



The Compassionate Friends

South Bay/LA Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

August 2026 ISSUE

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

OUR NEXT MEETING:
will be August 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 August 6th meeting will start with **"Time and Grief."**

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

The TCF Friday Lunch Group offers you a 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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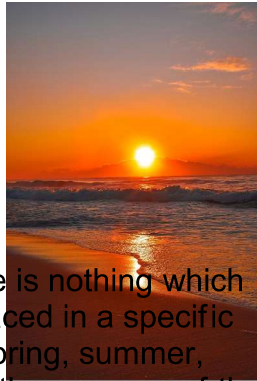
The Thursday August 6th meeting will start with **"Time and Grief."** One of the hardest things that we go through after a loved one dies is "picking up and going on." Time seems to stand still. How are we supposed to create a life that does not include them? The answer ends up being – that we don't. With time, we realize that we will always carry them with us – their love, their laughter, their wants and dreams, their strengths, and our relationship. While grief changes with time, so do we. We celebrate our child's life and remember them. We carry them forward with us into the new life we create. Consequently, it does get easier. The changes and challenges, the struggling with motivation and depression. The core feeling that you're ready for the pain to end, but realize that you're not ready to build a new life without your child. "I want things as they were!" diminishes with time and we find ways to use time to our advantage. Time has a way of showing us the many different emotions and doubts that bereaved families face. We invite you to come share how "time" has affected your grief.

Sunrises and Sunsets

Each life is lived in neat and tidy segments of time—weeks, months, years, sunrises and sunsets, births and death. There is nothing which happens to us that cannot be placed in a specific framework of organized time. Spring, summer, winter and fall not only measure the seasons of the year but the ages of our lives as well. The very young are in the springtime of their life, the very old are in the winter of their years. Sunrises are beginnings. Sunsets are endings.

During the progression of time, we keep mental ledgers where we record the passing of time by our successes, mistakes made, love given and received, and if we are lucky, we live long and our sunsets are bright and beautiful and welcome when we are full of time and memories.

But there are sunsets which are not so fulfilled—when the evening comes prematurely to a child of ours, and we are plunged into darkness in the middle of our day. Then there is only night, pain and confusion to measure and only what-might-have-beens to tally. Every scrap of memory is salvaged to being a spark of warmth to the coldness of the night to come. Each failure in our ledger is magnified and mixed with guilt and unanswerable questions. When memories are painful, we may even replace them with a more



acceptable unreality to armor our hearts and minds until the time when we can accept the harshness of what has been, and we're again strong enough to begin again— never the same, but sustained by our faith and the healing of time.

But when the child's sunrise and sunset have been compressed into a few minutes or hours, the lack of memories can be equally as hurtful. There are no memories of a beloved face, no remembered first or last, not even a remembrance of some irritating habit to tuck into our battered hearts—only the vacuum created when the mind has been geared to expect so much and is rewarded with only empty arms and blank pages in a baby book.

And so, if you should find yourself measuring your pain against another's, remember this: if you have memories and if your memories are beautiful, you have a gift that is the most worthy of all. For when your morning finally comes after the darkness has lifted, you can look back and see that the darkness was not as complete as you thought. For there in the darkness will wink and glimmer the light of your memories— like fireflies on a summer night.

--Judy Dickey TCF, Greenwood, IN

No Storm Lasts Forever

There is a saying: No storm lasts forever. While grief over the death of our loved one does indeed, endure forever- or at least as long as we love and miss them, the raw, searing pain of grief— that which takes your breath and brings you to your knees— ebbs and flows over time. Eventually, moments of peace do come.

Eventually, we do find joy again. Our priorities are clearer. We know, more deeply, who we wish to be and who we wish not to be. We appreciate and cherish the lives of our loved ones more, and because we've tasted the most bitter, the sweet-when it comes is ever sweeter. Still, the grief remains in the stillness between words, between peace, between moments of connection with others, between the sunrise and the sunset. This is the way of eternal love."

--Dr. Joanne Cacciatore

Time may bring more sophisticated coping strategies, but the absence of the loved child lingers in the heart of the parent and remains there for their entire lives.

--Julie Siri, *Journey Through Loss*

Then and Now

They were my children, then.
 Resounding voices, arguments and laughter -
 Intense and wide awake at storytime -
 In love with music, dance and birthday parties -
 So serious about their great inventions -
 So filled with promise, all-involved with life.
 My children, then.
 They are my children, now.
 Remembered like a touching of the wind -
 Remembered in the clarity of mornings -
 Remembered in the smiles of other children -
 Remembered like the charm of cradlesongs -
 Alive in silence and in absence, present.
 My children, now.
 --Sasha Wagner

Other Kids

Having other children is not always the 'logical blessing' non-grieving people think they are. No one can prepare you for the grief work that shows up when your other children 'pass' your angel child in earth years. It is hard. It is draining. I find myself once again struggling with motivation each day to continue experiencing life.

Logically I know it is inevitable. One day (hopefully) all the younger siblings will surpass their angel brother...but with that comes a whole mess of emotions as one by one they experience the 'last things' their brother did and move past them. I want to sit in the corner and kick and scream how unfair it all is. But that is rather illogical, and few people would understand what my problem really was.

