out of our life. We would like to put all of this behind us. Closure.

What an odd concept really, as if we could truly close the door on pain—turn the lock and throw away the key. The truth is far more complex, of course.

Closure is for business deals. Closure is for real estate transactions. Closure is not for feelings or for people we love. Closure simply does not exist emotionally, not in a pure sense. We cannot close the door on the past as if it didn't exist because, after losing someone dear to us, we never forget that person or the love we shared. And in some ways, we never entirely get over the loss. We learn to live with the loss, to integrate it into our new identity.

Imagine if we really could end this chapter in our life, completely. It would mean losing our memories, our connections to those we love. If we really found closure, it would ironically hurt even more because the attachment would be severed. And this attachment is vital to us—the memories are treasures to be held close, not closed out. Perhaps it is better to think in terms of healing. Yes, we can process our pain and move to deeper and deeper levels of healing. Yes, we can find ways to move on and channel our pain into productive activities. Yes, we can even learn to smile again

“

**The world changes  
from year to year, our  
lives from day to day,  
but the love and  
memory of you, shall  
never pass away.**



UNKNOWN

and laugh again and love again. But let's not ever think that we'll close the door completely on what this loss means, for if we did that, we would unwittingly close the door on all the love that we shared. And that would truly be a loss too terrible to bear.

--Ashley Davis Prend, ACSW, Hospice of North Idaho

## Find a Silver Lining, Even Where There Isn't One.

We all know the feeling – and the Pixar film “Inside Out” reminds us – that when the sun shines on us, we can't help but feel good. But what about when things go the other way? That's when the work begins trying to feel good, we can't see any reason to. The trick is to embrace the negative.

Turning away from sadness and disappointment stifles growth. In his research, Martin Seligman at the University of Pennsylvania found that pessimists and optimists respond differently to setbacks

Pessimists see failing as a reflection of their personal failures, while optimists see them as learning experiences. Let yourself feel bad when things are bad. Bad things happen to good people, including the most successful ones, and it's healthy to recognize them. The trap is in getting stuck. It's hard to separate these feelings, but nonetheless important. Frame your difficult experiences as stepping stones. It's ok to have a moment where you feel overwhelmed but use that energy to think about a plan ahead. Don't let the things that haven't gone well distract you from what you have accomplished.

The emotionally intelligent thing to do is to focus on your own strengths and your positive qualities to promote a more positive frame of mind. Instead of spending time thinking about your weaknesses and your shortcomings, shift your attention to your strengths and what you have accomplished. This can help you feel better about yourself and approach life's challenges with greater confidence.

Self-compassion is another powerful way to stay positive. Treat yourself and those around you with kindness and understanding, especially when times are tough. Treat yourself the way you would treat a close friend going through the same thing.

Surrounding yourself with positive influences is also important. Spend more time with supportive

friends and family members, and others who help you feel good about yourself. Participate in the activities that you enjoy and find meaningful, such as a hobby or volunteer effort. Spend time in nature. Being positive in your thinking doesn't just benefit you, but also the people around you. Your positive vibes can give them a boost, and in turn, they will be likely to give you positivity in return, creating an upward spiral of encouragement. So set yourself up for success at work and in your personal life by developing a more positive life by developing a more positive outlook and notice how it changes the way your experiences, relationships and daily life unfold. As you flex your emotional intelligence, allowing your mind set to shift, you'll soon be well on your way to becoming a shining example of positivity in the lives of those who work for and with you.

When you have a good day, even if you don't come by them often, pick up something as a reminder. A tiny rock or a wildflower, a leaf, a coin you find on the ground, a feather. Place it on a windowsill. Then when the darkness returns you will have something real to remind you that there is good.

--Whitney Hanson

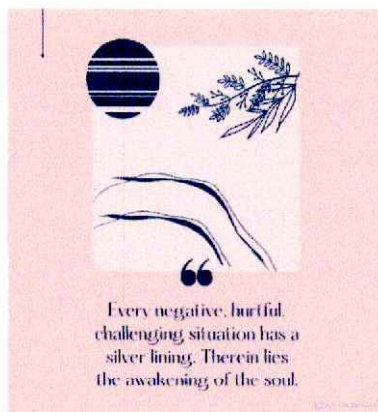
## Five Lessons Grief Teaches

Twenty-two years of grief changes a lot of things. I am a new person every day. I never expected to survive my daughter's death. For months after, I prayed to die. More than once, I considered taking my own life, though I could not leave all I love here.

There is no good way or time to lose a child. When someone you love dies, everything unnecessary falls away. I have learned to see grief as a spiritual practice, and it has taught me to see life in new ways.

