



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

P. O. Box 50833 • Nashville, TN 37205 • 615 356-4TCF(4823) •Nashville Website: www.tcfnashville.org
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The mission of The Compassionate Friends 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.

Welcome: The Nashville chapter meets at 3:00 P.M. on the second Sunday of each month in the HCA building on Park Plaza just north of Centennial Park off of 25th Avenue, North. Inside, you will see our sign and someone will greet you. We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend

How Men and Women Grieve Differently

July 13 Meeting

Grief is handled differently by each one of us and it is very hard work. Many bereaved parents have found that our grief differs greatly from the same process in our spouse or significant other. It is a fact that men and women grieve differently. At our July meeting, we will address this important issue in the form of a unique panel. Please join us as we learn from each other. You might just be enlightened as to “why they do that,” or “why don’t they do this.”



Phone Friends

We have all experienced the pain of losing a child. We understand and would like to listen. If you can’t reach one of us, feel free to call another person on this list.

- Accidental Death**Mike and Paula Childers
646-1333
- AIDS**.....Joyce Soward
754-5210
- Illness**.....David and Peggy Gibson
356-1351
- Infant**.....Patti Drexler
834-8892
- SIDS**.....Kris Thompson
931 486-9088
- Murder/ Suicide**.....Joe Ladd
361-7996
- Small Child**.....Kenneth and Kathy Hensley
237-9972

Attending your first TCF meeting can be difficult. Feelings can be overwhelming. We have all experienced them and know how important it is to take that first step. Please attend two or three meetings before deciding if TCF is right for you. There are no dues or fees. If you choose, you need not speak a word at a meeting. We are an international, non-denominational group, offering support and information to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents. We Need Not Walk Alone.

BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

Survivors of Suicide

There is a caring SOS group in Nashville. For information about meetings and receiving their helpful newsletter, you may call the Crisis Center at 615 244-7444.

Sharing

Sharing is a community organization interested in helping parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of a newborn infant. The parent support group meets the second Thursday evening of each month at 7 p.m. in the Administrative Board Room at The Women's Hospital at Centennial Medical Center located at 2221 Murphy Avenue (between 22nd and 23rd Ave).

Alive Hospice Support Group for Bereaved Parents

The first Thursday of each month, an ongoing support group for bereaved parents meets at Alive Hospice. For details, please call John Baker at 615 963-4674. For general grief (loss of parents, adult siblings, etc.) call 615 963-4732, leave a message and a counselor will return your call.

Times for TCF Videos

Do you have a question about what you're feeling? This informative thirty-minute program about grief and The Compassionate Friends can be seen on Channel 19 (Community Access Channel) in the Nashville area. Two videos are shown, with a break between them giving information about the Nashville chapter. The program may be seen on Mondays at 2:00 P.M., Tuesdays at 8:30 A.M., Wednesdays at 10:00 A.M., Thursdays at 7:30 A.M. and Fridays at 11:30 A.M. and 5:00 PM



CHAPTER INFORMATION

The Birthday Table

In the month of your child's birthday, a table will be provided at our meeting where you can share photographs, mementos, your child's favorite snack or a birthday cake, a bouquet of flowers—anything you'd like to bring. We want to know your child better, so please take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate the wonderful day of your child's birth and for us to become better acquainted.

The “Let Us Remember Them” Listings

At your first TCF meeting you are asked to sign a registration card that gives us permission to add your child to the “Let Us Remember Them” list on page 3 in the monthly newsletter. If you have not been able to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed, please let us know, printing the exact way you'd like your child's name to appear, the child's birth and death dates, and the parents' names as they should be listed. You may drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 50833, Nashville, TN 37205, or email us at tcf@tcfnashville.org. We'll be glad to include your child's name. You need notify us only one time.

Newsletter and Donations Deadlines

Remember that all newsletter submissions and monetary donations need to be received no later than the day AFTER the monthly meeting. Any suggestions for improving the newsletter are always welcome.

Religion—A Continuing Theme

The Principles of The Compassionate Friends state that TCF reaches out to all bereaved parents across the artificial barriers of religion, race, economic class, or ethnic group. Further, TCF espouses no specific religious or philosophical ideology. Despite our nondenominational status, many writers indicate that they have found comfort in their faith, and some have shared their anger and loss of faith. The opinions and beliefs expressed in letters, articles and poetry are those of the contributors.

