

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 American Builders & Contractors (ABC) Building, 1604 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37210. 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.

February 11 Meeting:

Changing Relationships:

Dealing With Disappointment, Finding Strength in New Ones

As we traverse the road of grief, we look to those family and friends who have always been there for us outside of this journey. After the loss of a child, many of these relationships change as we find a new distance between long-time friends or family members that have different expectations about how we should grieve. Out of the disappointment of those transformed relationships, we forge new ones with people who traverse our similar path or simply are there in our time of need. Join us as we discuss this topic during our program, then break out for our regular sharing groups.



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 and Darlene Henson 615-789-3613
Small Child	Kenneth and Kathy Hensley 615-237-9972
Alcohol/Drug Overdose	Ed Pyle 615-712-3245

An Opportunity To Honor Your Child

Thousands of helpful TCF brochures are used throughout the country. They address the many aspects of grief following the death of a child. As these TCF brochures need reprinting, families are given the opportunity to sponsor a brochure in memory of their child, for a \$500 donation. The names of the sponsoring parents and their child's name are printed on the brochure. To learn which brochures need sponsors now, contact Sara Zeigler at the National office at sara@compassionatefriends.org or call her at 1-877-969-0010.

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—

Brock Wyatt Blick
February 8
Son of Mark and Jeri Kay Blick
Grandson of
Jerry and Bonnie Buckner

Rachel Elizabeth Bohan
February 13
Daughter of
Walter and Christy Moore and
Donald R. Bohan

Marcus Dean Lynn Brown
February 27
Son of Ricky Brown and
Deanna Brown

Elizabeth Osborn Cheek
February 8
Daughter of
Ross and Libby Cheek

Buck Allen Dawson
February 6
Son of
Bob and Genevia Graham

Edward Elberson
February 28
Son of
Harry and Winnie Elberson

Corinthien Barto Jackson
February 1
Son of Charles Jackson and
Everlena Hodge

Tony Scott
February 18
Son of
Eldon and Margi Scott

**William John Shelburne
(Will)**
February 12
Son of
Terry and Laura Shelburne

Heather Ann Willis
February 26
Daughter of
Tom and Margaret Loose



And in the month of their deaths—



**Glenn Thomas Allen, Jr.
(Tommy)**
February 7
Son of Ann McKee
Stepson of
Wilson McKee

Taylor Christian Brewer
February 11
Son of
Justin and Tracy Brewer
Grandson of
Don and Sherry Eakes and
Penny Waters

Bonita Brown (NeeNee)
February 3
Daughter of Elaine Frey

**Charles Michael Brown
(Charlie)**
February 7
Son of Dan and June Brown
Brother of Katherine Brown

Marcus Dean Lynn Brown
February 27
Son of Ricky Brown and
Deanna Brown

Matthew Jason Connell
February 2
Son of Imelda Connell

**Kelsee Nicole Corbitt
(Princess)**
February 7
Granddaughter of
Cheryl Carney

Jeffrey Edward deZevallos
February 17
Son of George and Anne
deZevallos

Edward Elberson
February 28
Son of
Harry and Winnie Elberson

Jacquelyn Renee Kimbro
February 1
Daughter of
Billy and Cheryl Kimbro

Gregg Alan Swayze
February 10
Son of Michael Swayze and
Carole Swayze

Newly Bereaved . . . Time will ease the hurt

The sadness of the present days is locked and set in time, and moving to the future is a slow and painful climb.

But all the feelings that are now so vivid and so real can't hold their fresh intensity as time begins to heal.

No wound so deep will ever go away, yet every hurt becomes a little less from day to day.

Nothing can erase the painful imprints on your mind; but there are softer memories that time, will let you find.

Though your heart won't let the sadness simply slide away, the echoes will diminish even though the memories stay.

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.

*Kevin and Molly Bishop
In loving memory of
their son,
Daniel Bowen Bishop*

*Jerry and Bonnie Buckner
In loving memory of
their grandson,
Brock Wyatt Blick,
Son of Mark and Jeri Blick*

*George and Anne deZevallos
In loving memory of their son,
Geoffrey Edward deZevallos*

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

*Tom and Margaret Loose
In loving memory of
their daughter,
Heather Ann Willis*

*Kirk and Shayne Harris
In loving memory of
their son, Chase Lee Harris*

*Kroger Plus
Community Rewards Program
(See note below)*

*Rose Steagall
In loving memory of her son,
Trinity Rhodes Steagall*

*Linda Vaughn
In loving memory of her son,
Gavin Garrett Vaughn*



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.

