

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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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 American Builders & Contractors (ABC) Building, 1604 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37210. (See Mailing address above.) Park and enter at the rear of the building. We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.

April 12 Program:

Loss of an Adult Child

The death of any child, regardless of cause or age, is overwhelming to parents, who can never be fully prepared for their child to die before them. Parental grief is intense, long-lasting, and complex.

The grief and the healing process contain similar elements for all bereaved parents, but for those whose adult child has died, there are additional factors that may affect their grief. Others often assume that when the child who died was an adult, the parents' pain is less than if the child was young. Parents whose adult child has died often find their grief discounted or disallowed.

Join us April 12 as Edwin Pyle, longtime TCF Nashville member, leads a program addressing this topic. Small group sharing will follow.

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
615-646-1333
- AIDS**..... Joyce Soward
615-754-5210
- Illness**..... David and Peggy Gibson
615-356-1351
- Infant**..... Jayne Head
615-264-8184
- SIDS**.....Kris Thompson
931-486-9088
- Suicide**.....Ron Henson
615-789-3613
- Alcohol/Drug Overdose**.....Ed Pyle
615-712-3245



The 43rd TCF National Conference will be held in Atlanta, GA on July 24-26, 2020. "Sharing Sweet Memories of Love" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of last year's great National Conference experience. We'll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our [TCF/USA Facebook Page](#). Plan to be a part of this heartwarming experience.

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.

*We remember our children with love and gratitude. We miss their faces,
their voices and their smiles. And we do not forget--*

In the month of their births—

Rodney Bates, Jr.
April 24
Son of Elizabeth Christian

James Michael Bolton (Mikey)
April 9
Son of Jim and Loretta Bolton

Mark Joseph Dinkel
April 27
Son of
Richard and Kathleen Dinkel
Brother of Amy

Aaron Garner
April 30
Son of Don and Vicki Garner

Sherry Hooten
April 15
Daughter of Ann Flatt

Christopher Lincoln
Kingsborough
April 21
Son of
Paul and Lydia Kingsborough

Stacy Leigh Kraft
April 10
Daughter of
Keith and Meryl Kraft and
Terry Kornman

David Benton Lowe
April 26
Son of
Charles and Teresa Lowe

David Bennett Medlin
April 26
Son of
Ron and Brenda Medlin

John Robert Miller
April 20
Son of Trish Merelo

Drew Michael Tipton
April 25
Son of Bobby and Shari Tipton

Marshall Roberts
April 4
Son of Renee Stanfield

Jonathan Surratt
April 14
Brother of Chris Surratt

Daniel Wayne Vick
April 5
Son of Wayne and Marsha Vick

Andrew Washam (Seth)
April 16
Son of
Shannon and Jean-Ann Washam

Janessa Dian Wellman
April 24
Daughter of Timothy Pharris
and Debra Wellman
Granddaughter of
Glen and Dian Wellman

Abigail Wilson (Abby)
April 13
Daughter of
Danny and Amy Wilson

**Antonio Lynn Scott Winslett
("Chunky")**
April 27
Son of Branon Winslett
Grandson of
Keith and Wanda Winslett

Don Bruce Winters
April 16
Son of Jerry and Loretta Winters

Ryan Lee Wiseman
April 18
Son of
Roger and Deborah Wiseman



And in the month of their deaths

Christopher Jay Bradley
April 20
Son of Lamar and Joy Bradley

John Peres Bruno
April 15
Son of John and Emily Bruno

Kiara Cutting
April 12
Daughter of David and Anne
Cutting

Taylor Davies
April 16
Son of Roy and Barbara Davies

Joshua Lynn Finch
April 17
Son of Debbie Smith
Brother of Jason Finch

Chad Flatt
April 18
Son of James Flatt and Ann Flatt

Michael Hunt
April 21
Son of Robin Hunt

Kevin Moncrief
April 5
Son of Sandra Merkel

Andrew Morris Pack
April 19
Son of
Wayne and Kassandra Pack

Bert Rich
April 7
Son of
Shirley Rich-Brinegar

Laurie Lynn Shriver Robert
April 21
Daughter of
Warren and Donna Jones
And George Shriver

Jonathan Surratt
April 4
Brother of Chris Surratt

Lindsay Ware
April 8
Daughter of Scott Ware

Brooke Welch
April 24
Daughter of Laurie Welch

Abigail Wilson (Abby)
April 17
Daughter of
Danny and Amy Wilson

GIFTS OF LOVE AND REMEMBRANCE

We are deeply grateful for the voluntary gifts of love that make it possible for The Compassionate Friends to offer comfort to those families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.

