



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

Box 481, Charlton, MA 01507

NEWSLETTER

YOU ARE INVITED

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 7:30 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua Church
22 Dudley Hill Road, Dudley, MA

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National Web Page:
www.compassionatefriends.org

Our Next Sharing Sessions

Discontinued until further notice

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

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"

Please see important message on page 6



TELEPHONE FRIENDS

Sometimes it helps to talk with someone who understands your pain. If you're having a bad day, please call one of us.

"You Need Not Walk Alone!"

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What Kind of “New” Year Will It Be?

Well, since you are reading this, you must have survived those dreaded holidays. Some of you may be holding onto your sanity by the skin of your teeth, but you’re here. For now, that’s enough.

If this is your first or second new year without your child, consider that an emotional victory. I’m sure you wondered several times how you could possibly survive all that family warmth and frivolity without your child. Well, you did.

Now it is a brand new year. It’s up to you what you make of it. Do you want to spend the year bitter, angry, withdrawn, and tormented? Or do you want to begin to enjoy life again and start healing? Believe it or not, it IS up to you.

I’m going to assume that you want to begin healing. There are a few things that you must know. It absolutely is NOT disloyal to your child’s memory to smile again or enjoy yourself. Would your child wish everlasting pain on you? Would he/she want you to cry every day for the rest of your life?

One of the key elements to softening the pain is to try to think about all the good things

that you have instead of what you lost. I know that seems impossible, but force yourself to try. If you’ve got family, friends, health, whatever, count your blessings.

Another important element to healing is to be grateful that you had your child at all. I know that seems ludicrous when you feel you’ve been robbed because you “should” have been able to watch your child grow old. The fact is that you aren’t going to do that. Whatever memories you have of your child, or whatever joy you get from having loved him/her, no matter how briefly you had them, is worth hanging on to.

You also need to trust. Look around your next TCF meeting. Do you see the veterans laughing and sharing joyful stories with each other? Do you hear about new babies, weddings, hope and love? Trust that these parents love their children as much as you love yours. Trust that life can go on again.

Even though it sounds impossible, trust us when we say you will find happiness again. No one will try to tell you that you will eventually heal to the point where it doesn’t hurt at all. No one will tell you that you’ll be your old self soon. We realize you have been changed forever by the death of your child. For now,
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you'll just have to take our word that it does get better and the pain does dull itself a little with time.

It's a brand new year, why not try to make it one of healing and health, occasional smiles, reaching out to others, and remembering the good times? Maybe you can even start looking forward to the future.

As radical as all these concepts may seem to you now, guess what? When you do finally feel that you've made some progress, these will be what you did to get there.

Take it easy on yourself. We're with you. --
Kathy Hahn Lower Bucks, PA

Two things in life
change you, and
you are never the
same:

LOVE and GRIEF

I Don't Wear Make Up Anymore ~By Alice C. Osborn

I still shower every morning,
Brush my teeth just like before,
Comb my hair, polish my nails,
But I don't wear make-up anymore.

There was a black dress in the closet
Wore it once, but not once more
Not today, perhaps tomorrow,
And I don't wear make-up anymore.

I still want to look professional
Check the mirror on the door
Heels and hose and matching jewelry,
But I don't wear make-up anymore.

Turn the key and start the engine,
Slowly exit the driveway
Shifting gears, glide into traffic,
So begins another day.

Just another day without you,
You the apple of my eye,
Who gave me joy, now sadness,
"Oh God, why did my son die?"

I can feel the pressure building,
And I know what is in store,
Gushing forth the tears of heartbreak,
That's why I don't wear make-up
anymore.

Birthday Remembrances

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

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Alexis Auger – Matthew Bates – Joseph Dupuis – Katherine Kaiser – Brooklyn Skye Kilburn – Anthony Monopoli - David Pirkarczyk – Sean Seaver

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Jayce Garcia - Brenna Larson - Andrew Lauder - Nicholas Ledoux - Zachary Sheridan - Michael Sullivan

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Michelle Boutilier - Timothy Chrzan - Michael Desrosiers - Russell Harrington - Bethanie Leann Malone - John Palker - David Seibel - Mary Williams

In Memory of our Children

As long as we live, our children too shall live, for they are part of us in our memories. We lovingly remember the following children on their anniversary.

