



The Compassionate Friends
MA/CT Border Towns Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

P. O. Box 187, Pascoag, R.I. 02859

The Compassionate Friends are here for you. Our mission is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

Our chapter meets the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua Church, 22 Dudley Hill Road, Dudley, MA

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TCF National Office Toll Free Tel: 877-969-0010
National WebPage: www.compassionatefriends.org

NEWSLETTER

Our Next Sharing Sessions

Thurs., Jan. 9, 2025

Thurs., Feb. 13, 2025

Thurs., Mar. 13, 2025

You are always welcome to join us, even If it's been awhile since you've been to a meeting.

If you are newly bereaved, feel free to bring a supportive friend or relative. Share your feelings, or say nothing and just listen; but please come.

"You need not walk alone"

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

Having a bad day? Sometimes it helps to talk with someone who understands your pain. Please don't hesitate to call one of us.

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THE HOLIDAYS ARE BEHIND US

Posted on January 15th, 2021

It is the new year. The holidays are behind us. We did with them what we could. Whether they were a time of sorrow, a time of joy, or a combination of each, they are now a part of our memories. In a strange way, as a memory in our hearts and in our minds, our child's place is there amongst all the other memories of the season. There is hurt along with the memory, but also thankfulness for the memory.

Now we look out on a winter landscape. The earth is cold, the land sharply defined. Yet underneath the hard crust, the great energy and warmth of our earth is guarding and providing life to all that grows. We may personally know the coldness and hardness of a grief so fresh that we feel numb; a grief so hurtful that our body feels physically hard; our throat tight from the muscles pulled by tears, shed or unshed; our chests banded tightly by the muscles of a mourning heart.

If we are not now experiencing this, our memories recollect so easily those early days. Yet, as we live these days, like the earth from which we receive our sustenance, we, too, in our searching, find places of warmth and change and love and growth, deep within. Let our hearts and minds dwell in these places and be warmed and renewed by them, and let us have the courage and love to share them with our loved ones, to talk about even that first dim shape of new hope, or of new acceptance, or of new understanding, or of new love.

These are the new roots, born of our love of our child, forming and stirring within, gathering strength so that our lives, at the right time, can blossom once again and be fruitful in a new and deeper way.

MARIE ANDREWS TCF Southern Maryland

Valentine Message

I send this message to my child
Who no longer walks this plane,
A message filled with love
Yet also filled with pain.
My heart continues to skip a beat
When I ponder your early death
As I think of times we'll never share
I must stop to catch my breath.
Valentine's Day is for those who love
And for those who receive love, too.
For a parent the perfect love in life
Is the love I've given you.
I'm thinking of you this day, my child,
With a sadness that is unspoken
As I mark another Valentine's Day
With a heart that is forever broken.

*Annette Menen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen
TCF, Katy, TX*

My Missing Piece

62 years I have been searching for my missing piece -

At 21 they told me it was for the best

I tried so hard to believe

At 21 I cried and they told me I should pull myself together

I tried so hard to believe

I tried so hard to stop

At 21 they told me there would be other children

I tried so hard to see it their way

At 21, alone, I went on as if nothing had happened

At 26 there were more children

They said, "See, everything is wonderful"

I said "yes", and it was, but my piece was still missing

Secretly, I thought I must be a bad mother- I should be happier

And so life went -

A creeping sadness I couldn't shake

62 years I waited for someone to ask and say "how hard for you"

Someone said it and the missing piece has been found, reborn

My baby, my child, my dreams

You were my first step into believing in the future

You my child, my missing piece

So many years I was isolated from you and myself -

Now my pain is clean

I still don't know WHY but I know I have a right

To grieve and remember and acknowledge what you mean and meant to me.

Strange, now at 83 I truly feel like I can go on.

Anonymous

Written by an 83 year old woman in treatment for complicated grief reaction 62 years after the death of her baby.

MEMORIES ARE ALL I HAVE OF YOU

I remember him,, doesn't anyone else? No one will even mention his name. It's as if he never existed at all, and it's driving me insane. Surely in his four years he brought somebody hope or cheer. And if you'd let me show you, I can talk of him without shedding a tear. You say it makes you uncomfortable, you don't know how to handle the pain. So you just avoid the whole issue. I wish I could do the same! You're afraid if we talk that I just might cry, and you'd feel guilty and want to run and hide. Well let me share this with you, please. Do not fear my tears. Let me share the joys of him, my loneliness, my fears. If you love me, let me love him, for I'm his mother still, and if you do not set me free , then it's my memories you'll kill.

Debby Grogan

TCF, Atlanta, GA

LOVE GIFTS

What is a "love gift"? A love gift is a very thoughtful way of remembering your child at special times such as birthday, anniversary, or at any time, with a donation to your local chapter of The Compassionate Friends.

With your donations, we are able to reach out to other bereaved families, purchase pamphlets, and cover printing and postage costs.