TRUTH: telling it and living it My daughter Hannah died of cancer at the age of three. This is the first true moment in my human story. Everything I am begins with this. The truth of Hannah's death is fierce and unrelenting. I cannot change it, but I can change the way I live with it.

When Hannah died, my life entered a “no drama” zone. I only had time and energy for the few things that mattered. I lost my politeness and learned to tell the truth. I let the phone ring and



stopped reading fiction.

Pretending not to grieve does not make our children less dead. When tears are not seen as weakness, sorrow becomes a wise teacher. I also see now that truth is mutable. Truth changes as we change, and it waits until we are ready to see it.

JOY: finding it in the darkest places As time passed, this feeling lifted. I smiled more and cried less. I noticed signs and synchronicities that reminded me of Hannah.

Joy is fleeting when grief makes a home in your life. I learned to find it in the darkest places. Saying 'yes' in the moment reveals unexpected happiness. I rarely make plans ahead of time now, as I can't be certain how I will feel. This way of seeing allows us to release the need for everything to be perfect. Joy is the possibility of happiness in every moment, the feeling that we are right where we need to be.

FAITH: from "my will be done" to "thy will be done" Three months after Hannah's death, I stood by the side of a road, prepared to take my own life. I was not afraid of death, no matter what happens Hannah is already there. As a truck approached, I suddenly became aware of my lungs breathing. I forgot about the truck and focused on my breath. I realized that something in me is still choosing life. I stayed alive to find out why.

There are no words to describe the space left absent when a child dies. The love you feel has nowhere to go. The longer your child is gone, the more you miss them. This missing becomes a part of you.

In my grief, I began to explore other religions and belief systems, hungry for validation of life after death. The God I believe in now is not the God that I grew up with. Though Christianity remains the first language of my faith, I now see threads of truth connecting many understandings. For me, God is a force of a thousand names and one love. Hannah's spirit lives on as part of everything.

Strange comfort, this holding of everything in one place; yet I see an intelligence beyond imagining which orchestrates life and nature. While it is painful to accept Hannah's death, I also see her life making a difference in this world. Someone once described the earth as the planet for slow-learners. Faith trusts and breathes when it's all we can do

There's  
freedom in  
knowing you  
can carry joy  
and grief  
together.  
- Nancy Berns

COMPASSION: from specialness to belonging I do not know why Hannah died and other children didn't. At first, I felt a sense of specialness. No one could know the depth of my pain. For a while, I didn't want to speak with anyone unless they had lost a child. Gradually, I began to connect with other people.

Forgiveness is key throughout the journey of grief: forgiveness of those who live and of those who die. As I learn to forgive myself, I find it easier to forgive others. Our intent in harnessing grief makes transformation possible. 'Grief' shares the same root as 'grave', 'gravity', and 'gravitation'. It is a force with weight and heft. Once engaged, it can be redirected.

When Hannah was first diagnosed, one of her doctors gave us good advice. He said, "Remember, no matter what happens, make the best decision you can with the information you have AT THAT TIME." Of course, we would change things if we knew then what we know now. There is no solace in blaming ourselves and others for not knowing.

Although I sometimes have less patience for other people and their problems, I see each of us is a unique lens in a shared experience. Compassion softens our gaze and allows us to appreciate new perspectives. When we reach beyond our specialness, we realize we are not alone.

WONDER: from needing to know to letting go There was a house in our little town which was painted pink from top to bottom. Hannah loved this house. In the last year of her life, each time we passed it, she would say, "That's where I am going to live!"

A year and a half after Hannah's death, my daughter Madelaine was born. One day, when Madelaine was almost three years old, we were driving to the grocery store. Suddenly Madelaine started shrieking from the back seat, I turned to see what was happening and saw her pointing to the pink house.

"Mommy," she exclaimed, "That's the house where Hannah and I played in heaven before I was born!" I had no idea how she knew, and in that moment I didn't need to. Hannah's death opened me to realms I never knew existed.

Having watched my Father and my daughter take their last breaths, I remember a peaceful presence entering the room. This energy called life is where I feel our children's presence is, and their spirits still make themselves known. -- Maria Housden

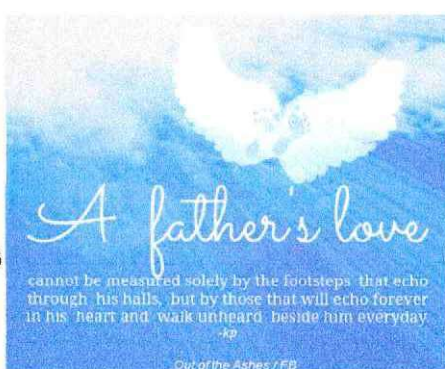
## A Bereaved Mom's Thoughts on Bereaved Dads and Stepdads on Father's Day

Father's Day, a day we honor those wonderful dads, for many is a day that can be bittersweet. There are two groups of fathers that fall into that category and, if I may, would like to speak up for. I know I have mentioned the bereaved moms on Mother's Day, but I ask you to keep in mind those dads whose children who have died before them.