The next option is be brave and face the moment with a smile on my face and tears in my eyes. But someone always notices and comments "How sweet! You are so proud you are crying...." Secretly I want to tell that person to shut-up...in not so kind terms of course. Just go away. Leave me alone. I do not want to talk about my tears, my pride in my earth children, or my regret over my angel child. I am a jumbled emotional mess inside and no amount of "tell me about it" will help. I can barely find the words to explain myself to myself.

Logically my behavior is quite illogical. Spock from Star Trek would be perplexed by me. How do you explain looking forward to incredible things this coming year but dreading each and every day? Stuck in another inevitable countdown to another 'anniversary date' - the day my earth children

become older than my angel child - I am overwhelmed just thinking about thinking about it. Thankfully the actual day will be numb, courtesy of the emotional exhaustion of the countdown process.

Of course, I am not the only one in this place. If this time is hard for me, what it is like for my earth children? I have a hard time understanding the view from my own shoes I am walking in; what is the view from their shoes like? How do I help them through this?

The functional side of me says forget the "Put on your oxygen mask first" bit - Spock where are you, I need some logical advice for this illogical time, please.

-- Chelle, editor Eastside nl



Resisting Resentment

I have been aware for years now that battling a descent into self-pity is pretty much a daily struggle. More recently, I am noticing how much I struggle with resentment.

I am at an age when many of my friends have children who are nearing adulthood or have reached adulthood. As a consequence, their lives are focused on graduations, new jobs, new apartments, weddings, and grandchildren. None of those things are happening for me and I am finding it hard. I don't resent the friends who are enjoying those life pleasures; in my own weirdly stunted way, I am happy for them. But I do resent that those things aren't going to happen for me.

Didn't I change an equal number of diapers? Didn't I nurse children through all the miseries of childhood maladies? Didn't I pack all those school lunches? Didn't I cheer at all those soccer games? I know I did. I know I carefully assembled Easter baskets and tried to be creative about Halloween costumes. I played Santa. I never missed a Parent/Teacher conference. I organized elaborate birthday parties. I even provided pick-up and delivery service for a tuba for two years.

I cooked dinners for the Youth Group. I made gingersnaps and date nut bars and pumpkin streusel muffins (his favorites). I fixed daily BLTs in August when the tomatoes were ripe.

But my son will never graduate from college. He'll never get married. He'll never have a career. He won't have children. He won't call me on my birthday or negotiate with me about when and for how long to visit. And I resent it.

I go to Crate and Barrel, or Bed, Bath & Beyond, or Pottery Barn and I select wedding gifts from a registry. I send checks for graduations. I buy gift cards from Target for baby showers. And I resent it.

-- Peggi Johnson TCF Piedmont Chapter, VA

For Men: Living a Regret-free Life after Loss

Hands down, the strongest, most destructive part of grief is regret. That ever-present feeling that you could have done more. Regret can become so strong that everything else about life gets tossed aside. It is exactly what happened to me. The night before I lost my 17-year old son, Michael, in an auto accident, he had come over from his mother's house to get something from my house. He was outside in the driveway playing basketball with my oldest son, Ronald. I looked down from the window upstairs and watched them for a few minutes. He didn't see me. I had a long day and had a few other things to do. So I didn't go downstairs. I simply figured I would catch up with him next time.

That was the last time I saw my son. For years after, I lived with this overwhelming regret and was stuck in this moment of time. It wouldn't have taken long. And, more importantly, I would have had that "last chance" to be with him. Why didn't I just go down?

Now, I knew that I couldn't change the fact that he died the next day. But then, over time, I started to realize that I could change how I felt about that last regret-filled night. Naturally, I didn't know it was his last night. So the point is this: Had Michael not died the next day, me not going down would have been just another ordinary thing. I would have seen him the next time — no big deal. I took for granted that Michael would be there. THIS was the real, true reason for the pain I felt about the last time I saw Michael.

This is where the loss of my son taught me something about living life. I wanted to begin living regret-free. So I knew that I needed to never take anything or anyone for granted again. Now, for men, showing gratitude is a tough thing to do anyway. We tend to just "go with it." We don't think that deep about the normal everyday things like coming down the stairs and going outside to play after a long day. We just take for granted it will be there tomorrow.

Now pair that up with dealing with loss. What

happens is that the mind often traps the good emotions underneath all the pain. What we need to do is open the mind's vault and start to get some "grief relief" by letting out some of the positive emotions, like gratitude.

Try this — identify just one thing that you are currently taking for granted in your life. And then take one step toward showing your appreciation. It can be as simple as washing your car to show how important it is in your life. Once you become familiar with showing your thanks with the simple, it will become a bit more comfortable to show it for some of the more complicated.

To be truthful, this moment in my life haunts me to this day. It is why I am so passionate about never, ever, taking anything in my life for granted again. It is just one of the legacies left behind by my son, Michael. Start today by choosing to do one thing new for something or someone in your life. I guarantee you will feel a great smile all around you.

--Ron Villano



The Gate to Tomorrow

There is a gate that each of us has unknowingly passed through. This gate opens only one way... once we have passed through this gate we cannot return to the other side. Each of us stepped through the gate at a different time and in a different way. This gate opens to the world of parents whose children have died; it is their gate to every tomorrow.

