



The Compassionate Friends

South Bay/LA Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

September 2026 ISSUE

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

OUR NEXT MEETING:
will be September 3rd, the First
Thursday of the month at 7:00 P.M.

LOCATION:
The Neighborhood Church
415 Paseo Del Mar
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274
(South of Torrance Beach)

DIRECTIONS: Pacific Coast Hwy. to Palos Verdes Blvd. → Palos Verdes Blvd. becomes Palos Verdes Drive West. Veer Right. → Go to Via Corta (stop sign just past Malaga Cove Plaza). Turn right. → Go down hill to Arroyo (stop sign). Turn right. → Continue down hill to end of street. → Turn left on Paseo Del Mar. → Park In EAST lot. Follow path to back patio. Meetings are held at the **EAST** end of the church. Patio Meeting room is 101 classroom. Follow signs. (Last door, first floor.)

--Please remember to park in the EAST church parking lot and not on the street.--

The Compassionate Friends Mission Statement...

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

The Sept. 3rd meeting will start with **"Different Grief in Different Grievers."**

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.

South Bay/LA Chapter of TCF
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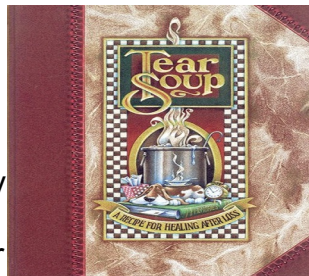
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The Thursday Sept. 3rd meeting will start with **“Different Grief in Different Grievors.”** When you are newly bereaved and thrust into this horrific pain you could care less how other people managed their grief...all you want is the reassurance that 1) This awful pain and confusion will end, 2) You are not going crazy, and 3) You will live through your loss. With time, you understand that even though grief work may be the hardest thing you have ever experienced, it is manageable and with hard work, can be overcome. Everyone's grief has commonalities but your grief will only be diminished when you plot your own course of action. As everyone finds their own way through grief, hearing from other bereaved parents and siblings can be one of the best resources for quicker healing. While the next article is long, it is also packed with tips and good information on overcoming the loss of your loved one. While geared for siblings, I know that every bereaved person will relate to something in the article that will help them in their grief. Knowledge and understanding the many nuances of grief are key factor in accepting our loss. Because of our individual personalities, past experiences, age, family position and closeness to the departed, we will all face grief differently from one another. That said, the following article has many key points about grieving your way and doing what is right for you in your own personalized grief path. We invite you to come share at the next TCF meeting what you have found helpful and what you are struggling with in your grief. By sharing our grief and loss with each other, we find the support and understanding that we need at this difficult time.

Tear Soup a Recipe for Healing after Loss

If you are going to buy only one book on grief, this is the one to get. It will validate your grief experience, and you can share it with your children. You can leave it on the coffee table so others will pick it up, read it, and then better appreciate your grieving time. The “tips” section at the back of the book is rich with wisdom and concrete recommendations. Affirms the bereaved ~ Educates the unbereaved ~ A building-block for children (Taken from www.griefwatch.com) The following are some “tips” from the book:



If You Are The Cook

- This is your grief—no one else's. Your friends can't feel your loss in the same way. It will not affect their life the way it affects yours. And you may resent them for that.
- At first you may think dying would be preferable to having to go through this pain. Just try to stay alive. Sudden mood swings are normal. You may suddenly be unreasonable and short tempered.
- Try your best to educate your friends about what you need and how they can help. Be as honest as you can be about how you are feeling.
- Don't give up on your friends if they let you down. But if they continue to be insensitive to your grief you may need to distance yourself for a while until you get stronger.
- At first you will probably want to talk to as many people as possible, but after a month or so, find one or two people whom you can count on for the long haul to just be there and listen when you need to talk.
- Write your thoughts in a journal. It will help you to process and also to remember the new insights you are learning.
- Consider attending a support group. Go at least three times before deciding if it is helpful to you.
- Be open to counseling.
- Exercise, sleep, drink plenty of fluids, and eat a well balanced diet.
- Pamper yourself. Take bubble baths. Get a massage.
- Try not to compare your grief with another's. You don't earn points for having a more painful experience than someone else has. And you won't feel less grief if someone else's loss is worse.
- You deserve to feel happy again. Being happy doesn't mean you forget. Learn to be grateful for the good days.
- Don't be too hard on yourself.
- Long after everyone else has forgotten your loss, you will continue to remember. Learn to be content with your private memories, Soup Making, & Time
- Grief work takes time. Much longer than anyone wants it to.
- If a child or spouse dies it may be a year before the bereaved begins to gain a sense of stability, because the loss is highlighted by each season, holiday, anniversary or special day. The second year is not so great either.
- You may be okay one minute but the next minute you may hit bottom.
- Night time can be particularly difficult. Some

people have trouble getting to sleep while others have trouble staying asleep. And then there are those who don't want to wake up.

- Most people can tolerate another's loss for about a month before wanting the bereaved person to get back to normal.