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Cathy Allen - Alexis & Ava Auger - Matthew Bates - Emily Bluin – Michelle Boutilier - Timothy Chrzan - Peter Diani Jr. - Ryan French - Gary Gemme – Jason Gaumont - John Judzynski – David Seibel

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Alejandro Lorente - Edward Masterson - Joseph Meszaro - Scott Ruth - Kelly Sanders - David Seaver - Oliver Tombeno – Robin Tyler

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Mike Bond - Michael Desrosiers - Patrick Fischetti - Mandy Hewitt - Daniel Keyser - Brooklyn Skye Kilborn – John Palker - Zachary Sheridan - DesMichael Spinks/Farrer - Alexandria Steinbuch - Michael Sullivan - Mary Williams

THE GREATEST GRIEF

A sudden accident killed your child.
That terrible phone call changed your life
with no warning – you didn't get to say goodbye –
this has to be the most terrible loss of all.

Your child died by suicide –
you feel you should have been able to prevent it.
Your guilt is devastating.
How can you live with such an incomprehensible tragedy?

You only had one child –
now you have none and your focus in life is gone.
What's the point of living?
What could be more devastating?

You've experienced the deaths of more than
one of your children – will it happen again?
How does one survive this pain again?

When your baby died, your dreams died
you have few memories and you're too
young to be suffering like this – this loss
is the most unfair.

Someone murdered your child – an
unbelievable violation – you're angry and your frustration
with the legal system feeds your anger.
This must be the very worst.

You're a single parent – your child has
died and you have no one to lean on, no
one to share your grief – surely your
suffering is the most painful.

The unbelievable has happened – your
adult child died – you had invested so
much in that child – now who's going to
care for you in your old age?

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You had to watch your child suffer
bravely through a long illness –
you were helpless to ease his pain and to prevent his death –
how do you erase those horrible images?
Yours must be the greatest grief.

The truth is that the death of any child is
the greatest loss, regardless of the cause, regardless of the age.
Our own experience is far more painful than we had ever previously envisioned,
so how could we possibly comprehend what others have undergone.

To make comparisons between our own suffering and the pain of others is an exercise in
futility. It accomplishes nothing and sometimes can be hurtful to others. To say that one type of
death produces a greater or deeper grief than another tends to place different values on the
children who have died.

Each child is worth 100% of our grief, each person's sorrow is 100% and each loss is 100%
of our being. I can't imagine wanting to walk in the shoes of any other bereaved parent, can you?

Peggy Gibson

Important Message

I'm sorry to inform you that due to cost constraints, and in an effort to
minimize contacts outside the home due to the pandemic, we are suspending
printed mailings of our newsletter. We will continue to offer the newsletter via
e mail. If you would like to receive the quarterly newsletter, please send me your
e mail address at ampm1259@charter.net. This is the last printed newsletter.

LOVE GIFTS

What is a “love gift”? It is a very thoughtful way of remembering your child at special times – birthdays, anniversaries, or any time with a donation to your local chapter of The Compassionate Friends. With your donations we are able to reach out to newly bereaved families, purchase supplies, and cover expenses.

Tax deductible donations may be sent to:

**The Compassionate Friends
P.O. Box 481, Charlton, Ma. 01507**



A sincere thank you for love gifts received from:

Martha Clarke in loving memory of her son Zack Jeneral

Richard Jarvis in loving memory of his daughters Niomi Elan and Aja Camille

A special thank you to **Dennis Gravelle** and the **North Central Chapter** for their generosity in printing the last several issues of our newsletter.

“A dictionary exists within me. In my heart, mind and soul my child will live forever. The memories of the full measure of each day of his life are there to give me peace and solace. Yet, the brutal pain of my son’s death is there, too. Unlike any other love in life, a parent’s love is unconditional and transcends all. There is a peace in knowing that. The pain doesn’t end. It simply reshapes itself into a quiet, soft ache that gives us a gentle, often tearful, reminder that our child will always be with us. And perhaps that is as it should be.”

Annette Mennen Baldwin

*My heart misses
What my arms held.*

*My arms miss
What my heart will always hold.*

*Alan Pedersen
AngelsacrosstheUSA.org*



*The
Compassionate
Friends*
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JANUARY – FEBRUARY – MARCH 2021
NEWSLETTER

Happy New Year!!

A self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families.