



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

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

NEWSLETTER

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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Our Next Sharing Sessions

Thurs., Jan. 11, 2024

Thurs., Feb. 8, 2024

Thurs., Mar. 14, 2024

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"

Please Note: Our mailing address has changed but our meeting location remains the same.

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.

"You Need Not Walk Alone!"

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— What is Normal After Your Child Dies? —

Normal is having tears waiting behind every smile because your child is missing from all the important events in your life.

Normal is feeling like you can't sit another minute without getting up and screaming, because you just don't like to sit through anything anymore.

Normal is not sleeping very well because a thousand what if's & why didn't I's go through your head constantly.

Normal is reliving the day your child died, continuously through your eyes and mind, holding your head to make it go away.

Normal is having the TV on the minute you walk into the house to have noise, because the silence is deafening.

Normal is telling the story of your child's death as if it were an everyday, commonplace activity, and then seeing the horror in someone's eyes at how awful it sounds. And yet realizing it has become a part of your "normal."

Normal is each year coming up with the difficult task of how to honor your child's memory and their birthdays and survive these days.

Normal is a heart warming and yet sinking feeling at the sight of something special your child loved.

Normal is having some people afraid to mention your child.

Normal is making sure that others remember your child.

Normal is everyone else eventually going on with their lives.

Normal is weeks, months, and years after the initial shock, the grieving gets worse, not better.

Normal is not listening to people compare anything in their life to your loss, unless they too have lost a child. Nothing compares.

Normal is realizing you do cry everyday.

Normal is being impatient with everything and everyone except someone stricken with grief over the loss of their child.

Normal is sitting at the computer crying, sharing how you feel with other grieving parents.

Normal is being too tired to care if you paid the bills, cleaned the house, did the laundry or if there is any food.

Normal is asking God why he took your child's life instead of yours.

Normal is learning to lie to everyone you meet and telling them you are fine. You lie because it makes others uncomfortable if you cry. You've learned it's easier to lie to them than to tell them the truth that you still feel empty and lost.

And last of all...

Normal is hiding all the things that have become "normal" for you to feel, so that everyone around you will think that you are "normal."

Written by A Grieving Mother 

SNOW

Every snowflake that falls is unique and has its own individual design.

There are beautiful patterns in each snowflake and even the tiniest of flakes have their own markings.

These patterns change again and again...even after the flake touches the ground.

Each snowflake is a cause for wonder; each flake is one of a kind. No two are exactly alike.

Like the snowflake, our beautiful children were unique and special; some we only dreamed about and some danced upon the earth.

They filled our lives with wonder and transformed our world. We held them too briefly, but we will hold them in our hearts forever.

We shall remember them always.

At this time of remembering, it may help to reflect upon how our lives have been enriched by the love we have given and the love we have received from our children. Our children leave treasures behind that time can never take away.

~Denise Falzon, TCF/Lake Area, MI



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 lose 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.

Losing someone is a journey,
not a one-off.

There is no end to the loss,
there is only a learned skill on how to
stay afloat,
when it washes over.

Be kind to those who are sailing this
stormy sea,
they have a journey ahead of them,
and a daily shock to the system each
time they realize,
they are gone,

Again.

You don't just lose someone once,
you lose them every day,
for a lifetime.

“When a child dies, part of a parent dies. That is a fact. From that point forward, parents live in a state of "partial life" due to having what is now called "broken heart syndrome." We are just beginning to learn all of the facts concerning grief, the effects of grief, and the reality of how grief changes the very physical and emotional make-up of parents. Those who say to parents of child loss that they should have closure and move on simply do not understand the facts of what happens to a parent physically and emotionally when a child dies. There are very real changes that take place. The pain of loss is real. Yes, parents will eventually learn how to "live within the pain of loss" , but there will always and forever be a part of a parent that is missing. Parents of child loss are courageous beyond words! They are living with part of their heart and soul missing, and there is nothing ~ absolutely nothing ~ to compare to this kind of pain. God bless every parent of child loss this day with the continued courage and strength needed to go on”

Wonderfully written by Clara Hinton (2016)

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

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

A special thank you to all who brought snacks to share at our December Meeting/Candle Lighting. They helped to make it a special event.

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

Michael Desrosiers - Timothy Lagesse -
David Seibel - Mary Williams

We do our best to print an accurate accounting of birth and death dates. 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

We often worry about getting thru the other major holidays – Thanksgiving, Christmas, but New Year’s Day is one we do not typically worry about. However, the notion of leaving the year where your child was still alive and entering a new year without your child can intensify your grief.

If any of you are experiencing challenges as we enter this new year, don’t hesitate to reach out for help.

TCF IS HERE FOR YOU

There is love in our pain,
Memories in our grief,
And hope in our sharing.

Darcie Sims



If I could sit and talk to you
For just a little while.
To say the things I wish I’d said
Like...

How I loved your smile
How much I loved the sight of you,
Your voice, your eyes, your face.
To watch you playing basketball
And see you win a race.

You were so much a part of me
The part that’s gone away.
Those memories you left become
More precious every day.

I pray that you can hear this
And God will let you see
The pride, the joy, the happiness
That your life gave to me.

Pat Fewnwell
TCF Delmar, Albany, NY

To the Newly Bereaved

**Today I am able to enjoy the beautiful sunshine.
I can look at the flowers and see their lovely hue.
I can be happy listening to a song and going out for an evening.
It hadn't always been this way.
There was a time I was just like you.
A time when everything around was darkened,
when feelings no longer could be felt.
A part of me was missing, I became different.
My whole being was filled with this part that was missing.
I feared if I did choose to think about anything else,
I would lose that special part forever.
I feared deeply I would forget everything that was good or bad about him.
Yes, maybe even forget how he looked.
Forget that warm smile or caring voice.
The deep hurt when I realized he would no longer be part of the living.
Oh, how that hurt.
People meant well I'm sure, but somehow their words hurt.
They had never passed this route and didn't know all the turns and pitfalls.
When I dared look up, that mountain looked too high to climb.
I was so broken, so tired, did I want to take on such a task. But climb I must.
Even though many times the struggle would be no harder on me than this dark valley I was in.
Slowly I began to climb, it was not easy – but I knew if not for myself,
there were others to care for, others that needed me.
I forced myself to see all that was around.
I began to see there were others in this same valley.
I decided to reach out my hand to help lead them.
As I began to help others up this mountain, my own pain began to lessen.
I found the more I reached out to others, they began to reach back and our help from each
other began to heal the deep wound of grief.
Along with this help from one another we looked to God to guide us and renew our strength.
We sought and accepted God's help and was abundantly blessed.
Newly Bereaved, we know your terrible pain.
Be gentle with yourself, it takes time to heal, to climb that mountain,
In time you'll be reaching back to give someone else a hand.
We made it and you can too.**

**Cathy Seaver, TCF Ma/Ct Border Towns Chapter
From her book "Beloved David".**

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.