Just as the bereaved siblings are oftentimes the forgotten mourners, the fathers can become invisible too. I know many a bereaved dad who, when met on the street got the question, "How is your wife doing?" I suppose for the person who asks, it is easier not to confront the father's grief head on by asking about someone not present and therefore, easing their own discomfort. I am here to tell you that those dads hurt every bit as much as the moms, but, because of the macho burden placed on men by society, don't always freely show it like we mothers do, and they keep it bottled up inside. Take a minute, at any time, but especially on days such as Father's Day where the focus is on them, to tell that dad you are thinking of them. I guarantee they will appreciate it.

The other group that more often than not are overlooked are the stepfathers. I think that we have the fairy tale, Cinderella, to thank for the bum rap that many of us stepparents get! That is particularly true when that parent isn't the "real" parent. However, I know many, many stepdads who deserve the title of father minus the "step" even more than the biological ones. They are dads, like one I know personally, who sat up all night long after a 13-hour workday and comforted his stepdaughters who were suffering a miserable case of chicken pox, made the midnight trips to the emergency room, as well as delighted along with them in their triumphs, and agonized in their defeats.

And I know one in particular who grieved with every fiber of his being when his stepdaughter, (though he never uses the term "stepdaughter," it is always "daughter") Nina, died almost eight years ago. Along with other bereaved stepparents he didn't deserve comments such as, "Well, at least it doesn't hurt as much because she wasn't your REAL daughter." To him, (just as many others I know), she is just as significant as his own flesh



and blood.

I wish all father's, dad's, daddy's, stepfather's and stepdad's (which is a step UP) a day filled with love, support, understanding, warm hugs, and an abundance of comforting memories. Happy Father's Day!

With gentle thoughts, Cathy Seehuetter

--Cathy Seehuetter TCF St Paul, MN

## Reflections of a Bereaved Father

### "TO DO THE IMPOSSIBLE, YOU MUST SEE THE INVISIBLE"

When my son, Robert, Jr., died ten years ago on Father's Day, I thought at that time it would be impossible for me to ever live a normal life again. Bob was 31 years old, married with three small children, and had his own business.

Many thoughts raced through my mind when my wife, Jackie, told me about the accident that took Bob's life. How and why did it happen? How were his wife and family going to make it without him? How were my wife and Bob's four siblings going to react? Would they feel the same emotions I do? Again, I thought it would be impossible to get over my son's death. As the weeks passed, then the months and the first holidays, the first anniversary, his birthday and then the years, I went through all the normal stages of grief. I guess I did! Because ten years later, here I am living a normal life!!

As I reflect over the past ten years, how did I arrive at this moment when I thought it would be impossible before? The more I thought about it, the more I began to realize and see the invisible things that were coming into focus: *First* of all, the love and support of my wonderful wife Jackie, our other four children and their families, and knowing that Bob's wife had remarried and the grand-children were still very close and part of our family. The *second* was when we joined The Compassionate Friends. The love, support, understanding, and friendship were invisible at first, but as the months and years went flying by, it became so strong that it was clearly visible as a source of energy that helped me understand myself and what I was going through.

The *third* was being able to bring forth the inner strength that God has given us that is invisible to everyone but ourselves. It is this invisible strength

that each of us must see and reach for if we are to overcome our grief and to live a normal life. In other words, "IF IT IS TO BE, THEN IT IS UP TO ME." Yes, if you are "TO DO THE IMPOSSIBLE, YOU MUST SEE THE INVISIBLE."

Yes, I am living a normal life. Yes, I still am grieving over the loss of my son after ten years, but the grief I feel is the grief that remains and is the grief I want to keep.

--Robert J. Creely, Sr., TCF, Pittsburgh, PA

## Death Chose Him

I have struggled with a question for many months now. Was Tom mentally ill, or did he just decide he could no longer go on? Is mental illness a label we put on someone who dies by suicide to lessen the blow of the loss and make it more palatable for those left behind? If Tom chose suicide to escape this world, then I as a parent must have failed him somehow, and his death is a conviction of my failures making it doubly hard to accept. But if I can label it as him suffering from undiagnosed depression and known, but untreated, anxiety, that softens the blow a little. I can say he was not willing or able to ask for help overcoming his internal struggles, and that, although still hard to swallow, shifts the blame, at least partly, from me to him. Somehow, that makes it a little easier.

