

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



P. O. Box 50833 • Nashville, TN 37205 • 615 356-4TCF(4823) or 646-8940•Nashville Web Site: 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.

November 9 Meeting Journaling

“I wish I had written that down” is a sentiment expressed by many bereaved parents long after the sharp painful days of early grief have faded into the past. Journaling is a way to capture some of those feelings before they are lost and Compassionate Friends encourage bereaved parents to do this.

Join us on November 13 as Nashville TCF Chapter member, Donna Reagan facilitates a session on journaling. Take advantage of this opportunity to learn about journaling. Bring examples of your own writings to share with the group if you wish. Donna will also facilitate a sharing table on journaling.



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

Candlelight Memorial Service Scheduled for December 11—HCA Auditorium

IMPORTANT: TO ALL MEMBERS

Everyone who wishes to have a picture of their child shown on the big screen will need to carefully follow the instructions on the form on page 7. This must be completed and received at the address on the form by Saturday, November 26. **DO NOT send forms and photos to the TCF P. O. box.** Slides that we have from previous years may be used, or you may send a new slide or an original photo of your child (preferably 5"x7" or larger, but smaller can be used too.) Copies cannot be used.

Place a sticky note on the back of the photo with the child's name clearly printed. Do not write on the photo itself. Your photo will be returned to you at the service.

Also, please plan to bring a stand-up photo (preferably no larger than 5"x7") to the service to be displayed on the stage at the front of the auditorium.

Following the service, we will gather in the cafeteria for refreshments. It would be most appreciated if you would bring a snack to share.

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National Office P. O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696—Phone 630 990-0010 or Toll free: 1-877 969-0010

TCF Web site: www.compassionatefriends.org National Office email: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

Survivors of Suicide

There is a caring SOS group in Nashville. For information about meetings and receiving their helpful newsletter, you may reach Tina Benson at one of the following: Write to SOS, P.O. Box 40752, Nashville, TN 37204; call 615 244-7444; email nahsosos@webtv.net; or fax 615 383-9714.

Help for Bereaved Children

The Grief Center at Alive Hospice now provides individual counseling for grieving children and teens, as well as their family members. Also, a children's support group is being offered the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month from 5:30-7:00 PM. For further information, call Nicole Jesser, Children's Grief Counselor, at 615 963-4737.

Alive Hospice Support Group For Bereaved Parents

An ongoing support group for bereaved parents is held the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month from 5:30-7:00 PM, at Alive Hospice. For details, please call John Baker at 615 963-4674.

Times for TCF Videos on TV Channel 19

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., Fridays at 11:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M., and Saturdays at 10:30 A.M.

CHAPTER INFORMATION

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.

Change of Address?

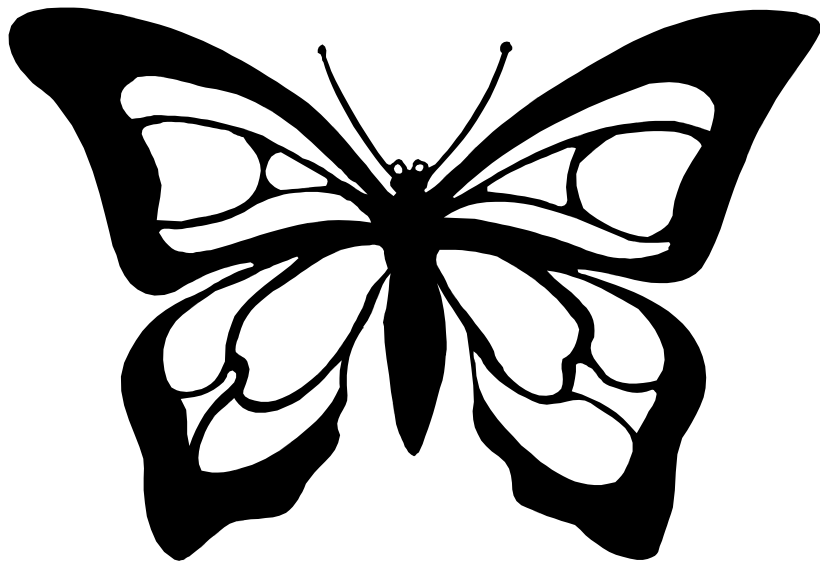
Due to the large number of newsletters we deliver each month, it is essential to keep our database up-to-date. We must rely on you, the recipient, to let us know if you have moved. We ask that you help us by remembering to let us know when you have a change of address so the newsletter will reach you each month. Thank you.