There is no other place that compares with life in this world beyond the gate; there is no sorrow like the sorrow inside the gate. The numbing pain and perpetual agony we experience when first stepping through this gate are so overwhelming that we often don't immediately realize that there will be no return. But we will never return to life before the gate.

The new world inside the gate is populated with friends who are strangers and strangers who are friends. Our perspective on life has changed forever. Few of our friends from life before the gate will linger with us now; these people are now the strangers. Our pain is all encompassing; they have lives to live, things to do, plans to make, happiness to capture. We are no longer part of their picture. Rare is the friend who stands by us inside the gate... stands by us until one of us dies and leaves the world inside the gate.

The strangers who are now friends live inside the gate with us. Some have just come through the gate; others have been here a long, long time. But these strangers who are now friends share our experience; they understand our need to talk about our children, each life and each death. They applaud our tiny advances toward acceptance and serenity and peace. Although we can never go back to life before the gate, we now have our compassionate friends... once strangers but now kindred souls who share our lives and our world.

Life will not be the same again, yet life can be good again. Inside the gate we will each find ourselves with the help of our compassionate friends. They listen carefully to stories about our child. They know our child's name better than they know our name. And that's how we want it to be... remember our children. Remember with us.

--Annette Mennon Baldwin Katy TX

The End of Summer Blues

I always get a little sad when summer comes to an end. I liked having my kids home during the summer, to be able to sleep late, go swimming, camping or boating whenever we had time. Some years my kids, especially the girls, got excited when August came. They would get new school supplies and new clothes. They would have new classrooms, new subjects and new teachers. I usually felt a little lost and left out at the beginning of the school year after I dropped them off at school.

I like hot weather (I wasn't disappointed this summer). In autumn, the weather is still warm, the trees turn on their fireworks, and the fall flowers are beautiful. However, fall is a predecessor to bare trees and flowerless landscape, to say nothing of freezing weather and limited hours of daylight. Also, in the summer there are fewer commitments. People vacation, take weekend trips and everything is just more laid back. Fall means gearing back up to all those things we let go during the summer.

Since our son Todd died, I feel even sadder when autumn hits. I see the kids walking and biking or being bussed to school and miss getting my kids ready. Fall sports, beginning meetings for Sunday school, Boy and Girl Scouts are all reminders that my son has died and my daughters are grown.

Fall is the start of the dying process, a process

that those of us who have lost children are much too familiar with. I know spring will follow winter and the earth will come alive again, but for now I have the end of summer blues.

--Barb Seth, TCF/Madison

Q. My brother took his life a few months ago.

He was very special to my daughter. I am trying to be there for my parents, but it is exhausting when I'm stuck between mourning and trying to handle everyday life. Any suggestions?

A. You have a very big job right now! Your daughter needs you to be able to continue with the everyday chores of being a mother and help her through the loss of her uncle. Your parents need you to support them through their loss, and the loss of the family unit that you grew up in. AND, you need to be able to mourn the loss of your brother and all that this entails! You have a lot going on at once!

It is going to be very important that you think about what nurtures you. What relaxes you. What helps you be able to pick up and go on to the next task. Those are the things you should be doing – REGULARLY! This may mean that you figure out how to include more downtime, more sleep, and more time off the clock – time where you don't have any commitments and you are unavailable to others.

Think of it as preparing for a marathon. It requires training, good running shoes, and the right nutrition the night before the run! What you have to realize is that you don't have to have an excuse right now to give yourself a little extra TLC – you've already got at least three that you mentioned in your question! Filling your tanks will make sure that you are able to meet the demands of what is now a very exhausting everyday life.

--Dr. Mary Paulson

What Do Parents Lose When a Child Dies?

A child's death is a dark stone dropped in the pool of your life. Ripples spread everywhere, no part of you is spared.

The Loss of a Piece of Yourself: Our time, our efforts, and our hopes - these are our most precious commodities, the materials of our selves. We invest them lavishly in our child. How much of ourselves we have invested is not measured by how many months or years the child lived. A stillbirth or the death of a newborn is as great a loss



as the death of a young adult. As Linda Edelstein reminds us, "the death of a child is an event that occurs in the (parents) inner and outer worlds." To take the measure of your loss, we must appreciate the unique place your child occupied in your inner world. Your child's death robs you of a central piece of your self, part of what is most you.

The loss of illusions: Our belief that we can protect our children too often turns out to be an illusion. We elaborate other illusions as well: "If I behave right and play by the rules, bad things won't happen to me." "Cancer happens to other people." "This is a good neighborhood; my kids are safe." These ideas sit in the back of our minds, seldom invoked, yet powerfully reassuring. When you cannot protect your child, you lose the canopy of illusions that sustained you. Your child's death delivers a staggering blow to your self-esteem. Your job as a parent was to protect your child, and you could not. No matter what the circumstances of his death, no matter how impossible to prevent or beyond your control, you hold yourself responsible. If what happened to your child happened in another family, you would not hold those parents responsible. Yet you hold yourself to a different measure.