Some people say those who die by suicide choose death over life, take the easy way out, or are selfish. Those words cut into my heart, because I do not consider Tom to be a quitter, not up to a challenge, or someone to put his needs before others'. Although he was cynical and loved sarcasm, he also was generous with his words and deeds. He chose his friends carefully, but once screened into the tribe, they could count on him. He gave thoughtful gifts. He helped family members, teachers, and friends in selfless ways. I have had heard many stories of his simple, thoughtful acts – helping put up chairs at the end of a class period, inviting bullied strangers to join him for lunch, buying a friend a pop and sitting under a tree talking. Tom was a good kid. Imperfect, but aren't we all?

I cannot imagine Tom would choose to execute his final act willingly, knowing the lasting devastation it would cause. The Tom I knew and loved would not have left his lifeless body to be found by those who loved him the most. He would not have abandoned family and friends forever anguished by his absence. He would not have

wanted us to suffer in his death as he did in life. He would have thought through the ramifications of his actions. My Tom would not have chosen death; therefore, I must believe mental illness changed him and allowed death to chose him.

--Kimberly Starr

## 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 TCF National Website

## Newly Bereaved...

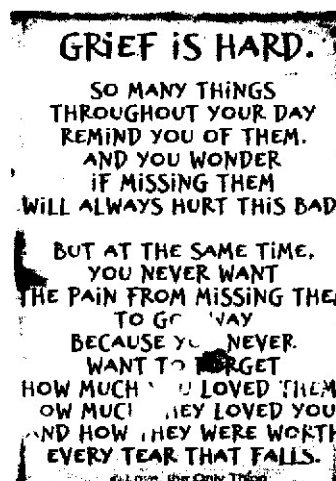
### Grief is Complicated

It isn't just sadness and crying, although that is certainly part of it. It's forgetfulness. Earlier I went to put the laundry in the dryer only to realize I had never turned the washing machine on. I've lost important paperwork, my glasses, my coffee cup, etc. I will swear I told Greg or Allison something only for them to tell me I didn't.

It's exhaustion. Sleep doesn't help. I can sleep 3 hours or 13 and I wake up exhausted. It's the kind of tired you feel in your bones. The kind that makes me feel like I've aged 20 years in the last month. The kind that makes it incredibly difficult to do anything at all.

It's questioning yourself about everything. Did I tell him I loved him that night before we left? I know I did, but I keep second guessing myself. Did I pray for him enough? And if so, why did this happen? Why him? Did my extreme worry over that bike somehow make this happen? Did I worry it into fruition? It's all so silly, but when you are in the thick of grief, nothing makes sense. So you question everything. Am I praying hard enough now to keep the rest of my family safe? Do I have any control over anything anyway?

It's anger. Anger at the person you lost, at others, at yourself, at no one at all. Anger that can't



be fixed by screaming or throwing things. It just sits with you. And it changes depending on the day, even the minute.

It's physical pain. Heart racing, headaches, constant nausea, and stomach aches. Everything hurts. It's guilt. Guilt for continuing to breathe when he stopped. For laughing at something on TV or at each other. Guilt for being sad, because I know he wouldn't want us to be sad. He was the fixer. He couldn't stand for us to be sad.

And it is sadness. It's crying until you physically can't cry anymore. It's working, doing housework, eating, reading, etc. but the sadness never really leaves. You get small glimpses of hope now and then, but the sadness overshadows it. It is a deep sadness that unless you've been through this, you'll never understand.

It's complicated. It is gut wrenching and awful and I pray you never have to go through it.

I miss my boy so much. Grief may change, but that never will. I will miss him for the rest of my life.  
--Lindsay Simmons

## Seasoned Grievors...

Today I Am Thankful  
 Today I am thankful for tears  
 Though an ocean I have cried  
 They speak of our connection  
 Reminding me that love has not died  
 Today I am thankful for the memories  
 They brighten the road of grief  
 They remind me of love shared  
 And provide a small relief  
 Today I am thankful for love  
 Felt strongly in my soul  
 Love continues living forever  
 Keeping us together and whole  
 Today I am thankful for friends  
 Those who didn't walk away  
 They saw my broken heart  
 And chose to sit and stay  
 Today I am thankful for time  
 For the moments that were too few  
 Through the tears that are shed  
 Today I am thankful for you  
 --Tanya Lord [www.TheGriefToolBox.com](http://www.TheGriefToolBox.com)

## Friends and Family...

### I Want To Cry

I want to cry.

Just sometime, let me cry.

Do not demand that constant smile from me.

I know you are uneasy with my tears.

I need to cry. Please, do not go away.