Sisters and Brothers

When a sibling dies, the world changes in a heartbeat. Oftentimes when such a loss occurs, others fail to recognize that the surviving sibling faces emotional battles on many fronts while working through the loss. Largely ignored, surviving siblings are often referred to as the "forgotten mourners."

Within this group of surviving siblings is one that is unique—the adult survivor who lives away from home and is mourning the death of an adult sibling. In the case of an adult sibling, attention and words of comfort are usually aimed at the parents, spouse, and children, and not the siblings who may live far away.

The loss of history

Each family has its own special history and the shared bonds that are a part of that history. When a sibling dies, the bonds are shattered, and the history forever has a void that cannot be filled.

As they grow, children develop certain characteristics and talents. Brothers and sisters tend to complement each other by developing a balance of interests in different areas. However, surviving siblings will need to redefine their roles in the absence of this relationship.

The loss of future

When a sibling dies, all future special occasions will be forever changed. There will be no more shared birthday celebrations, anniversaries, or holidays. There will be no telephone calls telling of the birth of a new nephew or niece. The sharing of life's unique and special events will never again take place.

What adult siblings may expect

Survivor guilt is normal. Siblings usually have a relationship where they seek to protect each other. Despite the physical distance that may separate them as adults, this need to have provided protection weighs heavily in the aftermath of the loss.

Guilt about how the relationship was maintained is common. So often as adults, the sibling relationship has changed from younger years. Each travels a separate path, and sometimes

communication is lacking and ambivalent feelings about maintaining the relationship surface. No matter how good a relationship may have been, the survivor often believes it should have been better, causing guilt.

Anger over a new role within the family often occurs. A surviving sibling may now be the one expected to care for aging parents, and he or she may have to step into the role of guardian for nieces and nephews.

Remaining family members may look to surviving siblings for guidance. All these situations are possible reasons to feel anger over a sibling's death.

Fear of mortality. When a brother or sister dies, it is natural for the surviving sibling or siblings to look at their own lives and question how many years they have left, and what their deaths would do to the family.

Surviving siblings may find positive changes within their lives. These may include greater emotional strength, increased independence, and a soul-searching re-examination of religious beliefs. Some survivors feel the need to make a change in their life's work, such as becoming a therapist, or working to effect a change in the area that took the life of the sibling.

Even when a sibling has died, a connection still remains. Surviving brothers and sisters think about them; talk about them; remember them at special times such as birthdays, holidays, and death dates; and may create a memorial of some type. This connection with the sibling who died does not have to be given up to move forward in life.

Understanding from others

Society often encourages bereaved individuals to feel guilty for grieving too long. This failure to receive validation of their grief can cause siblings to hide their feelings, causing a type of depression with which they may struggle for many years.

If the surviving sibling is married, stress may also be introduced into the spousal relationship. Individuals grieve differently, and the spouse may be bewildered and even unsympathetic that this loss is causing so much sorrow in their own family. This situation may provoke comments such as, "Why are you so upset? You haven't been close to your family for years." While this may sound reasonable, the emotions of grief and mourning are seldom reasonable—or even rational. Spouses may need to be told how they can be supportive. One woman simply asked her husband for a hug whenever she felt especially sad about the death of



her sister.

College students who lose a sibling

Those away at college in an unstructured environment often find the death of a sibling particularly difficult at a time when they find themselves extremely stressed. This may be the first experience with death within the family, and upon returning to college, the bereaved sibling tends to find little support, sometimes turning instead to drugs, alcohol, and other addictions for relief. Instead of helping, these habits hinder the ability to confront the loss. Many colleges have counseling and support centers. Consideration also may be given to delaying college for a period of time, reducing stress by decreasing difficult activities, and enjoying creative pursuits that provide positive ways of releasing frustrations.

Senior citizens who lose a sibling

When the sibling of a senior citizen dies, often those around this person feel that it is more normal for people to die as they age, and so there is no need to provide comfort or even acknowledge the death. In reality, whether the sibling who died is nine or ninety, the loss still wounds the heart. Oftentimes with senior citizen grief, the death of a sibling is compounded by the fact that the spouse and others important to them in their lives have preceded the sibling in death, leaving a void for feedback, comfort, and remembrance. One's own mortality is often questioned.

Finding support

Many siblings find help by talking with others about their brother or sister. However, even good friends can quickly become uncomfortable with the subject, often at just the point when their support is most needed. Some communities offer sibling support groups, and adult siblings are welcome to attend meetings of The Compassionate Friends.

Often, simply finding another bereaved sibling with whom to share concerns and feelings provides a path toward healing. Adult siblings may be living in areas where no one knew their deceased brother or sister—or even of their existence. This can be painful at a time when the surviving sibling longs to share memories.

When your parents die, it is said you lose your past; when your spouse dies, you lose your present; and when your child dies, you lose your future. However, when your sibling dies, you lose a part of your past, your present, and your future. Because of this tremendous loss, it is important that everyone work together to ease the path toward healing. --www.griefwatch.com)



Grieving Differently

Current scientific research on the brain indicates that men are functionally different from women. These distinctions account for many of the differences between how men and women process

information and the feelings that they have.