With any disaster - earthquake, death, car accident - the trauma arises not only from the event but from its power to rip away our illusions. We stand pitifully exposed to our own helplessness: all that we have done right, all the good we've been has not availed us. When parents whose child has died talk about what they have lost, they always mention the loss of their powerful illusions. These sustain us, and they are a lot to lose. Life goes much harder without them.

The loss of order in our universe: Parents are older, children are younger. Children will grow up. Parents will grow older and die, and their children will bury them. The order of the generations is deeply embedded in our thinking. It is how things are, the way they ought to be, natural and inviolable. A child's death violates this order. Every parent who has lost a child feels that violation. Age offers no statute of limitations.

The loss of the Future: A child's death robs you of your future. Your child is woven through the tapestry of your future, an integral part of the design. When death rips your child from the tapestry, the design is changed, damaged beyond repair. You lose the pleasure and pride that comes from watching her life unfold and her potential flower. You lose the pleasure of her company.

Holidays and birthdays turn into hollow, exquisitely painful reminders of her absence.

When your child dies, you lose simultaneously on so many fronts. You lose the embodiment of your special hopes, and you lose your second chance. You lose someone who loved you and whom you loved, perhaps more extravagantly than anyone else in your life. In your own eyes you have failed, because you could not protect your child. You lose a job and a piece of whom you know yourself to be. You are cheated of the natural order of time and generation. The tapestry of your future has been torn and forever altered.

--by Barbara D. Rosoff from "The Worst Loss"

Newly Bereaved...

Butterfly Soldier



A butterfly is a colorful, delicate creature. A soldier is one who works for a specified cause, a fighter. These two words would never be thought of together, but for me they happen to fit the way I now must live my life.

The butterfly's life IS so brief, but the magnificence of this creature stays in my mind, and I long for its splendor when it IS gone. The soldier is supposed to be strong in or out of combat, courageous in the face of the enemy... there is no room for weakness (society does not allow it).

The butterfly stands for my daughter, whose life was so short, but the impression she made on everyone who knew her leaves us with beautiful memories. The soldier stands for the daily struggle I have dealing with the tremendous grief I am left with due to her death. My shield is a smile I must wear to protect others from the sight of grief. Yet in the center IS the butterfly with its wings spread wide and all its colors as bright as the dreams left unfulfilled.

Butterfly and Soldier...almost opposites that conflict with each other in a constant tug-of-war. After the shock wears off then "grief" becomes the war I must battle every day, without specific rules of assault defined. Tears can come as rapid as an automatic machine gun. The lacerations go so deep...but I can't find a medic for bandages or painkillers. The wounds seem to stay open and fester for such a longtime. I feel alone on this huge battlefield, unable to hear anything but rifle shots or see anything but bombs lighting up a dark sky. No matter which way I turn, there is another minefield to cross that, with a sudden explosion, could take

away my remaining body parts. I attempt to fight back, but it looks as if my position is forever taken over and I am in reverse, never moving forward.

Time seems to be my only ally, easing some of the pain and letting my mind use pleasant memories as healing agents for the open gashes.

The Compassionate Friends (who use the butterfly symbol) IS my life-line to realizing that I will survive and learn to cope with the effects of "war". Now I am more like a soldier who has come back from a raging conflict and has to try and resume a "normal" life. But the "grief war" goes on, even though the scenery is different. I continue to suffer from all of its effects and battle scars.

A "survivor" is the way I see myself and others who have to fight in this "grief war", not knowing why we are still here or who we are anymore. I will go on fighting and withstanding what life has to fire at me each day. My wounds are healing very slowly and forming scars that do not show on the outside, but always exist. Each day the emotions of "war" continue but get less intense with newfound friends, activities, and a loving family to share the struggle with.

I am a "butterfly soldier" holding on to the beauty of my memories and battling the pain of loss. I was lucky to have had a daughter for a few years that added so much to my life. It hurts so much that she is gone, and before all of her goals had been met. The "war" goes on with each passing day and I take each "battle" as it comes. I still have a long way to go, and a lot of pain to deal with, but I will be okay. I am a survivor, not a war hero, just a survivor.

I don't have any medals to prove any heroism or courage ...I'm just a "Butterfly Soldier."

-- Bonnie Harris-Tibbs, TCF, Richmond, VA

Seasoned Griefers...

And Where Have You Gone...?

Where have you gone raw grief,
Your jagged sharp edges dulled
By the love of so many,
Made smoother by the ultimate Hope.
Where have you gone long shadows of
Silent sorrow,
Still lingering, yes, but diminished by
Chris being transformed to shine like the sun.
Where have you gone torrents of tears,
Though your tracks have etched
Familiar creases on my face,

Your sting, your bitterness has evolved,
Now capsules of intimate love
From my deepest places.
Where have you gone memories of desperate
longing,
Necessary emotional anchors during the dark
storms
Of deepest sorrow,
Now you are the keys to free grief imprisoned
Treasured joys, giving lift and light
To the present.
And where have you gone my son,
No longer can my earthly senses capture your
countenance.
But the veil seems thin between us,
Dreams, special messengers, humming birds,
Glowing stars and grace,
Have all told me so.
You have gone no where... yet
You have gone everywhere.
And there you wait with contented heart,
Embraced by the Eternal One.
Joyfully waiting as we wait with Hope,
Still restless, still longing but
For something greater than we
Can imagine.