I promise you that I will smile again.

Tomorrow I will be as light as air

But hold me now. And let my sorrow be.

Just for today, this moment: let me cry.

--Sascha Wagner



## Helpful Hint...

"Above all else, remember that you will always be a father! Be especially kind to yourself as you prepare for the array of emotions you will experience on Father's Day. As you work through these feelings of loss, you are taking steps forward towards healing in this difficult journey we call grief!"

--Clara Hinton



## Welcome...

Dear Bereaved Parents:

Seven years ago we became "members" of a group we never wanted to belong to. A group that consisted of parents who have lost a child or children. The purpose for us "joining" the group was to learn how to live without the physical presence of our daughter, Sherri, and to hopefully gain support from other bereaved parents who had been on the journey longer than we. The "group" was our lifeline in learning how to begin a "new normal" without our daughter. Many of you, I'm sure, never realized how much you gave to us throughout the years, on those Tuesday evenings.

Hearing your comforting words, sharing your own stories, and feeling an acceptance of what we were going through and expressing, made our group meetings a place where we felt we could come and pour out our hearts. You understood when we expressed how we felt we were losing our minds, how we were going crazy, how one day we felt we could function again, and by the next day be in the fetal position. You all understood this "craziness"- you all understood our erratic behavior. You empathized and didn't judge our ups and downs, our changes in feelings from one week to the next, our anger, our struggle as we searched for a new belief system, or our seeking out a psychic one week and denying it a year later. No, we weren't judged - there were "no shoulds" placed on us. We had heard enough "shoulds" and "ought-to's" from those that have never lost a child and who didn't have a clue as to what a bereaved

parent goes through.

Yes, this "group" that we never wanted to join was our lighted path on our journey through grief. It was the other bereaved parents that helped us learn how to live a new normal and gave us the strength and courage to go on and create a new life without our daughter. It was the support that we felt at meetings and the nonjudgmental statements from others that kept us coming back and looking forward to the Tuesday group. It was a "safe" place for us to express our inner most pains--a place that was safe for both of us to cry a river of tears. It's important to us that our group continues in this supportive, nonjudgmental way so that other bereaved parents who attend our meetings can also feel free to share and express their pain and sorrow in a trusting, supportive, and accepting environment.

No, we sure didn't want to join this group, but we are thankful for our "bereaved parent community" for continuing to help us on our journey and for being there on Tuesday evenings for two hours we are together and in total communion with each other and our children- and we understand.

Love, Debbie and Norm Bereaved Parent,  
Huntington Beach CA

Editor's Note: For those of you who are newcomers, we extend our hands in friendship and our hearts in understanding. We are truly sorry for the circumstances that bring you to our group, but we are glad you found us. Our chapter of TCF is here to help. We have no easy answers, but the understanding that comes from shared experiences will help to ease some of the pain of your grief. You will find sharing and talking with other parents and siblings helps you feel that others do understand and that the pain of grief will lesson over time.

## Book In Review...



***Such Good People*** by Martha Whitmore Hickman. Some of you will immediately recognize the author's name, for she is the writer of *Healing After Loss*, a book of daily meditations that many of us have bought and read every day! In this, her first work of fiction, she draws on her personal experience in the accidental death of a teenage daughter. It is the story of a family trying to come to terms with the tragedy and how their lives are deeply altered. Ultimately, it too is a book of hope.

--Rockland County, NY TCF newsletter

## The Child That's Not There

The child that's not there  
Takes up every piece of me  
The child that's not there  
Consumes my every thought  
The child that's not there  
Makes me feel like I failed  
The child that's not there  
Took away a main reason for being

But

The children that are there  
Still somehow bring me joy  
The children that are there  
Still need my love  
The children that are there  
Don't need any more grief  
The children that are there  
Force me to go on.

--Tricia Palmer In memory of my son, Gabriel Boyer  
TCF ~ Tidewater, VA

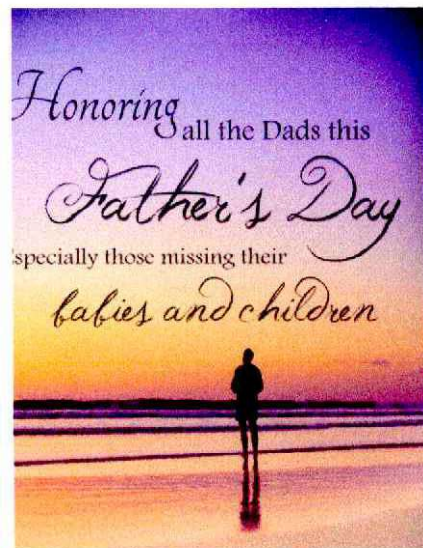
## Graduation

Pomp and Circumstance, Speeches,  
Happy faces, Proud parents,  
It's just not fair because you're not there.