Coping with grief and loss are no exception. While men and women experience the same grief, they will likely process and express it in very different ways.

THINGS MEN SHOULD KEEP IN MIND WHEN GRIEVING

Because many of society's stereotypes of how a grieving person should behave are based on the way women grieve, there are some things that men should keep in mind.

- You will grieve in your own way.
- There is no how-to guide for how you should grieve.
- Your grief process will be influenced by who you are, how you were raised, and your life experiences.
- You may not want to talk about it as often as those around you. You may use action instead of talking to work through your feelings.
- Working side by side may be an easier way to process grief than to communicate face to face.
- You may prefer to do your healing on your own and through your own inner strength.
- You may prefer to take on the role of caretaker of those around you in order to help you process your own grief. It takes strength and courage to experience and express grief.
- Grief is a process that will make you stronger. All people have a combination of both 'masculine' and 'feminine' characteristics that will influence their style of mourning.

ATTEMPTS TO AVOID GRIEF

While society may be changing, the lingering mentally that 'big boys don't cry' leads many men to try to avoid the grief process all together. They may fear that showing their grief will make them look weak. There are some common ways that men attempt to cover up their feelings of grief:

- Silence • Anger • Action • Addiction • Secrecy

SUPPORT GROUPS

For many men it helps to talk with other men

about their grief. This may be in a support group setting or in some type of community work group. Sometimes an activity that provides a common goal will help men to open to those around them.

LEARNING TO OPEN UP

Many men have been conditioned by society to keep their feelings hidden. The fact that, after a loss, it is more likely that a community will acknowledge a woman's loss than a man's reinforces the sense that they should keep their emotions inside. Men who learn to open up and share their grief will have many benefits to their emotional and physical health, as well as for their relationships and marriage. They will also feel more energy and happiness.

WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT

What is most important is that each person finds a safe way to express their grief. While some may be most comfortable in a support group setting, others may be more comfortable working through their grief on their own, or with the help of educational books or websites. Some use music, art or writing as tools to help them grieve. Some rely on ceremonies or rituals to bring them comfort. As time goes by, the methods used to cope with grief may vary.

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www.griefwatch.com

Reopening of School and No Child!



Summer ends, and across our nation, from the middle of August to the week after Labor Day, schools open for another year. For those parents surviving a child of school age, be that from nursery school to college or university, this can be as trying a time as the holidays.

School buses travel again the busy highways of our cities and the quiet lanes of our countryside. Anxious parents stand with children about to make the first ride to school. Gaggles of youngsters play at countless stops across our land. America's most precious and costly activity is renewed. The children are off to school.

I remember well the silences of the September mornings of those first years. The bus no longer stopped at our home. It simply drove casually by, the people within never realizing it once carried the focus of my love, the repository of my dreams. The drone of its wheels marked anew the mind numbing dullness of my fragmented senses as it

moved its way down the tree lined lane once alive with my son's comings and goings.

It was always possible to avoid "back to school" sales. Seeing young people and their weary parents gather school supplies and clothing was just too much in those earliest years. Somehow, the perfect notebook, the brilliant sweater, the odd-shaped erasers were simply unendurable. The stream of vehicles heading for Cape Cod for that final Labor Day weekend, the last family outing to end the summer, was another scene to avoid. It was a ritual from which we seemed excluded. Could we still be a family without him?

Those years are gone now. Having returned to education, I now have "back to school" buying to do myself. I see the buses arrive to unload their treasured passengers, no longer feeling the emptiness of a bus that drives on, barren of hopes and dreams. But I do and will forever remember the pain of those unhappy years and sometimes I reflect on the many parents who now feel as I did. If you are such a parent, if you mourn a child who leaves a school desk somewhere unfilled, I promise that you are not alone in that pain. But even though you are not alone, you know that you are forever marked, that the death of your child or children has altered you in some basic manner.

Perhaps time and much grief work remain before your spirit can yield up the agony and permit a new self to emerge. That time and work was necessary for me, as it actually is for all of us. For me, grief resolution finally recalled me to my original work. I teach. I no longer administer or direct. The need for that fled before bereavement's assault.

I teach math, science, and social studies to sixth grade children, ages 11 to 12 over the course of a year. In wondrous ways they have restored love to my living. There is nothing of an intellectual character with enough value to equal that, so I have given them the love and caring that was mine, evoked by and for Olin. Thus do Olin's gifts live on, called forth and given new lift through the innocent and selfless love of schoolchildren. All who walk this road realize this is not substitution. Such is not possible. But it does reflect qualities of successful reinvestment, something each of us sorely needs.