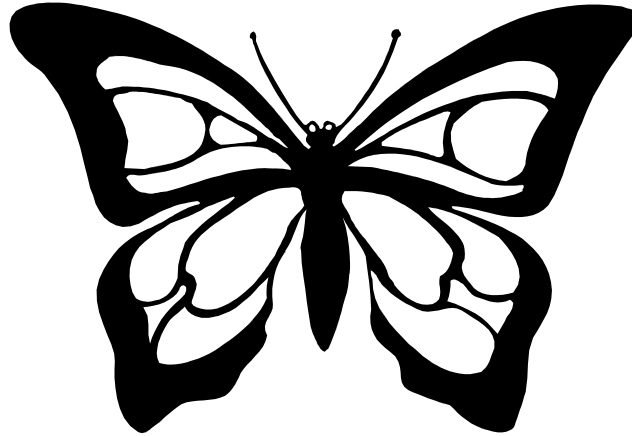
The "Children Remembered" Listings

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 are unable to attend TCF meetings and your child has never been listed, but you 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. This "one time notice" is all that is necessary.

TCF Web Site

Go to the TCF Web site at www.compassionatefriends.org to find a wealth of information about TCF and grief—poetry and articles, chat rooms, grief in the news, other chapter web sites, including Nashville, and numerous other resources. Check it out.





I was 12 and my brother was 15 when he died. At the time, my mother and I were in Massachusetts, while my brother stayed in town with my father to attend summer school.

I remember my mother telling me about it; it had been an accident. She took me around to the back of the house so we could be in private. I was very glad of this. I felt like I should cry since she was crying, even though I had to fake it. I also remember the funeral and my brother lying in the coffin. That's when the tears were real. If I had to give anyone advice, it would be to see the body because that's when I could finally come to my senses about the reality. After that I have forgotten mostly everything. I believe that's how I dealt with my grief, by forgetting most everything. I do remember one thing that helped me and my parents. We would talk a lot. It also helped me especially when I cried with my mother.

Jenny Pittman (sibling)
TCF, Tuscaloosa, AL

The Little Things

Often, even the simple tasks of everyday living seem to drain every ounce of one's energy. Remember going to the grocery store even months after your child's death and the feelings you had as you passed up his or her favorite cereal? Or watching another child the same age as yours in a restaurant and trying to swallow your food – you probably didn't even taste it. Or hearing a certain song in public and fighting back the tears? Sometimes even getting through the day in your own home makes you feel like you've run a marathon and leaves you in worse shape. You probably never dreamed that doing the family laundry could make you cry or that getting a piece of mail in your child's name could suck your breath away.

Even the best of friends and families can't possibly know the strength you must summon day after day after day. We shouldn't expect them to understand completely, but it does get lonely. Perhaps this quote puts it in a nutshell:

One sad thing about this world is that the acts that take the most out of you are usually the ones that other people will never know about.

Anne Tyler
TCF, Sacramento Valley, CA

Bryan Houstrup and Joe Philpott at Allegra Print & Imaging, 601 Grassmere Park, donate the printing, collating and stapling of this newsletter each month as a gift to the families of TCF. Deanna Brown and her family label, sort and mail the newsletter in loving memory of their son, Marcus Dean Brown. We are very grateful for these people and their generosity to all of us.