--Ken Ripp

Speaking from the Heart

September 2014



Some people call it the ripple affect; I have heard it referred to as the collateral damage of our loss. Whatever words you use to describe it, there is no doubt that the underlying layers of our grief continue with us through the years. My dear friend, the late Darcie Sims referred to grief as "a painful gift that keeps on giving." Each of us has triggers that can take us instantly back to the very depths of our pain. The school bus passing by, that song on the radio, a certain time of day or season of the year...anything it seems can remind us of our loss and throw us into a tailspin.

I spoke with a woman named Angie last week who every year would get hit with a huge grief funk as August turned into September. As we were talking, she began to tell me about her sister Karin who was a school teacher and died in a car accident 6 years ago. She shared a special memory how every year as summer would draw to a close, Karin would kidnap her for the day to go school supply shopping. Together they would clip coupons after having scoured all the

advertisements and would visit up to 12 different stores in one day, buying hundreds of items that were on sale.

This shopping expedition became an annual ritual and a special bonding time. What made it even more special is that all of the items they were buying were to provide school supplies for students in Karin's class whose families could not afford them.

Angie told me for the past 5 years she has tried to avoid stores or departments of stores mentioning back-to-school sales, it was just too painful. Karin says that many of her family and friends didn't understand why she couldn't move on after 6 years. Fortunately, she had her TCF friends who understood why she got the blues at the start of each school year. Her TCF family never pushed her or judged her, but they allowed her to feel her pain openly and honestly each year.

This past March, Angie met a woman in her TCF chapter whose daughter had been a teacher for 25 years before dying of cancer. The woman also shopped with her daughter for school supplies to help out underprivileged students in her class.

Over coffee one night, they decided to help each other face the dreaded back-to-school funk. They ventured out together one day in August for a day of shopping for school supplies to donate to an inner-city school near where they both live. Angie said "it was painful but beautiful." "The connection I felt to Karin was very powerful that day, and though it is bittersweet, I plan to do it again next year because it was also very healing."

I am so grateful that TCF provides the support each of us needs to walk through our own grief at our own pace. We provide each other with an opportunity to feel and heal when we are ready. We understand the ripple effect and we give each other the support we need to weather the ongoing waves of grief that are part of our unique journey. Thanks, Angie, for sharing Karin with me. I will think of her every time I see #2 pencils on sale at 10/\$1.00. Blessings, Alan Pedersen, Eastside TCF

Friends and Family...



Forgive Me

There's a hole where my heart used to be.
When I smile at you and say I'm okay,
Forgive me.
I know you want to help me but I turn you away,

Forgive me.

I show no interest, nor do I seem to care.

Forgive me.

For there's an emptiness now where my heart used to be.

--Alannah McGregor TCF Victoria, AU In memory of my daughter and son, Angela and Stuart

Helpful Hint...



You will lose someone you can't live without, and your heart will be badly broken, and the bad news is that you never completely get over the loss of your beloved. But this is also the good news. They live forever in your broken heart that doesn't seal back up. And you come through. It's like having a broken leg that never heals perfectly - that still hurts when the weather gets cold, but you learn to dance with the limp."

-- Anne Lamott



Book In Review...

Surviving Loss Of A Sibling. True stories about finding healing and hope after loss of a sibling. Christine lost her 38-year-old sister to suicide. Shannon lost her 21-year-old brother to a drunk driver. Brooke lost her 31-year-old brother to homicide. Part of the award-winning Grief Diaries series, *Surviving Loss of a Sibling* shares the poignant stories of 13 people who have lost a brother or sister. Covering tender issues such as surviving the funeral and transition, navigating the holidays, handling sensitive questions and more, *Surviving Loss of a Sibling* is a wonderful source of comfort for all who share the journey, and offers a treasured reminder that none of us walk this journey alone.



Welcome...

Where Else?

Where else - can you come into a group of complete strangers and talk about the death of your child?

Where else - can you know that you are not alone in your bereavement?

Where else - can others sincerely say to you, "I know how you feel?"

Where else - will you not hear, "It's time you were over it and started getting on with your life," and

other unwelcome advice?

Where else - can you cry without feeling ashamed or laugh without feeling guilt?

Where else - can you just listen and not talk if you do not wish to?

Where else - can you reach out to newly bereaved parents who are experiencing the grief and pain you have felt?

Where else - can you share the love and memories of your child/ren with others?

Where else - NOWHERE, BUT AT THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS!!

--Dave Ziv TCF Bucks Mont, PA

Editor's note: We reach out to you with the understanding and hope only another bereaved parent can offer. Attending meetings and learning from others what has helped them is one way to ease the pain of losing a child. We welcome you to join us at the South Bay/L.A. Chapter of TCF.

Goodbye Butterfly

In my dreams you laugh and play,
In dreams I never have to question
why, I had to let you fly away,
Goodbye butterfly,
Your memory is as clear today,
Your beauty none can deny,
Yet we had to let you fly away,
Goodbye butterfly,
Here for just the briefest time,
We're left with tears in our eyes,
Because we had to let you fly away,
Goodbye butterfly,
Our love just couldn't hold you,
Believe me we did try,
We had to let you fly away,
Goodbye butterfly,
Fly high my darling Angel child,
Among the clouds, up in the sky,
You had to go, to fly away,
Goodbye butterfly.