Gifts of Love and Remembrance

The following voluntary donations will help The Compassionate Friends to be here for the families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow. Thank you.

*Tom and Tracy Ceseretti
In loving memory of
Their son,
Brian Patrick Ceseretti*

*Bobbie Sue Graham
In loving memory of
Her grandson,
Robert Dwayne Harper*

*Rob and Patti Drexler
In loving memory of
Their daughter,
Gabriela K. Drexler*

*Jeff and Diana Kulas
loving memory of
Their son, Sean McKitrick*

*Carol P. Wilson
In loving memory of
Her son, Dustin Kyle Puckett*

*Mr. & Mrs. John R. Cheadle, Jr.
In loving memory of
Their Son, Ro Cheadle*

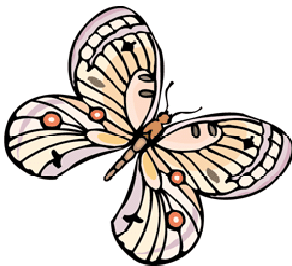
*Ted and Liesa MacDonald
In loving memory of
Their son, Chad Hooks*

*Dan and Martha Bland
In loving memory of
Their son,
Dan Michael Bland, Jr.*

*Jerry and Peggy Nolan
In loving memory of
Their daughter,
Amanda Jo White*

*Roland and Deborah San Gil
In loving memory of
Their son,
Ryan Edward Torres San Gil*

I will always cry sometimes...
Because I miss him.



I will always laugh sometimes....
Because I knew him.

Unknown Author
Quoted from TCF Newsletter
Lexington,,KY

Our Children

*I like to think
They are encircling us.
Sunlight in their hair,
Starlight in their eyes.
Holding hands in love,
The older ones nurturing the younger,
Helping them grow.*

*I like to think they are one
As we are one
A family of love.*

Gloria Grant
TCF Miami, FL

Bryan Houstrup and Joe Philpott at Allegra Printing & Imaging, 601 Grassmere Park, donate the printing, collating and stapling of this newsletter each month as a gift to the families of TCF. We are very grateful. Also, a special thank you to Deanna Brown and her family who label, sort and mail the newsletter in loving memory of their son, Marcus Dean Brown. We appreciate the generosity of each of you.

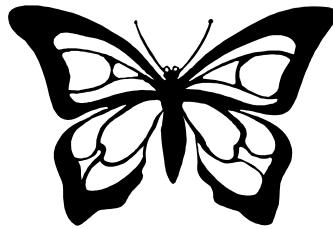
NOTE: TCF Nashville Newsletters are now available on our chapter website. <http://www.tcfnashville.org>

Grieving in Pairs

How many times have people said, “Well thank goodness 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 a touchiness or a quickness to become irritated that was not 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 am planning to play 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 rule 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 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.

Gerry Hunt
TCF White River Junction, VT



Religion and TCF

Bereaved parents have a wide variety of attitudes toward religion. In addition to those who are members of one of the world’s Eastern or Western institutional churches, there are humanists, agnostics, and atheists. All need the help that TCF can give. Some will credit a major share of their recovery to a deep, personal faith, but others have temporarily or permanently rejected the theological views they held before the death of their children.

Faced with this diversity of opinion and belief (sometimes even with husband and wife) and frequently accompanied by intense emotions, TCF has chosen to “espouse no specific religious or philosophical ideology” as an organization. Instead, it encourages its members to speak freely and openly about what helped or hindered them in coping with grief, but do so “with respect and consideration for those who may disagree with them.”

TCF National Newsletter

Registration is now open for the National Conference to be held right here in Music City!

You can register online at www.compassionatefriends.org.

Click on the conference logo on the right side of the page. As always, there is an outstanding lineup of speakers and singers for this event.

One Balloon

Our family moved from Andrews, Texas to Houston, Texas in 1983. In February of 1984, I was working in my backyard, when I found a deflated balloon. There was a note on the balloon. The note was from a mother, expressing her love for her daughter. The way the note was written, I knew that the daughter had died. The note expressed so much love that it penetrated through my heart. Little did I know that my own son would die in 1995, and I would be sending him notes.