Today as schools prepare for another year, I look forward to a new group of children. But cautions arise within as well, the legacy of that time over 12 years ago, when the world came to a sudden halt, when the laughter of lifetimes ceased,

when dreams evaporated with a morning mist. For those of us who dare live and love again, for those fortunate enough to have found a reinvestment encouraging the same, there is always risk. After all, tragedy can strike again. Our present or past pain grants no immunity. Students, the children within the school, invited me, albeit unknowingly, to take that risk again, although certainly not at the rich and deep level of father and son. Nevertheless, it feels right, and though I will never again know the depth of love which belonged to Olin and me, I welcome the chance to live once more on its margins.

So schools, which were once just another manifestation of hurt, have helped me to restore purpose and balance to daily living. There is surely such a reinvestment awaiting all of us, but we must seek the circumstances and create the opportunities for it to occur. I pray that all of us who have not yet had such good fortune may soon do so. All of our children would want this for us as well. With that thought in mind, it is indeed worth striving for that dimension in life once more.

--By Don Hackett, TCF Member, MA

In Loving Memory of Tyler Williams

Tyler A. Williams was born September 29, 1993, and passed on June 11, 2011. Tyler was the joy and love of my life; and he brought happiness to all he met. He had a smile and sense of humor that lifted those around him. My son had ADD and Asperger's; however, you wouldn't know it by his actions. He was so special in my eyes, and when we were out together people would ask if that was Tyler with me.

He'd say, "How do they know me?" I told him that I would show his picture to everyone and talk about him all the time. I'm so blessed to have had the greatest child in the world. I remember all the times I rushed home from work just to see him before he went to bed. He had a beautiful God-given gift of voice. The first time I heard him sing brought tears to my eyes. He also loved Transformers and graphic design. I taught him how to cook and iron his clothes. His teachers would comment about how nice he always looked in school.

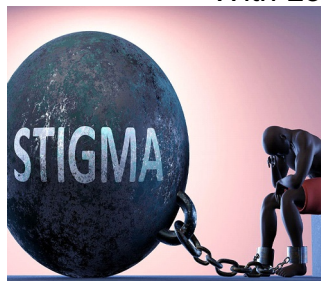
Like any father, I didn't want my son to worry about me. I was his strength, his protector. Tyler knew something was wrong with me because I coughed all the time. I had congestive heart

failure, but did not tell him. After all, he had enough to deal with being a teenager. After Tyler passed away my heart continually got weaker, I was hospitalized, and the doctors told me I could not leave the hospital. I spent 435 days in the hospital waiting for a new heart. The day I was told I would have a heart, the first thing I did was to thank God and Tyler for giving me the strength to get through the good and bad times spent waiting.

The tables have turned; he is now my strength, my protector. When Tyler passed away, I was so broken up. I knew I needed help, but didn't know where to turn. I thought that going back to work would help, but it didn't. I sat at my desk and cried all the time. Online, I discovered an organization called The Compassionate Friends. I contacted the co-chair, Lucille, and she invited me to a meeting. The first meeting I attended, Lucille sat with me before it began and explained the organization and its mission.

When the meeting started, a beautiful rock with butterflies was passed to each person and it gave the opportunity to talk about their lost child. It had only been two weeks since I had lost Tyler, and I cried through the whole time trying to express my grief. This group is the best thing that has ever happened to me since losing Tyler. Everyone understood exactly what I was going through because they have been there, and that made such a difference. The love and support given is comforting. At The Compassionate Friends I have made great friends, and I look forward to going to each meeting.

With Love, Larry Williams



Why I Don't Say My Son Committed Suicide

The news spread quickly. Two youth from the local high school had died over the weekend. "They committed suicide" were the words I heard to explain the tragic loss of two young people, who had their entire lives ahead of them.

It is common to hear those two words together—commit and suicide. I cringe when I hear it. They didn't commit a crime. They died by suicide.

I am a survivor of suicide loss. After my son's death, I was helpless to respond to the painful words that were spoken in hushed tones around me. "It was a selfish act." "Didn't you see the signs?" "Are they in heaven?" "I wonder what went

wrong in the family?" I was unable to formulate responses to these false beliefs. I didn't even know they were false. I just knew they held me hostage under a grief so powerful I could hardly breathe.

In short bursts of time when I could focus, I read. Books like "I'm Not Sick, I Don't Need Help," "The Burden of Sympathy – how families cope with mental illness," or "Man's Search for Meaning," helped me understand the suffering my son endured was so deep that he would take his own life.

"Schizophrenia with delusional behaviors," the doctor had said. Ryan was diagnosed with mental illness nine months before he died. In hindsight, I had seen signs, but I didn't know they were signs of mental illness. I never even considered mental illness was real. I just hoped he'd outgrow the anxiety, fear and worry that had insinuated themselves into his psyche.

Sleeping too much, not wanting to go to school, avoiding social situations, becoming more isolated and failing grades were what I had dismissed as "normal" adolescence.

I am not alone. Sadly, I hear stories of other parents who thought their child would outgrow these behaviors, too. When behaviors such as these change someone's personality, it could signal a growing mental illness. I stopped really seeing my son because I thought I knew him by heart. I dismissed his complaints and his tears. I didn't reach out to help him find his way because I was lost too.