*Barbara Davies
Through Nationwide
Workplace Giving Program
In loving memory of her stepsons,
Roy James Davies and
Taylor Davies
Sons of Roy Davies*



*Chuck and Kathryn Daley
In loving memory of
William Bernard Kovarik,
Son of
Ben and Kathryn Kovarik*

*Wayne and Marsha Vick
In loving memory of their son,
Daniel Wayne Vick*

*Vaughn and Donna Woods
In loving memory of their son,
Matthew Woods*

Each month, Allegra Print & Imaging, 601 Grassmere Park, donates the printing of this newsletter as a gift to the families of TCF. Deanna Brown and her family assemble, label, sort and mail the newsletter in loving memory of her son, Marcus Dean Brown. We appreciate so much these people and their generosity to all of us.

To benefit TCF, go to the **Kroger** website and click on "Community Rewards"; then follow the instructions on that page. After that, when you shop at Kroger, swipe your Plus Card or key in your phone number when you check out, and Kroger will donate dollars to TCF. It's a free and easy way to support your chapter.



Please See Me Through My Tears

*You asked, "How are you doing?"
As I told you, tears came to my eyes...and you
looked away and quickly began to talk again, All the
attention you had given me drained away.*

*"How am I doing?" ...I can do better when people listen,
though I may shed a tear or two.
This pain is indescribable.
If you've never known it you cannot fully understand.
Yet I need you.
When you look away,
When I'm ignored,
I am again alone with it.
Your attention means more than you can ever know.*

*Really, tears are not a bad sign, you know!
They're nature's way of helping me heal...
They relieve some of the stress of sadness.*

*I know you fear that asking how I'm doing brings me sadness ...
but you're wrong.
The memory of my loved one's death will always be with me,
Only a thought away.
My tears make my pain more visible to you, but you did not
give me the pain...it was already there.*

*When I cry, could it be that you feel helpless, not knowing
what to do?
You are not helpless,*

*and you don't need to do a thing but be there.
When I feel your permission to allow my tears to flow,
you've helped me.
You need not speak. Your silence as I cry is all I need.
Be patient...do not fear.*

*Listening with your heart to "how I am doing"
relieves the pain,
for when the tears can freely come and go, I feel lighter,
Talking to you releases what I've been wanting to say aloud,
clearing space
for a touch of joy in my life.*

*I'll cry for a minute or two...
and then I'll wipe my eyes,
and sometime you'll even find I'm laughing later.
When I hold back the tears, my throat grows tight,
my chest aches, my stomach knots...
because I'm trying to protect you from my tears.
Then we both hurt...me, because my pain is held inside,
a shield against our closeness...and you,
because suddenly we're distant.*

*So please, take my hand and see me through my tears...
then we can be close again.*



How Dare It Be Spring

My daughter, Colleen, died on March 29th and was buried April 1st, 1989. I noticed, through my haze, that spring was coming and I got so angry! I saw the first shoots of flowers in my garden, something that I had always tended so carefully, and I didn't care. I never even picked one of those lovely, fragrant lilies of the valley that grew just outside my front door. I don't think that I could even smell them.

It seemed to me an insult to see mothers pushing their children in strollers on those first warm days. How could they do that when I no longer could? How dare kites dance on spring breezes? I remember coming out of the hospital the morning that she died and seeing a jogger at the lake across the street. It seemed so strange that he could continue his routine when the world had just fallen apart. Just seeing the sun shining isolated that spring, seeing everyone else enjoying nature at its most beautiful. It hurt so much! I couldn't make myself do any of the things that had given me so much pleasure in springs of the past, it was just too painful.