--Christine Bevington

If I Had One More Day

If I had one more day,
my child, to spend with you,
anything you want,
I promise we would do.
If I had one more day,
to see your precious face,
we'd wake up bright and early –



not one moment would we waste

If I had one more day,
in your sweet voice let me hear,
"I'll love you Mom, forever, and
I'm waiting for you here."

If I had one more day,
I'd beg for another,
because it's the only way to mend
the heart of a grieving mother.

-- Brenda Taylor, TCF, Nashville, TN

"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,

I Found Hope



I found hope after meeting others going through the same nightmare, dealing with the loss of their sibling.

They give me the strength and courage to allow myself to be vulnerable, to accept that I do not need to go through this journey alone.

I found hope when I realized I could help someone else simply be sharing what has worked for me.

As well, I found hope by hearing what has worked for others.

-- Keith Singer, Lori's Brother

**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 Brooks Jr.
Born: 7/88 Died: 9/17
Mother: Thessia
Carpenter

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Michael John Dornbach
Born: 7/60 Died: 10/17
Parents: Maria Trillegi &
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 Bruns

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

**Our Children****Remembered**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Our Children****Remembered**

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

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

Danielle Murillo
Born: 5/96 Died: 4/14
Parents: Cheryl Outlaw &
Manuel Murillo

Christopher Murphy
Born: 11/92 Died: 4/18
Mother: Deborah Murphy

Christopher Myers
Born: 10/86 Died: 5/06
Parents: Janet & Larry
Myers

Edward W. Myricks II
Born: 4/72 Died: 10/11
Parents: Edward &
Sandra Myricks

Lisa Nakamaru
Born: 12/93 Died: 10/14
Mother: Grace Nakamaru

Natalie Rose Nevarez
Born: 5/90 Died: 11/14
Parents: Gregg and
Alison Nevarez

Richard Paul Negrete
Born: 6/43 Died: 2/04
Mother: Sally Negrete

Stephanie Sue Newkirk
Born: 12/67 Died: 10/15
Mother: Cindy McCoy

Trevor Mitchell Nicholson
Born: 7/99 Died: 1/18
Parents: Brad & Kendra
Nicholson

Steven Scott Nussbaum
Born: 5/61 Died: 11/15
Parents: Will & Gloria
Nussbaum

Sally Anne O'Connor
Born: 12/62 Died: 2/11
Mother: Grace "Darline"
Dye

Isabella Ofsanko
Born: 6/97 Died: 10/15
Mother: Desiree Palmer

Dominique Oliver
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/02
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Steven Thomas Pack
Born: 8/91 Died: 3/20
Parents: Tom & Lisa
Pack

Lilly Parker
Born: 12/15 Died: 1/17
Mother: Nicole Kawagish
Father: J.D. Parker

Jessica Perez
Born: 5/89 Died: 10/03
Sister: Monica Perez

Andrew Periaswamy
Born: 5/97 Died: 10/16
Parents: Megala & Xavier
Periaswamy

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

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

Donnie Vincent Pulislich
Born: 1/75 Died: 1/18
Mother: Maria Pulislich
Sister: Michelle Pulislich

Shannon Quigley
Born: 12/68 Died: 1/09
Mother: Kathleen
Shortridge

Dax Jordan Quintana
Dantas De Oliveria
Born: 6/17 Died: 8/17
Parents: Alexandar &
Sanderson Quintana
Dantas De Oliveria

Daniel Paul Rains
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/91
Mother: Janet Ferjo

Jeffrey Alan Rakus
Born: 10/86 Died: 7/06
Parents: Tony & Donna
Rakus

**Our Children****Remembered**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thomas Zachary
Born: 12/85 Died: 7/11
Father: Bob McGaha

Michael Jordan Zareski
Born: 5/71 Died: 12/17
Parents: Susan & Norm
Zareski

Kevin Zelik
Born: 11/85 Died: 6/10
Parents: Joe & Linda
Zelik

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

Our Children Remembered

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 or anniversary month, we invite you to join our monthly meeting and share their story!

Birthdays and anniversaries 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.)

Sorry, not tributes were submitted this month.

By Siblings...



A Grief All My Own

I was a freshman at college when my brother, Carl, died. The news reached me hours after he had been found at the base of the radio tower. Jim, a faculty member and family friend, stuck his head inside the door of my chemistry class as I waited for class to begin and motioned me outside. I was pleasantly surprised to see him, but my smile faded as I noticed the somber expression on his face. He took my hands in his as he told me of my brother's death. I searched his face desperately waiting for his expression to break in to a grin as people will often do before they let you in on the joke, but there would be no punch line.

I drew back instinctively and as I pulled away, Jim tightened his grip. I began shouting "No!" over and over until I became aware of myself once again and sunk into his hug. When I started to breathe more regularly Jim walked back into the classroom to get my backpack. I began to grow physically and emotionally numb as he led me down the stairs to his van. He asked me if I had a friend who could wait with me until I could get to the airport. I nodded indicating I did. He drove over to her

classroom and I carefully looked in to see if I could find her. Fortunately she saw me and dismissed herself.