Parents cannot look inside a child's head to see what dark thoughts may be present, thoughts of worthlessness, of being a burden or thoughts of death.

These are thoughts they can't shake. Too ashamed to speak them aloud, our children suffer. To share these with another person they fear judgment, advice giving and not being taken seriously, or worse, feeling weak and powerless. Without knowledge of mental illness as an actual brain illness, they languish. Without treatment, the illness can worsen over time and become a full blown chronic illness that is more difficult to treat or results in suicide. 90 percent of people who die by suicide had a diagnosable mental illness.

All too often the "s-word" strikes fear in our hearts — fear of the act itself, fear of the unknown or fear of getting too close because suicide might

be contagious.

We must remove the shame and stigma from mental illness and suicide, as well as the judgment youth often fear from talking about their feelings and seeking help. We must do a better job to help them share the darkness in their emotions support the 1 in 5 who will be diagnosed with mental illness at some point in their lives. We must listen with our hearts even if we quake with inadequacy when we hear the pain of our child or student.

We need to know of their suffering in order to move toward evaluation and treatment, if need be. Talking is only the first step. We have to remove the shame if we want to reduce and eventually prevent suicide in our time. We need to practice using the words suicide and mental illness so they roll off our tongues as easily as bubble gum and dish soap. We need to face our fear that asking questions about suicide will give our loved

ones the idea this could be an option.

With understanding comes a responsibility to educate others to effect change in the words we use when referring to someone with depression, anxiety or any other mental illness. We can increase our understanding of mental illness, suicide and open the dialogue. We can stop blaming the families or blaming the ones who took their lives. There is no blame in suicide.

Those students did not commit a crime. My son did not commit a crime. They believed the only way to end the pain was to end their lives. They died because they didn't have the words to express the deep psychological/biological pain, which was not a sign of weakness but of brain illness.

I didn't understand then, but I do now. These truths eluded me for a long time. Sometimes truth has to hold the darkness before it can shine thru the light.

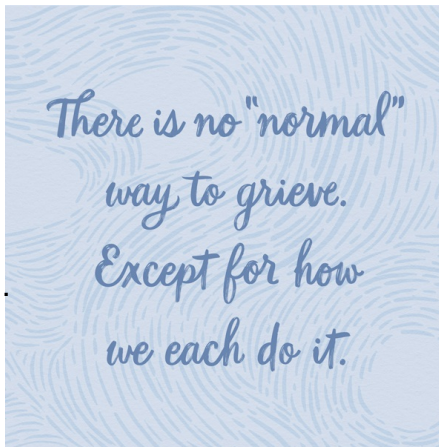
--Desiree Woodland

Albuquerque, NM

"An Unseen Heartache"

A heartache unseen, a pain so real,
A loss so great, it's hard to heal.
A love so strong, a bond so true,
My baby, I'll always carry you.

Though you were only here for a moment in time,



In my heart, you'll forever shine.
A memory cherished, a love so bright,
A guiding light, through the darkest night.

An angel in heaven, watching from above,
A love that endures, a love filled with love.
Forever in my heart, my baby, I'll carry you,
A love that endures, a love forever true.
--Baby Loss Awareness newsletter

Newly Bereaved...

People Grieve Differently



- Know that you can survive. Though you may feel you cannot survive, you can.
- The intense feelings of grief can be overwhelming and frightening. This is normal. You are not going crazy; you are grieving.
- You may experience feelings of guilt, confusion, and anger, even fear. These are all common responses to grief.
- You may even have thoughts of suicide. This, too, is common. It does not mean you will act on those thoughts.
- Forgetfulness is a common but temporary side effect. Grieving takes so much energy that other things will fade in importance.
- Grief also affects us physically. You may find that you are more accident prone, that you get sick more easily, you feel fatigued and have more pain.

Seasoned Grievers...

Today I wrote a note to a bereaved mother... I wanted to say don't believe all those sympathy cards. The ones that say "time heals" and "God only takes the best" and "may your sorrows be lessened." You'll only be disappointed. I wanted to say this is the most heart-wrenching, chest crushing, breath stealing tragedy on earth. I wanted to tell her there will be days she wants to die, and friends who will not understand some of the things she does or says.

I wanted to tell her she will still feel her child's presence at times, sometimes so strongly that it is as if they are dancing just at the edge of whatever activity is going on. And other times she might not feel their presence at all.

I wanted to tell her that her life will not go back, that she will never be the same, because a piece of her left with her child. And that even though the pain does not go away, somehow her soul will eventually make enough room so she can hold it all— the grief, the pain, the joy and the love.

I wanted to tell her... but I didn't. Instead, I wrote this: I'm sending love, for words are pointless right now. And that is the truth.

--by Susi Costello Shared by Hope's Seed

Friends and Family...