School song playing, Gifts, Celebrations,  
Laughing friends,  
We cannot share Because you're not there

Mortar boards flying, Diplomas, Tassels tossed,  
Teachers smiling, It's too much to bear  
Because you're not there.

--Sue Snapp TCF, Tucson, AZ Dedicated to the  
children who graduated only in our hearts.



**Our Children****Remembered**

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

Angel Alva  
Born: 12/91 Died: 6/24  
Mother: Jackie  
Alva-Ornelas

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

Brandon Armstrong  
Miscarried: July 1995  
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Frank Christopher  
Castania  
Born: 8/94 Died: 7/05  
Parents: Frank & Debbie  
Castania, Grandparents:  
Richard & Ann Leach

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## 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 Guerrevia  
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 &  
Cydne Shapiro

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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**

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 Stewart 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

**Remembered**

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

Dale Lee Soto  
Born: 7/94 Died: 5/11  
Mother: Monique Soto

Patrik Stezinger  
Born: 1/89 Died: 8/17  
Parents: Paul & Rosemary  
Mosher

## Remembered

Brittany Anne Suggs  
Born: 10/88 Died: 4/16  
Mother Camille Suggs

Elizabeth D. Szucs  
Born: 4/72 Died: 6/11  
Parents: Dolores & Frank  
Szucs

Kenneth Tahan  
Born: 2/66 Died: 7/16  
Parents: Shirley & Joseph  
Tahan

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

Manuel Vargas III  
Born: 3/95 - Died: 5/15  
Father: Manuel Vargas

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

David Michael Villarreal  
Born: 11/90 Died: 2/18  
Parents: David & Barbara  
Villarreal

Eric Douglas Vines  
Born: 7/77 Died: 7/91  
Parents: Doug & Lynn  
Vines

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

Matthew L. Weiss  
Born: 9/96 Died: 8/18  
Mother: Natalie Narumoto

Rennie S. Wible  
Born: 8/66 Died: 1/18  
Mother: Jinx Wible

Dovan Vincent Wing  
Born: 6/83 Died: 9/17  
Mother: Becky Wing

Aaron Young  
Born: 9/74 Died: 6/15  
Mother: Sheila Young

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

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



## Our Children Remembered



Ryann 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...** If it's your child's birthday month, we invite you to join our monthly meeting and share their story! Birthdays hold treasured memories and are especially difficult for surviving parents and siblings. TCF offers a wonderful venue to honor and celebrate the precious life— a story of your loved one. Taking a few minutes to share a picture, memento, award or even their favorite toy is a gentle reminder to all that our love continues.

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 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.)

## Birthday Tributes

Sorry, No tributes were submitted this month.

## By Siblings...



## Happy Father's Day

Today is Father's Day, Daddy.  
This is your special day.  
I realize this is hard for you  
since your son went away.  
Today should be a happy day  
for fathers far and near.  
But for you it's not that way  
because not everyone is here.  
Along with the joy you feel  
because you are a Dad,  
comes the hurt you have  
for the son you once had.  
The rest of us kids realize  
that Wade is on your mind.  
The card looks so strange  
without his name signed.  
WE all miss him a lot, and  
we really hurt for you.  
Even though he is gone now,  
his Dad is still you.  
Although he can't tell you,  
the rest of us can.  
"Happy Father's Day, Daddy!"  
We do understand.  
--Delaine Reindel, TCF, Houston, TX

## A Brother's Death

Barbara Lazear Ascher's brother, Bobby, died of AIDS at the age 31. Following is an excerpt of a beautifully written sensitive article describing the author's struggle with grief. "A Brother's Death" was originally printed in the New York Times Magazine.

When we first learned of Bobby's illness, it seemed incomprehensible that this could be happening to our baby brother. My sister and I began a journey into paralysis. There were days when it seemed we had to concentrate on putting one foot in front of the other if we were to walk at all. If we traveled more than a couple of blocks, we were exhausted for the rest of the day.

We were hungry, we weren't hungry. We made chocolate chip cookies and chocolate

brownies and didn't eat them. We opened and closed the refrigerator door, looking for something that might cushion the pain, fill the chasm that was opening from within.

Now I realize that this was the beginning of grief which starts in the stomach, yawning like the gaping mouth in Munch's painting, "The Scream." But what did we know of grief? We were young, our beloved had not yet died I began to understand that grieving is like walking. The urge is there, but you need a guiding hand; you need someone to teach you how.