When I got to the dorm, the RA (resident assistant) for my unit was already waiting for me. She and my friend, Heather, followed me to my room after an exchange of somber glances between them. Without much thought as to what I needed I packed a suitcase hoping I had everything I needed since I would be going home for the week.

I was nearly finished packing when one of my roommates came into the room. She heard the announcement in chapel and came to see how I was handling the news. I was suddenly aware of how closely I was being watched. It was as though I had taken up residence in a fishbowl. The girls sat silently watching me, not quite knowing what else to do. I could feel their unease at not knowing what to say; afraid of saying something that would cause me to have some sort of nervous breakdown right in front of them.

I desperately wanted to be alone. It was as though I was a hostess at a boring party needing to entertain my guests, but I was afraid to act anything but somber. Would they think Carl meant nothing to me if I tried to strike up meaningless conversation? I felt an emptiness growing in the pit of my stomach. I wanted to crawl in bed and curl up against the wall. Yet, all I could do was sit uncomfortably while they watched.

I was the elephant in the room. My brother had just died, yet no one could state the obvious: something horrible had just happened. I didn't know it at the time, but I had experienced for the first time a reaction that was to become all too familiar to me.

After a draining week at home, I was unprepared to face my friends, roommates, and acquaintances at school. I could feel the tension as I walked into my unit. The girls watched cautiously as if waiting to see if it would be OK to approach me. I wanted to tell them about the week and about all of the painful memories my hometown triggered of my brother. Actually, I needed to talk about it, yet I knew it was better to keep it to myself.

I don't know how to explain it, but people react very strangely when they hear about someone's death. I couldn't count the frequency with which I was purposefully avoided or had someone quickly change the subject if I happened to mention my brother.

I soon discovered a positive reply when asked how I was doing avoided many uncomfortable situations. Most of the time people merely asked out of a sense of obligation, not concern.

Few wanted to hear how my stomach turned when I walked up to his casket and saw the bruises, which ran down alongside his head and neck beneath the make up the mortician applied in an attempt to conceal them. Nor did they want to hear how my heart skipped a beat when I thought I caught a glimpse of Carl riding his skateboard down the street, only to have it break one more time when I realized it couldn't have been him.

They didn't even want to hear how I found comfort in

memories of him such as the time we were just little kids and had been sent to our rooms because somehow we had managed to irritate Dad. Unwilling to accept our punishment and allow our fun to come to an end we recorded ourselves giggling and set it behind our dad's chair knowing we were sure to get a reaction. We laughed hysterically when our dad heard the recording and sprang from his chair to catch us out of our rooms.

I found I was truly alone in my grief aside from what I could share with my parents. I try not to get angry when I think of how others reacted to me in my grief. I, myself, reacted toward others the same way before I lost my brother. Yet, it was difficult to be forced to create a mask for the comfort of others when comfort was what I sought. Each day I "put on a happy face" and tried my best to appear together.

A few weeks after I returned to school the other girls in the unit no longer tolerated my grief. I could sense their irritation when I failed to get out of bed as they prepared for class. No longer was it necessary to try to comfort me. They had accepted my brother's death and were done feeling bad. It would not have been a great shock to learn they had forgotten I had a brother.

I was forced to stuff my grief for the remainder of the semester. I cried only when I was sure I was alone and knew no one would be back for a while. I carefully watched what I said as not to let anything about my brother slip into conversation. I found even sharing a good memory of Carl could set off a series of uncomfortable events. The mere mention of his name would cause my listeners to freeze. Would I break down immediately and fall to pieces at his memory?

I didn't know at the time it would have been OK. No one had to understand my emotions, nor did anyone have to deal with them. I was the only one able and willing to carry myself through my grief. I had to realize I could only do what I could as I struggled with my grief and had to remind myself I would be able to do more as time passed and the impact of his death gradually became less painful. It was necessary for me to understand if I never got over his death I would also be all right as the death of a sibling is not something anyone ever truly gets over.

Everyone deals with grief differently. If I were to only allow myself to grieve as much as other's around me felt comfortable I would be quite miserable today. It has been four years since his death and I continue to miss him. I still watch what I say to others, but I don't worry so much about their reaction. I know what to expect from someone when they hear about Carl for the first time and have found ways to keep the evil of discomfort for all parties at a minimum.

When Carl died I struggled with what my answer would be when someone asked if I had a sibling. I didn't know how to answer. Would I say I did have a brother or would I say I had a brother? Neither answer seemed quite correct. Today I can answer the question. Carl was and always will be my brother. My memories of him are mine to share if I wish. My grief is also mine to deal

with, as I need to.

It is not open to the criticism of others.

--Carrie Pueschel Eastside TCF, Kirkland, WA

For Grandparents...



Dearest Elizabeth Grace Vieira Cote,

My darling Granddaughter, I have known you but for 39 days, yet as I held your lifeless body in my arms today, for the first time since you were born, my grandma heart mourned not only the life which has been taken from you but also the precious moments that have been robbed from all of us.