7 Things I Have Learned Since the Death of My Child

Child loss is a loss like no other. One often misunderstood by many. If you love a bereaved parent or know someone who does, remember that even his or her "good" days are harder than you could ever imagine. Compassion and love, not advice, are needed. If you'd like an inside look into why the loss of a child is a grief that lasts a lifetime, here is what I've learned in my seven years of trekking through the unimaginable.

1) Love never dies. There will never come a day, hour, minute or second I stop loving or thinking about my son. Just as parents of living children unconditionally love their children always and forever, so do bereaved parents. I want to say and hear his name just the same as non-bereaved parents do. I want to speak about my deceased children as normally and naturally as you speak of your living ones. I love my child just as much as you love yours— the only difference is mine lives in heaven and talking about about him is unfortunately quite taboo in our culture. I hope to change that. Our culture isn't so great about hearing about children gone too soon, but that doesn't stop me from saying my son's name and sharing his love and light everywhere I go. Just because it might make you uncomfortable, doesn't make him matter any less. My son's life was cut irreversibly short, but his love lives on forever. And ever.

2) Bereaved parents share an unspeakable bond. In my seven years navigating the world as a bereaved parent, I am continually struck by the power of the bond between bereaved parents. Strangers become kindred spirits in mere seconds— a look, a glance, a knowing of the heart connects us, even if we've never met before. No

matter our

circumstances, who we are, or how different we are, there is no greater bond than the connection between parents who understand the agony of enduring the death of a child. It's a pain we suffer for a lifetime, and unfortunately only those who have walked the path of child loss understand the depth and breadth of both the pain and the love we carry.

3) I will grieve for a lifetime. Period. The end. There is no "moving on," or "getting over it." There is no bow, no fix, no solution to my heartache. There is no end to the ways I will grieve and for how long I will grieve.

There is no glue for my broken heart, no elixir for my pain, no going back in time. For as long as I breathe, I will grieve and ache and love my son with all my heart and soul. There will never come a time where I won't think about who my son would be, what he would look like, and how he would be woven perfectly into the tapestry of my family. I wish people could understand that grief lasts forever because love lasts forever; that the loss of a child is not one finite event, it is a continuous loss that unfolds minute by minute over the course of a lifetime. Every missed birthday, holiday, milestone—should-be back-to-school school years and graduations; weddings that will never be; grandchildren that should have been but will never be born—an entire generation of people are irrevocably altered forever.

This is why grief lasts forever. The ripple effect lasts forever. The bleeding never stops.

4) It's a club I can never leave, but is filled with the most shining souls I've ever known. This crappy club called child loss is a club I never wanted to join, and one I can never leave, yet is filled with some of the best people I've ever known. And yet we all wish we could jump ship—that we could have met another way—any other way but this. Alas, these shining souls are the most beautiful, compassionate, grounded, loving, movers, shakers and healers I have ever had the honor of knowing. They are life changers, game-changers, relentless survivors and thrivers. Warrior moms and dads who redefine the word brave.

Every day loss parents move mountains in honor of their children gone too soon. They start movements, change laws, spearhead crusades of

tireless activism. Why? In the hope that even just one parent could be spared from joining the club. If you've ever wondered who some of the greatest world changers are, hang out with a few bereaved parents and watch how they live, see what they do in a day, a week, a lifetime. Watch how they alchemize their grief into a force to be reckoned with, watch how they turn tragedy into transformation, loss into legacy.

Love is the most powerful force on earth, and the love between a bereaved parent and his/her child is a life force to behold. Get to know a bereaved parent. You'll be thankful you did.

5) The empty chair/room/space never becomes less empty. Empty chair, empty room, empty space in every family picture. Empty, vacant, forever gone for this lifetime. Empty spaces that should be full, everywhere we go. There is and will always be a missing space in our lives, our families, a forever hole-in-our-hearts. Time does not make the space less empty. Neither do platitudes, clichés or well wishes for us to "move on," or "stop dwelling," from well intentioned friends or family. Nothing does. No matter how you look at it, empty is still empty. Missing is still missing. Gone is still gone. The problem is nothing can fill it.

Minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day, month after month, year after heartbreaking year the empty space remains. The empty space of our missing child(ren) lasts a lifetime. And so we rightfully miss them forever.

Help us by holding the space of that truth for us.



6) No matter how long it's been, holidays never become easier without my son. Never, ever. Have you ever wondered why every holiday season is like torture for a bereaved parent? Even if it's been 5, 10, or 25 years later? It's because they really, truly are. Imagine if you had to live every holiday without one or more of your precious children. Imagine how that might feel for you. It would be easier to lose an arm, a leg or two—anything—than to live without your flesh and blood, without the beat of your heart. Almost anything would be easier than living without one or more of your precious children. That is why holidays are always and forever hard for bereaved parents.

Don't wonder why or even try to understand. Know you don't have to understand in order to be a supportive presence. Consider supporting and loving some bereaved parents this holiday season. It will be the best gift you could ever give them.

Since your death I am all broken bits and sharp edges. My goal is not to be whole again. My goal is to polish up these broken bits and put them together in a new way to make something beautiful of my life as a monument to you and to our love.