Kind Little Deeds

The kind little deeds
 so thoughtfully done.
 The favors of friends
 and the love that someone
 Unselfishly give us
 in a myriad of ways,
 Expecting no payment
 and no words of praise –
 Oh, great is our loss
 when we no longer find
 A thankful response
 to things of this kind.
 For the joy of enjoying
 and the fullness of living
 Are found in the heart
 that is filled with Thanksgiving.

Helen Steiner Rice

One Week Young

Seven long and lonely days have passed
 Since you were born
 It is the anniversary of the day
 You lay on my lap breathless.

And in your quiet beauty
 I shall always remember
 How perfect you were.

And those few treasured moments
 Of joy and pride
 In knowing
 That you would always be my son
 No matter what...

Bonnie Rabic
 TCF, Jasper, GA

Anniversaries of the Heart

“The holiest of all holidays are those kept by
 ourselves silent and apart;
 The secret anniversaries of the heart.”

-- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Thanks Given

Many years after her birth
 Having taken for granted her wonderful worth,
 We feel it necessary to share a time
 That our memories of her come to mind.

Everyone was excited about the day
 That each would give thanks in their own way.
 That year our daughter's birthday was celebrated
 With turkey and mashed potatoes, all were elated.

She was given head-of-the-line honors, not too bad,
 And the smile on her face told of the thrill she had.
 We sang “Happy Birthday Pride” then gave thanks
 For one of the best moments ever, is where it ranks.

She thanked us for presents and for the fun.
 We thanked her for being our special one.
 “Thanks” seemed to be fine later that night,
 Yet, not enough was said to make it feel right.

Were we able to re-live that day long ago,
 We would have said thanks for the love she showed.
 Thanks for the compassion she gave to others.
 Thanks for putting up with me and her mother.

We would thank her for laughing at silly cartoons
 And at us when we acted like buffoons.
 We would thank her for challenging our minds
 And thank her for loving people of all kinds.

She would be proud of us for what we do now,
 Helping others to work through grief somehow.
 She would tell us that the thanks, for doing our parts,
 Is given freely from the love for her in our hearts.

Thank you for being our daughter.

Dan Gardner
 TCF, Nashville, TN

My Best Suggestion

How I struggled that first Thanksgiving after
 Wade died to see how in the world I could
 possibly be thankful. The idea came to me to
 separate the two – what I could never be
 thankful for, from those things for which I was
 still thankful in spite of the tragedy that had
 come. I wrote my two lists on paper, and it
 helped.

Janet Reindle
 TCF, Houston NW Chapter, TX

Thanksgiving

*Our time together was too brief,
Your life on earth numbered in but days.
Yet, how could I have loved you more if I had
Held you through the seasons of your life?
When does love begin?*

*For me the day you first moved within me
Wrapped me in such warmth that it can still keep
Out the cold as here I stand missing you and all
That we could have shared.*

*Death has robbed me of your softness and of all
The dreams I had for you,
But not of my love.
Not even death can take that from me – from us.
And for that, I am thankful.*

*Karen Nelson
TCF, Box Elder county, Brigham City, UT*

A Day in Time

*If I could go back in time
Do you know when it would be?
It would be the day when you were “suddenly”
Taken away from me.*

*We would laugh and talk together
About the day’s events,
Putting those memories in my heart
For that “special” time we had spent.*

*I’d kiss your face and hold you tight,
Never letting go.
Telling you all the while
How much I love you so.*

*And I’d take the time to thank you for all the things
You did for me
For sometimes I was too busy to take the time to see.*

*For we all take for granted that Tomorrow
Will always come,
But now I know definitely,
“Tomorrows” aren’t promised to anyone.*

Momma

*Peggy Wood Nolan
TCF, Nashville, TN*

Silent Visit

*I’m going to your grave today.
With flowers, orange, yellow and red.
I’ll throw the faded ones away
And leave fresh ones instead.*

*I’ll kneel beside the place you lie
Placed there a year ago,
And once again my heart will break
And unchecked tears will flow.*

*With gentle fingers I’ll caress
Your name carved in the stone
And brush away the fallen leaves,
November winds have blown.*