We will never see you smile a crooked little grin or watch you take your first steps. We will never touch your first tooth; hear your first (goo) or your first laugh. I will never hear you call me (Gammy). I will never savor the special memories of painting your tiny nails or braiding your silky hair. I'll never play hide and seek with you or share secrets with you that only you and I could understand ... these things are now just faded dreams that will never come true.

Why have you been taken from us? ... this remains the unanswered question. Maybe one day we will know the reason for all this madness. One thing I can tell you, my darling Elizabeth, is that your life was not in vain. In your short time here on Earth you have taught us determination, courage, and Love with a capital L. You have taught us to be humble and patient. Through your silent suffering you have touched the hearts of all who cared for you and all who visited you in your tiny hospital bed.

Because of you, our family ties are even tighter. You have brought us abundant joy and happiness by just being ...

Your Mommy and Daddy also have grown as a result of your arrival. They have learned, as have we all, that we should not take things for granted. Life can change forever in a matter of minutes. Last Sunday your parents were overwhelmed with pride as they held you in their arms. That is a memory they will cherish for as long as they live and because of it, their love for one another will bond even more. No, your life has not been in vain, my precious granddaughter, for you have changed our lives forever ...

Rest well my little oneremember how much you are loved.

Your Gammy XX



From Our Members...

The Morning After Death

The morning after death, the silent time,
The time that crawls if time moves on at all.
I walk on tiptoe into the kitchen,

meeting Truth.
 I beckon to a time of living.
 Grief descends; it settles on the table,
 chairs, and all around the kitchen.
 How can I make the tea or toast the bread
 with sadness all around me?
 What was once vibrant has gone.
 Only memory brings brightness, and I fear memory
 will fade.
 How can I be left alone standing by the stove?
 She left me, and I am here.
 Making breakfast food
 In the morning's dawn.
 But the tea is flat; the toast is burnt,
 And I inhale the grief.
 --Rebecca Pinker Jana's Mom
 Submitted by Linda Curtis, I wanted to share this poem
 because I related to it and it helped me in my grief.

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 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: Sept. first for September 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.

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



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

Kristy Mueller

Kitty Edler

Connie & Leo Licciardone

Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla



Lori Galloway

Kristy Mueller

Susan Kass

Jackie Taos

Sandra Myricks

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.

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

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 room for specific topics that you need to register for.

Closed Group Chat... TCF National has several closed Facebook groups you may find helpful on your grief journey. Click the blue link above to be connected and request to join.

TCF - Loss to Substance Related Causes*Moderators: Barbara Allen and Mary Lemley***TCF - Loss to Suicide***Moderators: Cathy Seehuetter and Donna Adams*

TCF - Loss to Homicide *Moderators: Debbie Floyd and Kathleen Willoughby*

TCF - Infant and Toddler Loss *Moderators: Susan*

*Peavler and Tiffany Barraso***TCF - Sibling Loss to Substance Related***Causes Moderators: Andrea Keller and Barbara Allen*

The Compassionate Friends Sounds of the Siblings (for bereaved siblings) *Moderators: Tracy Milne and Keith Singer*

TCF - Loss of a Grandchild *Moderators: Betty Farrel and Jennifer Sue Hale*

TCF - Loss to Miscarriage or Stillbirth*Moderators: Kelly Kittel and Kenzie Janzen***TCF - Loss of an Only Child/All Your Children***Moderators: Lisa Ridge and Vicki Woods-Ozias***TCF - Loss to a Drunk/Impaired Driver***Moderators: Robin Landry and Rebecca Perkins*

TCF - Loss to Cancer *Moderators: Lee Meyerson, Michelle Setzer, Marguerite Caraway Ward*

TCF is On Facebook Please visit and help promote TCF. You can get there by clicking on the link from TCF's national website home page at www.compassionatefriends.org. Or, you can log into Facebook and search for The Compassionate Friends/USA. In addition to the social support aspect, The Compassionate Friends/USA Facebook page will have information about upcoming events.

Help Support Our Chapter... Although our group's size has diminished the past few months, we have not been having the donations and support we have always counted on. We would love to have your suggestions and input on ways we can improve our meetings, outreach and help you in your grief. Please consider the various ways you can give back to our South Bay/L.A. chapter. We'd love to hear from you.

Four Options To Give:

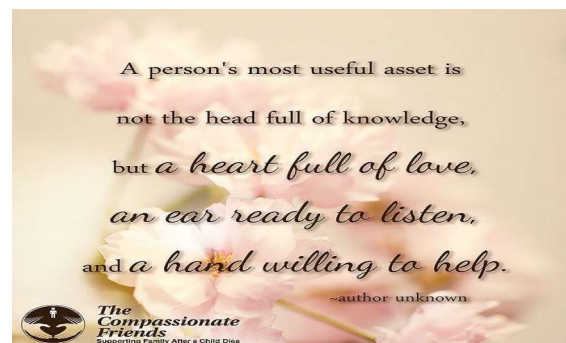
QR code on cell phones.

Online at tcfsbla.org/donate-now/

Cash/checks: Donation box at in-person meetings.

Checks: Mail to PO Box 11171
Torrance CA 90503

SCAN ME





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.

No donations were received this month.

In honor and in remembrance of you child, please consider a donation to 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_____

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



August 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.