7) Because I know deep sorrow, I also know unspeakable joy. Though I will grieve the death of my son forever and then some, it does not mean my life is lacking happiness and joy. Quite the contrary, in fact, though it took awhile to get there. It is not either/or, it's both/and. My life is more rich now. I live from a deeper place. I love deeper still.

Because I grieve I also know a joy like no other. The joy I experience now is far deeper and more intense than the joy I experienced before my loss. Such is the alchemy of grief.

Because I've clawed my way from the depth of unimaginable pain, suffering and sorrow, again and again—when the joy comes, however and whenever it does—it is a joy that reverberates through every pore of my skin and every bone in my body. I feel all of it, deeply: the love, the grief, the joy, the pain. I embrace and thank every morsel of it. My life now is more rich and vibrant and full, not despite my loss, but because of it. In grief there are gifts, sometimes many. These gifts don't in any way make it all "worth" it, but I am grateful beyond words for each and every gift that comes my way. I bow my head to each one and say thank you, thank you, thank you. Because there is nothing—and I mean absolutely nothing—I take for granted. Living life in this way gives me greater joy than I've ever known possible.

I have my son to thank for that. Being his mom is the best gift I've ever been given. Even death can't take that away.

--author unknown Providence RI newsletter

Helpful Hint...



You Don't Just Lose Someone Once

You don't just lose someone once...

You lose them over and over,
sometimes many times a day.

When the loss, momentarily forgotten,
creeps up, and attacks you from behind.
Fresh waves of grief as the realization hits
home they are gone.

Again.

You don't just lost someone once,
You lose them every time you open your eyes
to a new dawn, and as you awaken,

so does your memory,
so does the jolting bolt of lightning that rips
into your heart, they are gone.

Again.

-- Author Unknown Providence RI newsletter

Book In Review...



Beyond Tears: Living After Losing a Child By Ellen Mitchell. Nine mothers lose their children, find each other and share their stories. The women became friends after meeting at a support group. Ellen Mitchell has organized the thoughts and words of these nine bereaved mothers (and to a lesser extent their husbands) into a useful and instructive presentation of what it is like to be on this grief journey after a child dies. This book, unlike others, does not dwell on how each child died, rather focuses on the difficulties that followed for these women, their spouses and their living children. Each has a slightly different take on such issues as: Holidays and birthdays, Belief in an afterlife, Laughter, Gratitude, Redefining themselves and the Value of each other's friendship.

--Providence RI TCF newsletter

Welcome...



We Welcome You with Compassion, Love and Hope

It is always difficult to say "welcome" to those coming to our meetings for the first time because we are so very sorry for the reason they came. For some, the first meeting or two can be rather overwhelming, especially for the newly bereaved. We hope that anyone feeling that way will return to at least a couple more of our meetings. You will find that each meeting is different and depending on your mood or vulnerability, you may react to something someone is saying with a negative or positive feeling.

No matter how long ago your child died, you will find interacting with other bereaved parents, grandparents and sibling can help you in your own healing. Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings regardless of the age at which their child died or the length of time that has passed since that day. We are here for each other. Come find the support that only someone who truly understands how deep our losses go can help.



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 Albarez

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 Bruns

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



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 Guerreva
Born: 7/97 Died: 7/17
Mother: Sharon Cortez

Leslie Geraci Hart
Born: 6/66 Died: 7/11
Father: John Geraci

Adam Guymon
Born: 4/89 Died: 4/06
Mother: Eileen Guymon

Christie Hagenburger
Born: 4/63 Died: 12/17
Father: D.W. Hagenburger

Bishop Michael Hernandez
Born: 3/98 Died: 6/21
Father: John Hernandez

Jesse Hernandez
Born: 2/90 Died: 11/22
Mother: Joann Hernandez

Jennifer Nicole Hower
Born: 6/75 Died: 12/04
Brother: Jeff Hower

Rachel Suzanne Hoyt
Born: 2/70 Died: 1/95
Sister: Laura Hoyt D'anna

Sarah Jade Hurley
Born: 6/97 Died: 5/17
Father: Tim Hurley
Grandmother: Laurie Hurley

Taylor X. Hyland
Born: 8/06 Died: 7/20
Mother: Tessa Hyland

Steven Ishikawa
Born: 9/75 Died: 4/17
Mother: Miki Ishikawa

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Shauna Jean Malone
Born: 8/70 Died: 1/13
Parents: Tom & Mary Malone

Elizabeth Mann
Born: 7/60 Died: 5/05
Parents: David & Olivia Mann



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

Alex J. Mantyla
Born: 3/89 Died: 8/08
Parents: Jarmo & Bonnie
Mantyla

Jesse Robert Martinez
Born: 1/89 Died: 9/21
Father: Harry Martinez

Travis Frederick Marton
Born: 10/91 Died: 1/15
Mother: Ricki Marton

Matthew "Matty" Louis
Matich
Born: 5/02 Died: 7/18
Parents: Mike & Shirley
Matich, Grandmother:
Dorothy Matich