Note: Kroger Rewards—To create an account to benefit TCF, go to the Kroger website and click on "Community Rewards," then follow the instructions on that page. After that, all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Plus Card. Kroger will donate dollars to TCF every time you shop there. It's an easy way to support your chapter.

Things I Learned From You

*Things I learned from you..
Never to be judgmental.
To appreciate every sunrise.
To marvel at the loveliness of butterfly wings.
To see the beauty of every living being.
To appreciate my children.
The song contained in laughter.
To watch the sunset.
To see dinosaurs in the clouds.
The true meaning of sorrow.
To see laughter in the eyes of a child.
To care what happens to others.
To appreciate art.
To love life. To love God.*

*What it means to have a family.
To protect the earth.
How to accept the life given to me.
The importance of education.
What it means to be a friend.
Not to be afraid.
To pray. To love more.
Not to take anything for granted.
To see beauty wherever I find it.
To be humble. To watch the stars.
That there is an eternity.
Your life was not wasted, little one—
I learned from you.*

*Maggie Melendez
Racine, WI
From Bereavement Magazine*

The Piano Sits Silent

*I etch her name in the dust.
Run my hands over the keyboard,
too long untouched
by the pianist;
The one no longer
physically here,
who played the songs,
badly at times,
yet was unstoppable in
her need to make music,
As if she knew there was little time
to master the melody.
So she played and played.
Melancholy tunes
that spoke of lives gone too soon.
I would call to her,
"You're playing too loud,
I can't hear myself think."
If I could just take back those words,
for I long to hear my
beloved child play the music
that once rang through these halls.
Those uneven strains would be
the sweetest music to my ears.
I touch the ivories and hear
the foreign sound of this long
silent instrument.
And remember my precious child,
remember the joy
her efforts brought her...
Remembering, remembering...
Though my tears fall gently,
my heart smiles as I
recall the sweet sounds of her life.
And even as the piano sits silent,
My memories resound
and I recall the love, always the love.*

Cathy Seehuetter
TCF, St. Paul, MN



Missing You

*I'm missing you—
Missing the phone calls,
The discussion on politics,
Your opinion of family matters,
Sharing news of people you know,
Hearing about where you've been flying,
Your thoughts of the Middle East,
Someone who shares my philosophy of life.*

*I'm missing you—
To remember together
Your grandparents,
Your aunts and uncles,
The old geezers (as you called them)
In our little town.*

*I'm missing you—
To tell me the correct word to use,
To answer a quick question on proper English.*

*I'm missing you—
The list is endless.
You were always there,
Just a phone call away.
How could I realize the void your death
Would make?*

*My son, my good and funny friend,
I'm missing you.*

Arlene Pearce
TCF, Bishop, CA



A Sibling's Feelings

The pain of a sibling is so real we sometimes hide it deep inside of ourselves. As we watch our parents hurting we see the pain in their eyes. We are also hurting not only for the loss of our brother or sister but also for our own parents. We need to reach out to each other to let each other know we are hurting inside.

Our lives have all changed forever. I know they lost a son but I lost my younger brother I loved, and as siblings we share a special bond that we will never have any more for he no longer lives...my brother, my friend.

I will always miss you and I will never forget you for you will always live in my heart, and I have wonderful memories no one can ever take away from me. In my heart you will stay, love you forever.

Marie Porreca
TCF Rockland County, NY

Heartfrost

*Does it not seem
as if in wintertime
your mind remembers
all those sunny things
that warmed you once?*

*And does it seem
as if you have not smiled
forever?*

*Now take your hands,
one in the other hand,
and do remember
all those sunny things again.
Again.*

*And let them warm you now.
The smile will find you.*

Sascha Wagner

Valentines in Heaven

*Are there Valentines in Heaven?
Are there Red Hearts everywhere?
Do they line the golden streets,
Or is that very rare?
I wish that I could send you one,
Right through Heaven's Gate,
To say how much we miss you,
On this special date.
I'd like to send a Candy Heart,
That is printed, "I Luv U,"
And maybe you would whisper back,
"I know, I Luv U too."*

Marilyn Rollins
TCF Lake-Porter, IN



Miscarriage—The Unrecognized Tragedy

Though it's been almost three years since I experienced a miscarriage, it still evokes painful memories. My husband and I had two healthy daughters at the time and were eagerly anticipating the arrival of our third child. The little one was to complete our family.