The next year I felt a little better, but my heart still wasn't in spring activities, I forced myself to do things for my surviving daughter's sake. Those first walks felt so alien without a stroller to push that I often had to cut walks short. I did pick my flowers but they didn't seem quite as sweet as I remembered them. I no longer hated other moms who walked their children, I just avoided looking at them.

Now, it is my third spring. It still hurts, but it no longer seems like spring was invented just to torment me. I look forward to working in my yard and garden this year. I take walks and my arms don't ache for a stroller to push. I will always love and miss Colleen. I still think about her everyday, but the pain no longer overpowers everything else.

For those of you who are experiencing your first spring without your child, hold on. It really does get better. I remember very well those words at my first several TCF meetings. I listened politely, all the while thinking, "But you don't know how horrible MY pain is. Somehow mine is worse and I'll never get better!" You probably think that too. Even if you don't believe us right now, you've got to hang on, it DOES get better!



Kathy McCormick,
TCF, Lower Bucks, PA

A Gift of Hope

Human pain does not let go of its grip at one point in time. Rather, it works its way out of our consciousness over time. There is a season of tranquility. A season of hope.

But seasons do not follow one another in a lockstep manner. At least not for those in crisis. The winters and springs of one's life have lifted, but the next day they have returned. One moment we can smile, but a few hours after, the tears emerge. It is true that as we take two steps forward in our journey, we may take one or more steps backward.

But when one affirms that the spring thaw will arrive, the winter winds seem to lose some of their punch.

A Gift of Hope: How We Survive Our Tragedies
Robert Venigna

You Are Not Going Crazy

One of the most common things we hear from bereaved parents is that they think that they are going crazy. If you feel this way, let us assure you that you are not. Grief and the resultant depression, fits of crying, and the feeling you are going to pieces may lead you to these feelings or often to the feeling you no longer want to continue living. It is not uncommon to have these feelings.

But most grief-stricken people do not go crazy or commit suicide. It is most important at these times for you to have someone to talk to – to share your feelings – and for you to be able to verbalize your pain. We of The Compassionate Friends want to help. We encourage you to call on us. We have all been where you are now, and we understand your pain.

Fay Harden
TCF, Tuscaloosa, FL



Empty Places

*I drove the old way yesterday.
It'd been a while, you see.
And there, without a warning,
the pain washed over me.*

*I drove the old way yesterday
and sadness came on strong,
taken back by so much feeling,
since you've been gone so long.*

*Places seem to lie in wait
to summon up the tears,
to say remember yesterday,
those days when you were here.*

*Places where you laughed and played
are places where I cry.
These places hold the memories
that will live as long as I.*

Genesse Gentry
TCF Marin County, CA



Benchmarks

*Good bye would be too difficult,
Although I know you are gone.
Instead, I keep you in my heart
And your memory lives on.*

*I have redefined my purpose, son,
Since you are no longer here.
With your death I faced a choice
To die, exist or to live free.*

*My life has changed forever, child,
I'm redefined each week,
You would call these "benchmarks"
Of goals set and then achieved.*

*And so I set my benchmarks,
Achieving many, reshaping some...
But everything is different now
Except your mother's love.*

Annette Mennen Baldwin
TCF Katy, TX

Heeding the Call of Life

There is tremendous wisdom that is accumulated in one's encounter with grief, and it needs to be shared. Healing takes place when we turn our pain into a positive experience and we realize that helping others is the key to helping ourselves. When that happens, our problems don't look so big. We expand on newfound strengths and we discover that as one door closed, many others have opened. The road to recovery from grief, therefore, is to take time to do things which will enable us to give new meaning to our lives.

That's when our journey through grief becomes a journey of discovering ourselves, our potential, and our resources in the encounter with life. That's when we become BETTER people, rather than BITTER people. In grief, no one can take away our pain because no one can take away our love.

That call to life is to learn to love . . . again.