Max McCardy
Born: 4/05 Died 8/15
Parents: Derk & Akemi
McCardy

Joseph Mc Coy
Born: 9/11 Died: 11/14
Mother: Amy McCoy

Sarah Mc Donald
Born: 10/00 Died: 6/17
Parents: Tom & Shideh
Mc Donald

John Paul Mc Nicholas
Born: 12/89 Died: 11/20
Parents: John & Leeann
Mc Nicholas

Kirk Nicholas Mc Nulty
Born: 7/84 Died: 2/14
Mother: Elaine Mc Nulty

Jeremy Stewert Mead
Born: 10/61 Died: 11/14
Mother: Carol Mead

Robert Andrew Mead
Born: 5/65 Died: 4/11
Mother: Carol Mead

Nicole Marie Megaloudis
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/04
Mother: Gail Megaloudis-
Rongen

Damion Mendoza
Born: 7/76 Died: 6/92
Parents: Carlene & Paul
Mendoza

Christopher Metsker
Born: 11/94 Died: 3/18
Parents: Justin & Tara
Metsker

Blanca Isabel Meza
Born: 9/21 Died: 9/21
Mother: Angela Azurdin-
Meza

Mathew Scott Mikelson
Born: 4/77 Died: 4/20
Mother: Dorthy Mikelson

Keith Moilanen
Born: 10/80 Died: 5/19
Mother: Jill Moilanen

Reyna Joanne Monje
Born 9/98 Died: 4/21
Mother: Debbie Trutanich

Jacki Montoya
Born: 10/89 Died: 6/15
Mother: Theresa Montoya

Joshua Montoya
Born: 4/15 Died: 6/15
Grandmother: Theresa
Montoya

Danielle Ann Mosher
Born: 8/78 Died: 6/97
Parents: Paul & Rose
Mary Mosher

Benjamin A. Moutes
Born: 3/07 Died: 5/10
Parents: Kevin & Claudia
Moutes

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

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 Sinclaire
Born: 1/80 Died: 2/22
Mother: Suzanne
Sinclaire

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



Our Children Remembered



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 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, no tributes were submitted this month.

By Siblings...



Coping With Grief After the Death of a Sibling

For those bereaved after losing a sibling, here are ways to help you cope with the grief and find a way through your loss. Some suggestions are better suited for earlier in your grief journey, some for later on:

- Be kind and gentle with yourself. As you're

learning, grief is a winding process.

- Rest and sleep more. The bereaved may feel more exhausted physically and emotionally.
- Don't skip over feeling pain. Allow yourself the time to hurt so you can move through that.
- Spend time with family and friends. Although you may want time alone, don't remove or isolate yourself.
- Do small things that make you happy. Work in the garden, play games on your phone, and integrate small pleasures back into your life.
- Allow yourself joy. Don't feel ashamed or guilty if you enjoy a meal or dance to a song that you liked.
- Return to a routine as soon as you can. Eat regularly, go for a walk, resume work.
- Focus on spirituality and creativity. It's important to shift your energy toward doing the things that bring you joy. This is the perfect opportunity for you to tap into your creativity. You could write poetry, paint, or even write your loved one a letter.
- Create a ritual in your sibling's memory. This may be participating in a 5K for breast cancer research every year if your sister died of breast cancer.
- Do something to honor your sibling's life. If your brother shot hoops and played with friends in a neighborhood park, you can donate a bench as a memorial. The goal is to honor your sibling's memory.
- Join a supportive group. Others are going through what you are, too. Online grief support groups can offer you a safe community in which to mourn.

The Compassionate Friends Sibling Groups and Modern Loss offer resources to help you deal with grief. While we live in a culture that encourages us to move on, grieving the death of a sibling can take some time. It's a very special loss and you have every right to feel deep pain. But there is light at the end of the tunnel and a way to live with and through the loss. Find professionals in your area or online support groups that can guide you through this difficult period.

For Grandparents...



In many families, the relationships between grandparents and grandchildren are every bit as profound as those between parents and their children. The death of a grandchild also ranks high on the scale of human grief – but it is rarely acknowledged. There are few books or support

groups addressing the grief of grandparents, and bereavement counselors who specialize in this kind of grief are rare. Grandparents are usually left to cope as best they can.

When a grandchild dies, the anguish of grandparents is doubled. Their grief for a son or daughter suffering this tragic loss only compounds their pain at the loss of a beloved grandchild. Grandparents who outlast a grandchild struggle with a death that seems out of order; they may cope with survival guilt, perhaps wondering why they couldn't have died instead. Moreover, a grandchild's death chips away at a grandparent's assumed legacy. Most of us hope to make a mark in the world, and the achievements of our children and grandchildren are a part of that dream. When one dies prematurely, that loss resonates through the generations, and like the bell in John Donne's poem – "it tolls for thee."

--By Helen Fitzgerald, CT

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



September 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.