



# The Compassionate Friends

## Supporting Family After a Child Dies



THIS MONTH:

JULY 2015 ISSUE

This Month: *Small Group Discussion*

Newsletter Editor: Crys Kelly

## HELP THOSE AROUND YOU TO UNDERSTAND

When we suffer the death of a child, a brother or grandchild, people around us want to help, but it can be very hard for them to understand how to help and what to say if they have never experienced a similar death that caused such great pain. Even though sometimes the people trying to help are the very ones who should know us the best, the change in our lives can be beyond their understanding.

The following article is published here so that it might help you to know that what you are feeling is normal and for you to share with those around you who want to help know better how to walk with you on your journey.

### *“What Grieving People Want You to Know”*

**I am not strong.** I'm just numb. When you tell me I am strong, I feel that you don't see me.

**I will not recover.** This is not a cold or the flu. I'm not sick. I'm grieving and that's different. I will not always be grieving as intensely, but I will never forget my loved

one and rather than recover, I want to incorporate his life and love into the rest of my life. That person is part of me and always will be, and sometimes I will remember him with joy and other times with a tear. Both are okay.

**I don't have to accept the death.** Yes, I have to understand that it has happened and it is real, but there are just some things in life that are not acceptable.

**Please don't avoid me.** You can't catch my grief. My world is painful, and when you are too afraid to call me or visit or say anything, you isolate me at a time when I most need to be cared about. If you don't know what to say, just come over, give me a hug or touch my arm, and gently say, "I'm sorry." You can even say, "I just don't know what to say, but I care, and want you to know that."

**Please don't say, "Call me if you need anything."** I'll never call you because I have no idea what I need. Trying to figure out



what you could do for me takes more energy than I have.

So, in advance, let me give you some ideas: \*Bring food. \*Offer to take my children to a movie or game so that I have some moments to myself. \*Send me a card on special holidays, birthdays (mine, his or hers), or the anniversary of the death, and be sure to mention her name. You can't make me cry. The tears are here and I will love you for giving me the opportunity to shed them because someone cared enough about me to reach out on this difficult day. \*Ask me more than once to join you at a movie or lunch or dinner. I may say no at first or even for a while, but please don't give up on me because somewhere down the line, I may be ready, and if you've given up, then I really will be alone.

## Steering Committee

### CHAPTER LEADERS

Crys Kelly (817) 875-7490  
Jaye Sanford (817) 475-9363  
**Contact via Chapter Email**  
tcffortworth@gmail.com

### Treasurer

Steve Roberts (817) 914-8689  
sjroberts1216@hotmail.com

### Hospitality

Marty Akeman (817) 636-5645

Christine Anderson

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Lydia Moore (817) 829-3801

### Newsletter

Crys Kelly (817) 875-7490  
tcffortworth@gmail.com

### Librarian

Liz Hutchison (817) 726-3999

### Welcome Bags

Janet DuPertuis

### Committee Members

Jeff Abodeely

Jeff & Marty Martin

Jerry & Sharon Austry

Charles & Genie Dean

## Fund Raising

Please remember to promote the online sponsor page for Walk to Remember. We can all participate and request friends, family, coworkers, neighbors, and classmates to sponsor us. 85% of what is raised will be returned to the Ft. Worth Chapter.



## Need to Talk?

Listed below are parents, grandparents and siblings who have walked where you are today.

If you are having a difficult day and just want to talk, please call.

### Addiction

Helen (817) 431-6964

### Auto

Jeff & Marty (817) 475-9141

### Grandchild/

### Multiple Loss

Lydia (817) 829-3801

### Drowning

Debi (817) 270-3275

### Drowning (Young Child)

Stacy (817) 656-7540

or (817) 845-3433

### Long Term Illness

Marty (817) 636-5645

### Homicide (Only Child)

Steve (817) 914-8689

sjoboberts1216@hotmail.com

### Suicide (Only Child)

Joy (817) 453-2227

### Suicide

Glinda (817) 485-3772

### Siblings

Cheryl (817) 624-7043

lopezgregg@aol.com

### Premature Infant(s)

Amy (817) 944-1710

amytori12@hotmail.com



## Middle of the night calls

Liz (817) 726-3999

## COURAGE

My brother died three years ago when he was seventeen years old. It was an accident when he fell while hiking in the mountains. I was fifteen and my brother was my hero. I would do anything to make him proud. When I lost him, I could have just given up. I have the courage to love people even though I know that I could lose them. I had many opportunities to just forget everyone else and lose myself. My brother was my best friend and when he died I could have too.

I decided that he would not have wanted me to throw my life away. I try my hardest to work hard in school and live up to what his expectations would have been. I am not living just for him. I am living for myself. A lot of people like to escape their problems by drinking or doing drugs. Alcohol and drugs only make problems worse because escaping a problem is not solving the problem. Self-respect means knowing who you are and treating yourself with dignity. I want people to look at me and to respect me. Staying in school and working to my potential is essential for respect. People cannot respect those who do not respect themselves. As Shakespeare said, "This above all else, to thine own self be true."

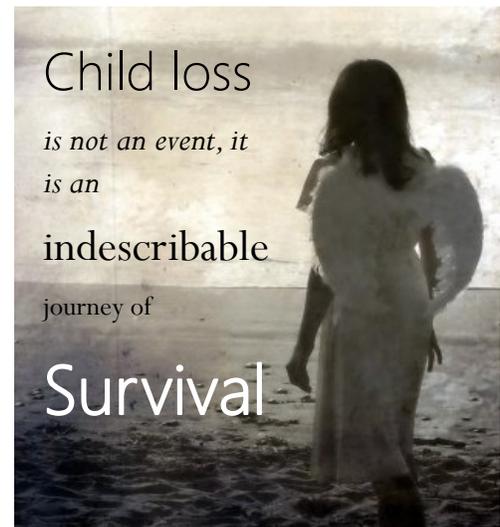
I do not make choices based on what the popular decision is. I base my thoughts and ideas on what I believe is right and important. I know that my brother would have been proud of me, because I made it through the most difficult time in my life, without him. I kept living when I lost the most important person in the world to me.