But at 18 weeks gestation, things went awry, and we lost our wee son. I remember experiencing an overwhelming feeling of emptiness as I left the hospital without our baby. Denial, then shock, sadness and anger caused anguish over the "whys?" and "what ifs?" It wasn't long before I found out how miscarriage may be trivialized as an insignificant occurrence.

My physician, who had not been present when I delivered the baby, confronted me a few hours later. "It was a boy," I sobbed. "Oh," she remarked in an offhanded way, "I didn't see it." I vividly remember my anger toward her nonchalant manner and the way she referred to him as an "it." *Don't you know that was our baby, our little son?,* I thought. *Please don't minimize our loss.*

"You have other children at home, don't you?" she continued. *Yes,* I was screaming inside, *but don't you realize that each child is unique and special in his or her own right? Having two at home doesn't in any way lessen the sorrow I feel for this baby.* "Go home and enjoy your summer," she added later. "You can start trying again in another three months." Enjoy my summer?! This miscarriage had literally knocked me off my feet. There I was, an adult mother of two, reduced to tears whenever I saw a pregnant woman or new baby. (They seemed to be everywhere I went!) There was no denying the intense emotions I felt. My husband and daughters, as well, were trying to deal with the loss in their individual ways. Even though I tried, it was not an enjoyable summer. Life didn't automatically revert back to normal.

Yet my heartache was misunderstood not only by my physician, but by others as well. I was given the impression that it was inappropriate and even abnormal to be mourning. There was a conflict between the way I actually felt and the way society expected me to feel. I began to think I must be losing it.

Fortunately, I had a deep need to find out all I could about miscarriage. I read avidly, attended support group meetings and talked to other women who had been through a similar experience. I was relieved to find out that my reactions were healthy and normal. Until then, I didn't know that I was going through the grieving process. The tears, along with the questioning, the heart-to-heart talks with my family and friends, and the memorial service to say goodbye to our baby all helped me to heal.

A loss is a loss. Just because it's named "miscarriage" doesn't mean that it's insignificant. Nothing has ever affected me so deeply.... Though the deep sorrow I felt has since subsided, I realize that I'll never completely "get over" him. There are still times that I long to hold our son, to watch him grow, to love him.... I know I'll never forget.

Sara Winslow, Bereavement Magazine,
Colorado Springs, CO

Precious Valentine Memories

The lace has grown yellow with age. The edges are tattered and the glue that held the pieces together has long dried up, leaving only a slight stain on the faded red paper. It is much smaller than I remembered. Perhaps time has caused it to shrink. It seems so fragile, resting here in my palm. The words have nearly faded and even the heavy crayon marks have lost their luster over the years. There's a smudge of unknown origin on the back, near where the paper was rubbed dangerously thin by the uncounted erasure marks. The name is barely legible, the pencil lines so weak that only the mind can read the letters.

I found it the other day, while doing one of those winter chores: cleaning closets. It's nearly 25 degrees below zero outside and it seemed like a good idea to clear away some of the trappings of a thousand years.

February is a middle-of-winter month and most of us have fewer choices in this month than in any other. For those of us here in the Great North, it is either shovel the walk or clean the closets, and it's warmer in the closet (although not by much!) So, armed with a dust rag, trash bag and the radio, I opened the door and slipped in...not really about what I might find. I thought I was just going to clean the closet.

But, that first box sent me spinning. I found things I hadn't even remembered I'd lost! I finally found the holiday gift bought for my sister last year and then so carefully had hid away. I found snow boots and sand pails, a beach towel, three old paperbacks, a pile of magazines (all saved because I wanted to clip something "important"). I found shoelaces for shoes no longer "alive" and several other things that had once been alive.

I found a half a chocolate-covered cherry and part of a deck of cards. It was quite a treasure box, filled with junk that once had had some meaning to someone, maybe even me.

When I found the box of scrapbooks, I sat down, now that the closet had some actual floor space. I touched the bindings, not quite sure I possessed the courage required to open the pages. The phone rang and forced me away from that decision. I left the closet and did not return until now.

That's when I found the old paper Valentine, tucked away between the pages of a life lived long ago. As I held that once sticky, but now only stained, piece of construction paper, I felt a connection with other valentines, in other lifetimes.