Niecy Moss
TCF Houston-West, TX

When Grief is New-Reminders

Try not to imagine the future, take one day at a time.
Allow time to cry, both with loved ones and alone.
Don't shut others out from your thoughts and feelings.
Share these difficult times, you may grow closer for it.
Be realistic with expectations for yourself, family and friends.
When a good day comes, relish it.
Don't feel guilty and don't get discouraged because it doesn't last.
Take care of yourself, rest (even if you don't sleep).
Help your body to heal as well as your mind.

Share your feelings with others at The Compassionate Friends and let them share with you. You will find that as you begin caring about the pain of others, you will start to come out of your shell, a very healthy sign.

Mary Ehmann
TCF Valley Forge, PA

Memory

*I saw you standing on the shore
Where your sandaled feet
will stand no more.
Your daughter's hand cupped in your hands,
Her chubby feet on wave-washed sands,
Joy shining in her baby face
At sharing in this sacred place.
I saw you standing here, my son,
Where dolphins play and waters run,
But you will never come again
To ride the waves as you did then,
For death has bleached your life to bones,
And your daughter walks the beach alone.*

Jeannie Nestojko
TCF, South Bay/LA, CA

To Know Or Not

*I wept I never had the chance
In which to say goodbye.
But would it have sat more lightly
Had I known you were to die?*

*I've often pondered late at night
About which would hurt the most,
Anticipation of your leaving,
Or acceptance of your loss.*

Richard A. Dew
Rachel's Cry

**Grief is like weeding a flower
garden in the summer.**

**You have to do it over and over
again until the season changes.**

taken from *Songs From The Edge*
submitted by Fay Harden
TCF Atlanta, GA



Vacation Tips

Summer is the time of the year when families think of vacation. Whether a long trip or a short time spent near home, vacations are a pleasant change of pace and a time to have fun. For many bereaved parents, especially in the first year or two of grief, even the idea of a vacation may cause a devastation of emotions. Some cannot even use the term vacation. Remembering the fun times with their now-dead child is more than can be borne.

However, if you are planning a vacation, here are some suggestions that may help:

Be kind to yourself. Don't expect too much. The first time we do anything without our children is tough no matter what the activity.

Be patient with yourself. You will have feelings of guilt, anger, and all the other emotions associated with grief. Let those emotions come and go as they will.

Rest and have a good time if at all possible. Give yourself time to have a bad day.

Be aware that your child will be on your mind most of the time just the same as he or she would be if you were at home. Grief travels along with us.

If you plan to visit relatives, remember they mean well even if they seem insensitive with their remarks. They have not lost a child and can't see through your eyes.

Remember your other children. They are also having a hard time coping on this vacation. Plan some activities that they especially choose.

Communicate with your spouse and other family members.

Philip Hall
TCF, South Central Missouri

**Last Chance Reminder!!!! National Conference in Nashville
July 18-20, 2008!!!!**



**Keynote Speakers, Workshops, Sharing Sessions, Activities
Bring Healing Experience to Nashville, Tennessee**

Don't Miss This Wonderful Opportunity!!!

Waiting for Answers

Years ago I left my first meeting of The Compassionate Friends and drove home in tears. My son, Max, had died a few short weeks before and I had been anxiously awaiting this evening. These people must have some answers, I thought. With paper and pen in purse, I was ready to take notes and do as they prescribed. I would do anything to ease the ache in my soul. But when I walked out into the spring air later that night, I felt betrayed. I hadn't heard any answers. Instead of learning how to leave my grief behind, it had been confirmed, made more real with expression. I knew I would miss Max forever. Now I wondered if I would grieve forever. Would it always be this way, a flash of pain aligned with every memory? During the next months and years, I attended TCF meetings and conferences, read books, raged, kept busy, sometimes spent the day in bed. I wrote, cried and talked about Max.

Slowly, I discovered the answers I had long feared *were* true: yes, I will grieve forever, and yes, my memories will often provoke tears. But something had changed. My grief was now more forgiving, my tears almost sweet with memory. Max's life took shape again as the anguish of his death began to recede. If I would always miss him, I would also always have him with me in so many ways. I wanted to carry his memory into the future: the joy, the lessons, and the inevitable pain. How could I do otherwise? As I walked to my car after that first meeting, the TCF chapter leader caught up with me. "How can I stop this pain?" I asked. She put her arm on my shoulder. "Just do what feels right to you," she said. "Listen to your heart. And we'll be here to listen, too." Sometimes the best advice is none at all.

Mary Clark
TCF Sugarland/ SW Houston Chapter, TX