Father Arnaldo Pangrazzi
TCF Muskegon, MI

Bring My Child Back To Me

*Whisper, whisper, wind in the woods,
Bring back my child, here where he stood,
Let him laugh, let him shout, let him giggle with glee,
Wind in the woods, bring my child back to me.*

*Silence of morning, dew on the grass,
Give me peace in my soul, let this time pass,
Let my child sit beside me, let the two of us be,
Silence of morning, bring my child back to me.*

*Middle of night, so dark and so still,
Let me relax and remember at will,
Let my child in my thoughts drift forever to see,
Middle of night, bring my child back to me.*



*Sunrise and sunset, beginning and end,
Give me a day with my child, my friend,
We'll run on the beach, we'll play in the sea,
Sunrise, sunset, bring my child back to me.*

*Memories, memories here in my head,
Don't ever leave me, even though my child's dead,
Keep him alive, keep him strong, keep him free,
Memories of mine, bring my child back to me.*

Barbara Patterson
TCF, Conquitlam, BC

Waiting for the Wake-Up Call

I'm waiting for the wakeup call that surely must come someday in this journey through grief. When *will* it get better?!! I'm waiting for the day when the memories are softer, the step a little lighter and when the sounds in my heart aren't always those of sadness, I'm waiting for the music to return, for the light to shine, for the magic to come back. I'm waiting for the pain to stop, the hurt to leave and for everything to go back to its original place. I want the picture to look the same as before, and I'm waiting until it does.

But, while I'm waiting, I'm learning a lot, I know I have to make lists now in order to capture my chores and things I have to do. I gave up trying to remember and now just carry a notepad with me (with a pencil attached!) I have set the clocks 10 minutes fast so I have a better chance of being on time, and I have stocked the car with maps of every place I need to be.

I make menus and create shopping lists. I plan ahead, write down everything and then don't worry when I lose the list, get lost, or simply change my mind, I think most people thought I was always confused, so now I don't worry so much about not remembering. I'm liking advantage of being bereaved and am learning to work with the lack of concentration, the forgetfulness, the confusion. If it isn't written down, it doesn't exist and I've been much happier ever since!

If the weather and the seasons can't get it together, why should I try to coordinate an outfit? I'll just wear what's comfortable for the moment and worry less about what others think. Maybe they are as confused as I am. Maybe they're struggling too. Maybe we should all just stop, look and listen...trying to remember to hold hands when crossing the street and practice hugging instead of hitting.

Maybe spring reflects nature's inability to make up its mind or maybe that hesitation to change is more of Mother Nature's mourning the passing of her winter season. Maybe it's hot one day and cold the next to keep us on our toes, to keep the blood flowing, the legs moving. Maybe shoveling snow one day and planting seeds the next is what we are supposed to be doing...maybe spring is the season of change and we should let go of the whys? and work on the hows? Maybe pushing the plow is better than trying to pull it.

Maybe just relaxing into the craziness and letting the tides ebb and flow across the beach will work better than trying to direct the winds that change rides on. Perhaps letting the sun warm my winter-weary bones is a more productive activity than rearranging the closet, and maybe the good memories will come back if I let them.

Maybe spring is the reason for getting up...to simply see what is possible today. Maybe today is the day and if I'm in bed, I'll miss the beginning, and I'll still be lost.

Maybe I'm already in the middle of change and maybe I will always be confused, lost and slightly off balance, but maybe that's okay, and I'll just have to figure out how? instead of why? And when that happens, I know I won't be lost anymore! It really doesn't matter if it's Tuesday or Friday (unless one of those days is garbage day, and then it does matter!) Maybe I can let go of the time frames and calendar pages that dictate my life and my emotions and let life simply flow.

Perhaps you and I have already answered the wake up call. Don't let a poor yesterday or an uncertain tomorrow use up today. I think this is it, and now is the time for being all I can be. Half of me is still in winter and dyeing eggs. All of me is still perhaps a bit off balance, but I am alive and that's a start! This wasn't the life I expected to live, but it is the one I've got.

If I'm lost, I'd explore wherever it is I am. If I'm late, I'll just apologize and enjoy the time I have left. If I'm out of place, out of style or out of sync, I'll just keep dancing to the tune I hear and let the rest of the world figure out their own melody...

Darcie Sims
Bereavement Magazine Mar/Apr 1995

Grieving takes time. Give yourself time.