I went to speak with a wise and trusted minister at my church who warned that there were bad times ahead. The death of a sibling, he said, grievous in itself, is also a startling reminder of our own mortality. I suppose it's not dissimilar to the time in youth when we first learned of our origins and began to understand, if they made me, then they can make another. After that we became the nervous sentinels of our territory.

When a sibling dies, the absolute certainty of death replaces the cherished illusion that maybe we'll be the exceptions. When a sibling dies, death tugs at our own shirttails. There's no unclasping its persistent grip. "You too," it says. "Yes, even you."

When you are new to grief, you learn that there's no second-guessing it. It will have its way with you. Don't be fooled by the statistics you read: Widows have one bad year; orphans three. Grief doesn't read schedules.

One morning three weeks after Bobby died, I arose feeling happy and energetic. Well, now, I thought, I guess we've taken care of that. Wrong. The next morning I was awakened by a wail I thought was coming from the storm outside until I realized it was coming from me.

Grief will fool you with its disguises. Some days you insist that you're fine, you're just angry at a friend who said the wrong thing. One day I wept into the lettuce and peaches at our local market when an acquaintance approached to scold me for my stand in an old battle. Of course, we both assumed that she was responsible for my tears.

You learn that you can cry and stop and laugh and even follow a taxi driver's commands to "Have a nice day," and then cry again. You learn that there is no such thing as crying forever. Three months ago I was certain that I would never be happy again. I was wrong.

Grief is like the wind. When it's blowing hard, you adjust your sails and run before it. It blows too hard, you stay in the harbor, close the hatches and don't take calls. When it's gentle, you go sailing,

have a picnic, take a swim.

You go wherever it takes you. There are no bulwarks to withstand it. Should you erect one, it will eventually tire of the game and blow the walls in.

We cannot know another's grief, as deeply personal as love and pain. I cannot measure my own against the sorrow of my brother's friends who must wonder every day which among them will be next. I shy away from the magnitude of my brother's own grief when, upon being diagnosed, he heard the final click of a door as it closed on possibility.

A friend of mine said of her son when he died at 30, "He was just beginning to look out at the world and make maps." So was my brother. And then there was no place to go.

—Barbara Lazear Ascher, NY, NY



## For Grandparents...

### **Grandparent To Grandparent: What advice would you share with a newly bereaved grandparent?**

As I pondered this question my initial response was, "I have no advice" because when you are experiencing the horror and pain of losing a grandchild there is no path that seems to lead in the direction that you wish that you could go. So many times the prayers and wishes are that the power greater than we, should reverse their decision and take us instead. Take us and allow the precious little one the opportunity to remain on this earth and fulfill our child's hopes and dreams. But we know deep in our hearts that this is not possible.

So I would say to each and every grandparent who is in pain, "build the foundation for memories"! It is something that we do so very well. Grandparents bring to the extended family, love, hope and joy, but most importantly, strength! Our children are looking to us for guidance and support. Talk about the missing angel and the beautiful times no matter how short they were. Bring identity to the "grandbaby" that will last through eternity with friends and family members and others that we touch. Also remember that regardless of how uncomfortable the outside world is about the mention of the name or the feelings attached, it's okay!

Seek out peace, poetry, anything of beauty that will allow you to attach to the beauty of the

child that died. Music is one of the things that allowed me to cry when my stubborn strong image was refusing! Crying cleanses some of the pain and brings with it some peace. Don't punish yourself; don't second-guess about what you could have done differently to change the current situation. Just remember that neither you nor your child had control. Each of us will deal with the grief as our minds will allow and no one has the right to tell you to "get over it, get on with your life"! You will never get over it; you will only learn to put it into perspective as that hole in your heart the size of the Grand Canyon begins to mend.

--Pamela Handprints/ Summer 2001 Newsletter

## From Our Members...



### Newly Bereaved

They call me newly bereaved,  
It seems like time has stood still.  
They come with their stories,  
Their ideas, their gifts of hope,  
And we listen, and we cry, and we listen and we cry.  
I go home and think,  
I think about what was said at that special place,  
With those special people, and it helps.  
It helps put suave on my open wound,  
It helps to heal a heart that will never heal,  
But maybe one day it will not hurt so much.  
I am newly bereaved, but NOT alone.  
--Nancy Fisher TCF, SB/LA

## National Conference...

**49<sup>th</sup> National Compassionate Friends Conference...**  
This summer it is being held in Baltimore, MD. July 2-5th. TCF's National Conference is an enriching and supportive event for many newer and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Attendees come and find renewed hope and support, as well as strategies for coping with grief. Participants create friendships with other bereaved people who truly understand the heartbreaking loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. Lifelong friendships are often formed and rekindled each year at TCF conferences.