It was a peaceful hour in that closet, listening to the sounds of my life, lived long ago and now remembered through the pages of the scrapbooks. I found my own laughter and that of my friend, joining the laughter of my own children, seeking the laughter of tomorrow's bearers of paper hearts. Time does pass on. Generations of hearts have been delivered and received. Generations of love have been shared just as generations of hurt have been endured. It felt timeless in the closet...as if when I opened the door, the gift of this Valentine would still be waiting!

Perhaps that is exactly what is happening, perhaps the engineers of all of our hurts and happiness are still waiting - waiting for us to claim that love and bring their light back into being. There were so many years when I could not bear this exchanging of paper hearts! There were so many years when I counted FIRST what was missing, never realizing that in the measuring of my losses, I was truly losing what I did have.

The snow had drifted deep across the yard: only the tips of my flamingos' knit-capped, covered heads are visible in the white. But my vision has been cleared somewhat this afternoon by a visit in the closet where I found a memory that no length of time could fade. The lace is faded, the edges tattered, but the heart always remembers and though the tears, the sounds of love given and received echo back to me.

So now, this little paper message from both my past and my future sits on my dresser, reminding me each morning to make room for the happy memories as well as the hard ones.

I had "lost" that Valentine from so long ago, but the bearer of that most precious gift of love has NOT been lost to me. Our loved ones die, but the love we share between us can NEVER BE DESTROYED. Love continues past all change and becomes the memory trace that guides the human spirit. Love isn't enough, but without it, the world grows cold and frozen, and the sidewalks never get shoveled and the closets never get cleaned, and the memories get lost in the confusion of pain not healing.

Go find a Valentine, clean a closet, rummage through a drawer, search for some tangible evidence that, indeed, your love DID LIVE - and what a sweet treat that will be!

Darcle Sims

Lovingly lifted from Sunflower Chapter, Wichita, KS Feb Newsletter



*The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more*

Wordsworth



CHAPTER INFORMATION

Are you Moving?

Each time a newsletter is returned to us with an incorrect address, we pay to retrieve it in order to find out where you've moved; then we pay again to mail it back to you. This is in addition to the original bulk mail cost. It would help a great deal in both time and money if you would notify us immediately of any address change so your newsletter can reach you right away. You may call, write or email the chapter leaders or the newsletter editor. Thanks for your help.

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 We Remember Them list on pages 2 and 3 in the monthly newsletter. If you are unable to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed, 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.

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. There will be no harassment, no phone calls, and no demands made upon the parents, and the information you provide is strictly confidential.

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.



BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

Alive Hospice Support Group for Bereaved Parents

For general information about Grief Support Services at Alive Hospice, please call the main number: [615 963-4732](tel:6159634732) or email griefsupport@alivehospice.org. Diane Castellano, LCSW is a grief counselor there for children and their families. Call her at 615-346-8554. Contact John Baker at 615-346-8364 for bereaved parent support or individual counseling.

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, or go to the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at TSPN.org, and you will find a list of all Tennessee SOS locations.

TCF Website —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. Check it out.

The Compassionate Friends

P.O. Box 50833

Nashville, TN 37205



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February 2018

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Another Sweet Good-Bye

Some people stay in your mind, haunting you, lingering in your thoughts. I met such as a mother at a Compassionate Friends meeting some time back. She was fearful, frightened, heart-broken and very specific about her wishes. Her only child had died, and this was her first Compassionate Friends meeting.

She then faithfully attended meetings, listening to others and absorbing what was said and occasionally contributing. One evening she connected with the guilt that every parent feels when a child dies. It matters not that we couldn't control the circumstances. What matters is that our child has died. We feel guilt. We say "If only...." so many times that it is almost a mantra.

Her body language changed instantly. I noticed that her head was up, her shoulders were back. Her subconscious had acknowledged that her feelings were the same as every other mother's feelings. Imagined guilt can wear us down.

Three months later she called me. She wanted to inform me that she had identified the monster that had been eating at her for this long time. Her conscious mind had accepted what her subconscious mind had known.

While I will miss her sharp repartee and the smile that began gracing her face, I know that we have served our purpose. She has been freed from the demon of an irrational emotion. Now she keeps her child in her heart as she gently and graciously moves through this life.

The paradigm of Compassionate Friends is the opposite of the paradigm of life. We are sad to see you when you arrive. We are happy when you are ready to go. You have found your way; this makes the good-bye a sweet one.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
TCF Katy, TX