For Both of Us



*As long as I can
I will look at this world
for both of us.*

*As long as I can
I will laugh with the birds,
I will sing with the
flowers,
I will pray to the stars,
for both of us.*

*As long as I can
I will remember
how many things
on this earth
were your joy.*

*And I will live
as well as you
would want me to live
as long as I can.*



Sascha

CHAPTER INFORMATION

The “Children Remembered” Listings

If you are unable to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed on pages 2 and 3 in The Children Remembered list, please let us know, printing the exact way you'd like the child's name to appear, the child's birth and death dates, and the parents' names as they should be listed. You may call the database manager at 615 356-1351, drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 50833, Nashville, TN 37205, or email us at davidg14@bellsouth.net. We'll be glad to include them. You need to contact us only once, unless any of your information changes.

CORPORATE DONATIONS TO TCF

To benefit TCF, go to the Kroger website and click on “Community Rewards”; then follow the instructions on that page and designate The Compassionate Friends Nashville Chapter. After that, when you shop at Kroger, swipe your Plus Card or key in your phone number when you check out, and Kroger will donate dollars to our chapter. Also, when going to Amazon, type in “Amazon Smile” and designate The Compassionate Friends; then, each time you go on Amazon Smile a small contribution will be made by Amazon to our organization—both free of charge. It's a free and easy way to support TCF.

We Need Your Help

If you know a family outside the immediate Nashville area who has experienced the death of a child, regardless of age or cause of death, and you have access to the address (and phone number) of the parents, it would be most helpful if you would call us with that information. Our mission is to reach every bereaved family in Middle Tennessee, but we have to know about them in order to give them the support we ourselves have received. If you know the child's name, birth date, date of death and cause of death, so much the better. Our outreach chairperson will send a warm letter of sympathy and information about TCF along with appropriate brochures and articles. We do not phone the family and all information you provide is confidential.

TCF Nashville Sibling Support

We encourage siblings from teens to adults to come support one another at our monthly chapter meetings. Siblings face a unique and complicated grief journey and are finding hope and healing through our sharing groups.



BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

Alive Alone

Alive Alone is an organization to benefit parents whose only child or all children have died. Visit their website at www.alivealone.org.

Alive Hospice Support Group for Bereaved Parents

For general information about grief support services and groups at Alive, please call the Grief Line at: 615-963-4732 or email griefsupport@alivehospice.org. They offer eight-week groups, ongoing monthly groups, family group and Little Hearts Club for children who have experienced the death of a sibling. Services are in Franklin, Nashville, Hendersonville, Lebanon, and Murfreesboro.

Sharing

SHARING is a community organization for parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of a newborn infant. They meet at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of the month in the Administrative Board Room on the first floor at Tri-Star Centennial Women's and Children's Hospital, 2221 Murphy Avenue in Nashville. The meetings are “open” and free. You can drop by as often as you like. The website is sharingmiddletn.org. Their informative brochure is found under “Contact Us.”

Survivors of Suicide

There is a caring SOS group in Nashville. For information about meetings, you may call [615 244-7444](tel:6152447444), or go to the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at TSPN.org, and you will find a list of all Tennessee SOS locations.

TCF Web site —A Treasure for You

When you log onto the TCF Web site at www.compassionatefriends.org you will find a wealth of information about TCF and grief—poetry and articles, chat rooms, grief in the news, other chapter Web sites and numerous other resources.

The Compassionate Friends

P.O. BOX 50833
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Borrowed Hope

*Lend me your hope for awhile,
I seem to have mislaid mine.
Lost and hopeless feelings accompany me daily.
Pain and confusion are my companions.
I know not where to turn.
Looking ahead to the future times
Does not bring forth images of renewed hope.
I see mirthless times, pain-filled days, and more tragedy.
Lend me your hope for awhile,
I seem to have mislaid mine.
Hold my hand and hug me,
Listen to all my ramblings.*

*I need to unleash the pain and let it tumble out.
Recovery seems so far distant,
The road to healing, a long and lonely one.
Stand by me. Offer me your presence,
Your ears and your love.
Acknowledge my pain, it is so real and ever present.
I am overwhelmed with sad and conflicting thoughts.
Lend me your hope for awhile.
A time will come when I will heal,
And I will lend my renewed hope to others.*

Eloise Cole
TCF Phoenix, AZ

There's relief when we hope – it is our compass for tomorrow.

Pamela Hagens
TCF, Nashville