For more information and to register, visit:

[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

**Welcome New Members...** We welcome our new members to our chapter of TCF. We're sorry you have a need to be with us, but we hope you feel you have found a safe place to share your grief and will return. It often takes a few meetings to feel at ease in a group setting.

Please try attending three meetings before deciding if TCF is for you. Each meeting is different, the people and topics change and need to talk or share fluctuates between each meeting. The next one might be the one that really helps. We encourage you to take advantage of our resources. We have a well stocked library of grief materials, a phone friend committee that welcomes calls at any time, and a members' directory to call another parent you have met at the meetings.



**Flash Zoom Meetings...** are called on short notice, and are of shorter duration than in-person meetings. 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 & 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](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: July first for August tributes. 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.



**Four Options To Give:**

- QR code on cell phones.
- Online at [tcf-sbla.org/donate-now/](http://tcf-sbla.org/donate-now/)
- Cash/checks: Donation box at in-person meetings.
- Checks: Mail to PO Box 11171 Torrance CA 90503



**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 (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 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.

**Local Support Groups...**

- Takingtime.org: (424) 634-1956 Grief support for kids 5-11, 12-18, and their families
- 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.

**A Note From Your Editor...**

We often are asked about local support groups for children. I found out about Taking Time South Bay, and wanted to let you know about them.

**Bereavement Support Groups For Children ages 5-11 & their Parents/Guardians and Care givers...**

Grief is hard — especially for children. Taking Time is here to walk alongside your family. We offer a free 8-week bereavement support program for children ages 5-7, ages 8-11, and their parents/guardians. Groups meet at the same time in separate rooms, so the whole family is supported together.

In a safe, compassionate setting, families connect with others who truly understand — sharing hope, healing, and tools to navigate loss. All groups are led by Licensed Mental Health Professionals and/or Certified Bereavement Educators.

**When:** Tuesdays, 4:00-5:00 PM, April 14 – June 2

**Where:** Beach Cities Health District, 514 N. Prospect Avenue, Suite L6 Redondo Beach, CA 90277

**Pre-registration is required.** For more information and/or to pre-register, please contact Patty Ellis, Certified Grief Educator or Claire Towle, LCSW, Certified in Bereavement and Thanatology at: (424) 634-1956. [info@takingtime.org](mailto:info@takingtime.org)

**Other Grief Support Websites...**

[thetearsfoundation.org](http://thetearsfoundation.org)  
[goodgriefresources.com](http://goodgriefresources.com)  
[bereavedparentsusa.org](http://bereavedparentsusa.org)  
[healingafterloss.org](http://healingafterloss.org)  
[survivorsofsuicide.com](http://survivorsofsuicide.com)  
[taps.org](http://taps.org) (military death)  
[save.org](http://save.org) (suicide/depression)

[pomc.com](http://pomc.com) (families of murder victims)  
[grasphelp.org](http://grasphelp.org) (substance abuse deaths)  
[www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub](http://www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub) (Suicide)  
[Griefwords.com](http://Griefwords.com) (for grandparents)



[childloss.com](http://childloss.com)  
[griefwatch.dom](http://griefwatch.dom)  
[opentohope.com](http://opentohope.com)  
[webhealing.com](http://webhealing.com)  
[alivealone.org](http://alivealone.org)  
[angelmoms.com](http://angelmoms.com)  
[M.A.D.D..org](http://M.A.D.D..org)

**A Special Thanks 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  
 Lynn Vines  
 Connie & Leo Licciardone  
 Sandra & Eddie Myricks  
 Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla



Lori Galloway  
 Kristy Mueller  
 Kitty Edler  
 Jackie Taos

**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.

**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)



# 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.**

*No donations were received this month. Please consider supporting our chapter.*

\*\*\*\*\*

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.

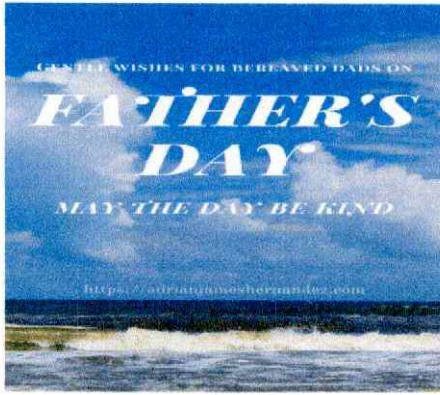
**When making a donation, please make checks payable to:  
The Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. Chpt.  
Mail to: The Compassionate Friends So Bay/ L.A. Chapter  
P.O. Box 11171, Torrance, CA 90510-1171**

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  
P.O. Box 11171  
Torrance, CA 90510



**June 2026**

**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.