Your tax deductible donations may be brought in to a meeting or sent to:

The Compassionate Friends

P.O. Box 187, Pascoag, R.I. 02859



Thank you for love gifts received from:

Martha Clarke in loving memory of her son
Zachary Jeneral

Suzy & Kevin Lavallee in memory of her
son Joseph Doucette

Thank you also to those who leave
donations anonymously in our basket at
meetings.

Many thanks to all who brought in
refreshments for our December
meeting/candle lighting. And, of course
many thanks to Becky and Melissa who
planned the event.

Grieving in Pairs

How many times have people said "Well, thank God you have each other." How many times have you felt "each other" to be entirely inadequate at meeting your needs? Alarming statistics are available telling us of the rocky road parents encounter in their marriage after the death of a child. We sometimes see in ourselves touchiness or quickness to become irritated that wasn't there before. It always seems that my "bad day" is my wife's "good" day, or the day she wakes up crying is the day I had planned on playing tennis. Or sometimes, even more difficult, we both have a bad day and find no help from the other in pulling things back together. How can one person hold up another when he is, himself, face down in the mud!

Every person grieves differently. This is a role that even applies within a family. And the needs of every individual are different. While you may need to talk and talk, and talk, your spouse may need some time alone to reflect inwardly. You have both been through the worst experience of your life. And while at times, you can face recovery as a team, sometimes you must develop the patience to be able to wait out certain needs alone or with someone else. Realize that no matter how it is shown, your partner hurts, too.

Gary Hunt

TCF – White River Jct., VT

Birthday Remembrances

**We celebrate the day they
were born and hold them in
our hearts forever.**



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Casey Bulger - Anthony Monopoli - Sean Seaver

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Andrew Lauder

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Kristine DeSerres - Michael Desrosiers -
Timothy Lagesse - David Seibel - Mary
Williams

We do our best to print an accurate accounting of birth and death dates. If we've missed someone or if you notice an error, please let us know so we can correct our records.

In Memory of our Children

**As long as we live,
our children too shall live,
for they are part of us in our
memories.**



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Cathy Allen - Jason Gaumond -
Wil Sweny

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Scott Ruth - David Seaver

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Patrick Fischetti - Michael Hokanson-Dion
Timothy Lagesse - Mary Williams

YOURS TO KEEP

Memories – tender, loving, bittersweet. They can never be taken from you. Nothing can detract from the joy and the beauty you and your loved one shared. Your love for the person and his or her love for you cannot be altered by time or circumstances. The memories are yours to keep. Yesterday has ended, though you store it in the treasure house of the past. - and tomorrow? How can you face its awesome problems and challenges? It is as far beyond your mastery as your ability to control yesterday. Journey one day at a time. Don't try to solve all the problems of your life at once. Each day's survival is a triumph.

“Living When A Loved One Has Died”
by Rabbi Earl A. Grollman

*Those we love
remain with us
For love itself lives
on and
Cherished memories
never fade
Because a loved
one's gone.*

People in mourning have to come to grips with death before they can live again. Mourning can go on for years and years. It doesn't end after a year, that's a false fantasy. It usually ends when people realize that they can live again. That they can concentrate their energies on their lives as a whole, and not on their hurt, and guilt and pain.

Martha Whitman Hickman

Through this pain, beyond this loss
Time will have its way with me
While you remain forever young, always
blameless, always free.
I'll keep your whispers in my heart
As time flows on from now to then
And you who ended at the start
Teach me to begin again.

Nanette Jacobs
TCF Morin County
San Francisco, CA

Newsletter & Tears

One cries as he's writing his feelings
Another cries when they read the article.
Another cries when they select the article for
their newsletter.
Tears of sorrow and understanding.
You are not alone!

Jeff Johnson
TCF Cap Fear, N.C.

Yesterday and You

If I could have a lifetime wish,
And dreams that could come true,
I would pray to God, with all y heart,
for yesterday and you.

A thousand prayers can't bring you back,
I know because I've tried,
And neither will a million tears,
I know because I've cried.

You left behind my broken heart,
And happy memories too,
But I never wanted memories,
I only wanted you.

Author Unknown



Perhaps they are not the stars,
but rather the openings in Heaven
where the love of our lost ones
pours through and shines down
upon us to let us know
they are happy.

Inspired by an Eskimo Legend

**Hope is not pretending
that troubles do not exist...**

**It is the trust that they will not last
forever;
that hurts will be healed and difficulties
overcome...**

**It is a faith that a source of strength
and renewal lies within to lead us
through the dark to the sunshine.**

TCF, Pueblo, CO

“The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss and have found their way out of the depths. These persons have an appreciation, a sensitivity and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen.

Elisabeth Kubler Ross

SOMETIMES

Sometimes love is for a moment

Sometimes love is for a lifetime

Sometimes a moment is a lifetime.

**Pamela S. Adams
TCF Winnipeg, MB, Canada**

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.