Courage is to keep fighting even though it looks

like you are going to lose. When he died, I felt the world crash down on me. Everything I ever hoped for just seemed empty. Even now some-times it will just hit me that my brother is gone. I have to keep on living and facing the world be-cause that is what life is all about. Sometimes things happen that seem impossible to face. If I do not face my problems, who will?

Life is not supposed to be easy but it is not devastating either. There are so many wonderful things that happen and I have to have the courage to realize it. Life is not just a long line of problems. It is also a long line of answers. I need courage and self-respect to find these answers. I have to trust myself and my future that everything will work out. I always does. The answers to life's problems can only be found through hard work and belief in yourself. My belief in myself comes from a big brother who always had faith in me.

Patricia Kelley  
TCF Richmond, VA



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**Email:** nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org **Website:** www.compassionatefriends.org The website contains links to TCF's national and regional conferences, brochures, e-newsletter, online support community, *We Need Not Walk Alone* magazine, "Healing the Grieving Heart" and "The Open to Hope Show" radio program archives, webinars, chapter websites, and other resources. **Regional Coordinator:** Bill Campbell 972-935-0673 jobill@sbcglobal.net

**Facebook:** The Compassionate Friends/USA **In Spanish:** Los Amigos Compasivos/USA **Twitter:** Text follow TCFofUSA to 40404



Don't miss this once a year event the becomes and must do annual pilgrimage for hundreds of parents, grandparents and siblings after their first experience.

*Keynote Speakers*

*Workshops*

*Special Events*

*Exceptional Entertainment*



## A GRIEVING PARENT IS...

A grieving parent is someone who will never forget their child no matter how painful the memories are.

A grieving parent is someone who yearns to be with their dead child but cannot conceive leaving their living ones.

A grieving parent is someone who has only part of a heart as the rest of it is buried with their child.

A grieving parent is someone who begs for relief from the memories which plaque them and then feels guilty when they get it.

A grieving parent is someone who pretends to be happy and enjoying life when they really are dying inside.

A grieving parent is someone who holds the lives of their remaining children as the most precious gift they have.

A grieving parent is someone who can cry or laugh at the drop of a hat whenever they remember their beloved child.

A grieving parent is someone who feels as if they just lost their child yesterday no matter how much time has passed.

A grieving parent is someone who fears for their remaining family because they cannot bear to have any more loss.

A grieving parent is someone who sits by their child's gravestone and feels a knife stabbing their heart.

A grieving parent is someone who wants to help others who have lost loved ones because somehow their loss is theirs all over again.

Judy Skapik  
Tampa Bay Chapter of BP/USA

## I NEVER BELIEVED

I never believed I would see another season change with gladness. I never believed I would see the world again without the haze of tears. I never expected to actually laugh again. I never felt my smile would return and feel natural on my face. I never hoped for another day when I would not want to die. I never envisioned a world that could again be bright and full of promise.

I believed that all that had passed from me the day he died and went away, never to return. But I was wrong. I know that in the fullness of your grieving, you will come to understand that life goes on...that it can still have meaning...that even joy can touch your life once more.

Please sign up on our website if you would like to bring refreshments for one of our monthly meetings. We have four openings each month. Thank YOU!

## LOVE GIFTS



*Love Gifts* are a thoughtful way to remember our precious children and can be made **ONLINE** on our website or by sending your donation to: Steve Roberts  
P.O. Box 202654  
Arlington, 76006

## WANT A BUTTON

If you would like to have a photo button of your child, simply bring a photo to any of our monthly chapter meetings and we can make one for you.

*There is no cost.*



“It is the nature of Love and of Death to touch every person in a totally unique way, comfort comes from knowing that people have made the same journey, and solace comes from understanding how others have learned to sing again.”

Helen Steiner Rice

Visit our website for more Online Grief Resources





**The  
Compassionate  
Friends**  
*Fort Worth Chapter*  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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Fort Worth, TX 76111

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

WWW.THECOMPASSIONATEFRIENDSFW.COM



**July 2015**

## **Fort Worth Chapter Meeting**

**We meet the 2nd Tuesday  
of every month.**

**Meeting Time: 7 P.M.—9 P.M.**

### **This Month's Program**

*Small Group Discussion*

*Refreshments*

Please sign up on our website and you are always welcome to bring something to share.

*~ Paper Goods and Drinks are provided ~*

ARBORLAWN UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH—ROOM 271  
5001 Briarhaven Rd., Fort Worth

## ***A Special Message***

To those of you who are newly bereaved and receiving our newsletter for the first time, we warmly welcome you to The Compassionate Friends. We are a self-help organization of parents, grandparents and adult siblings who have experienced the death of a loved one. We offer understanding and support through our monthly meetings, a lending library, support materials and loving telephone listeners. Please do not be afraid to come to a gathering.

Every other person in the room has lost a child, grandchild or sibling. They come because they feel the need to be with someone else who understands. We know it takes courage to attend that first gathering, but those who do come find an atmosphere of understanding from others who have experienced

the grief that you have now. Nothing is asked of you. There are no dues or fees and you do not have to speak. There is a special feeling at meetings of **The Compassionate Friends**.