*Then I’ll dry my eyes, I’ll say a prayer
And as I raise my head
Another grieving mother
Just tucked her child in bed.*

*Alice C. Osborn
TCF, So. Central Missouri*

A Heart Weeps

*This is a level of loss
That numbs every part of my being
My heart is bound so tightly
That it cannot even weep.
Will this ever end?*

*The ground lies bare and brown
Covered with last year’s leaves.
The earth is cold and hard
As desolate as my heart.
Sustain me in this hour!*

*Today, from that barren earth
A clump of green appeared
White snowdrops clustered there.
And I saw, once again, a fragment of beauty!*

*I weep with thanksgiving
For this beauty that has warmed me.
For this heart that leapt, and now knows
That joy can enter once again.*

*Marie Andrews
TCF, Southern Maryland*

Thanksgiving Thoughts

I remember the first Thanksgiving after Tony was killed. I didn't know how we could possibly get through that dinner, with an empty chair. The solution that occurred to me was to fill it with someone else – several someones. Grandpa came to spend the week, a newly widowed friend came for dinner, and so did her young nephew and his bride who had just moved to town. They brought the salad. And we were thankful for each other, for the love among us and for the memories.

If this will be your first Thanksgiving, do something different. The pattern of your life has been broken, break it some more. Have dinner at a different place or with different people. Go away for the weekend. Be kind to yourself. You do not have it all but you do have something.

Ronnie Peterson
TCF, Star Lake, NY

A thought to ponder as you search for something for which to be thankful...

As a parent you have known love ----
Some people have never known love --- in all their lives.

From "Helping Ourselves"
TCF, OK



CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE—December 11, 2005



Regardless of past participation, **every family wishing to take part in the memorial service MUST return this form.** We need to receive it no later than Saturday, November 26, 2005. Do not send photos to the TCF P.O. box—they might get bent or damaged.

Mail to:
Candan & Dan Gardner
1090 Thornberry Trace
Goodlettsville, TN 37215

Instructions: A new computerized process (Power Point) is being used to display our children's pictures on the big screen. Either a slide, or an original 5"x7" photo (no copies, please) may be used. (If a 5"x7" is not available, any size will do; however, the 5"x7" or larger is easier to process.) The original photo will be returned to you at the memorial service while the image will be stored for use next year. **Place a sticky note on the back of the photo with the child's name clearly printed. Do not write on the photo itself.**

Child's name: _____
Please print the name as you wish it to be read at the service along with phonetic pronunciation, if needed.

- _____ **I will attend and am enclosing a slide or original photo of my child. (First time in the memorial service.)**
 _____ **I will attend and am enclosing a photo or different slide of my child to be used in place of the slide you have from last year's service.**
 _____ **I will attend and would like for you to use the slide you have from last year.**
 _____ **I will attend and would like for my child's name to be called and I'll light a candle, but I will not have a picture shown.**

Your name: _____ Phone: _____

Detour of the Month – Thanksgiving

Well, here it is - detour time again! And just when you were about headed back to the main road after Halloween. Some out there think of the four months of October, November, December and January as the holiday season, but we know better, don't we? We know they're really the detour season, and I don't have to tell you why, do I?

About this time last year I had a really good laugh when I received a letter from a member of the Atlanta Chapter where she told me, among other things, that she and her husband and their two young boys were heading for Florida over Thanksgiving. "We are not," she said "going to sit around a turkey and pretend to be thankful." Now, that "ain't" observing that day in a traditional way. Do whatever it is that you need to do this year, if Thanksgiving is a problem. Explain to those who really care about you that this year will, by necessity, be different. Hope they will understand, but if they don't, let it be their problem, for your needs are paramount right now.

I'm happy to report that I look forward to our traditional day now. (Let me tell you, there was a time I didn't!) I hope you will soon reach that place, if you haven't already. I just want to assure you that nowhere is it carved in stone that you must sit around a turkey pretending.

Mary Cleckley
TCF Atlanta, GA

