



The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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Chapter Website:

www.thecompassionatefriendsfw.com

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Jerry & Sharon Austry
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David & Suzanne Wilkinson

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Newsletter Editor

Lisa Jo Adkison

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Becky Long

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A DECADE OF VOLUNTEERING

Our chapter has been blessed to have Steve Roberts serve as Chapter Treasurer. He has volunteered in this capacity for over ten years. Steve recently moved to the Houston area and has resigned as our keeper of the books. Thank you Steve for serving others, making yourself available, and being such a wonderful, compassionate example.

We wish Steve well in his new home and continued healing on his journey as a bereaved father. We are certain Kelsey would be so proud of her daddy! Steve will be profoundly missed by all of us at TCF of Fort Worth.

So Thankful!

We appreciate Peter Tau stepping up and volunteering to serve as our chapter's new Treasurer.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Help us welcome these members who attended in January:

Maria for the loss of her son, Timothy Bryan
Tonya for the loss of her daughter, Charlotte
Carol for the loss of her daughter, Randi Lynn
La Shawn for the loss of her son, Todd

We all benefit from each other's experiences. Remember what it was like your first few Compassionate Friends meetings? There is healing for both in helping others by sharing.

BIRTHDAY TABLE

The Birthday Table will be available at our meeting this month.

If your loved one's birthday is in February you are welcome to bring a memento or photo in honor of your loved one's birthday. Or even refreshments to share!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 12, 2019 - Chapter Meeting 7pm, Sharon Austry will present "Writing a Memoir of Your Child, Grandchild or Sibling"

March 12, 2019 - Chapter meeting 7 pm, Panel Discussion on National Conference

April 9th - Monthly Meeting 7 pm, Tear Soup video and discussion

April TBD - Steering Committee Meeting

May 14th - Monthly meeting 7 pm, "Taking Care of Yourself While Grieving" presentation

June 11th - Annual Butterfly Release

July 19-21 - National Conference in Philadelphia, PA

LENDING LIBRARY

Feel free to take advantage of the resources our Lending Library. It is available each monthly meeting. We just ask you to return the book(s) as soon as you are finished with them. Thank you!

LOVE'S LASTING TOUCH

Don't weep for me when I'm gone,
Because I'll always be there.
My spirit will exist in all the earth,
In the water, trees, and air.

You'll hear me say, "I love you",
In the whisper of a breeze.
You'll know that I'm beside you,
With the rustling of the leaves.

You'll feel my arms caress you,
In the warmth of each sunrise.
The moon will be my goodnight kiss,
The stars my watchful eyes.

Your life will be my legacy,
Your memories my epitaph.
These ties will bind us together,
Till we meet on heaven's path.

I'll not ever desert you,
We'll never be far apart.
I'll live within you always,
Nestled deep inside your heart.

Jacquelyn M. Comeaux
In Memory of My Angels...
Michelle, Jerry & Danny

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love

Thank you for these **LOVE GIFTS** received in January:

*Voss Family Open House in memory of their son, Craig,
and all children who have died;
Linda in memory of her son,
Devon.*

Please remember **ALL** donations to our chapter are tax deductible. Our local chapter exists as a result of such gracious Love Gifts.



Donations are accepted at our chapter meetings, **ONLINE** through our local chapter website or written to TCF of Fort Worth and mailed to Peter Tau, 8304 Asta Court, Benbrook, TX 76126.

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. *It isn't necessary to call someone who has suffered a loss identical to yours.*

Addiction

David (214) 686-1901

Auto

Jeff & Marty (817) 475-9141

Drowning

Debi (817) 422-4018

Drowning/Young Child

Stacy (817) 656-7540 or
(817) 845-3433

Grandchild/Multiple Loss

Lydia (817) 829-3801

Long Term Illness

Marty (817) 636-5645

Premature Infant(s)

Amy (817) 944-1710
amylori12@hotmail.com

Siblings

Jaye (817) 475-9363

Suicide/Only Child

Joy (817) 453-2227

Middle of the Night Calls

Liz (817) 726-3999



SEASONS OF THE HEART

Your special days are unchanging
Seasons of the heart I celebrate.
Your birth, forever spring,
Tender memories relate,
New and green, a dream
From which too soon I awake.

The summer of your life was bright
Laughter needed no reason,
Seemingly endless days of sharing.
Sixteen summers. Short in season.

Your death brought winter without warning,
What sense in all this can be found?
Summer dreams replaced with mourning.
Where is hope now?

But the heart knows what
The mind cannot accept
That when all is lost,
It is love that is left.
Love knows no barriers
Time or distance recognize.
Love does not diminish,
But is constant in our lives.
And like a summer breeze
Uplifts and inspires us
With healing memories.

Peggy Walls
TCF Alexander City, AL
In Memory of my son, Eddie



CHOOSING LIFE



“It will never be the same. Never.” As a bereaved parent, you have often heard or said these words to express grief’s profound feelings of sorrow and disorientation. Your life has suddenly taken an unexpected course that appears both uncharted and endless. Bewildered, you vainly search for pathways back to your former life, until you confront the reality that there is no way back. Your child is dead forever. It is then that you may say, “. . .never the same.”

This is the aspect of grief that Simon Stephens calls “The Valley of the Shadow.” It is that very long time between the death of your child and your reinvestment in life. *Between*. It is not supposed to be a permanent resting place. Although some people do take up residence in the valley, it is a transition from the death of your child to life with renewed purpose.

The key to this transition is yourself. You must choose between life and the valley. You and only you can decide. And you must make that decision again and again, each day.

Giving in to the hopelessness of the valley is tempting. Choosing to move on toward life requires a great deal of work. You must struggle with the pain of grief in order to resolve it. It is a daily struggle full of tears, anger, guilt and self-doubt, but it is the only alternative to surrendering yourself to the valley.

Little by little you choose to move on. Little by little you progress toward the other side of the valley. It takes a very long time, far longer than your friends or relatives suspected. Far longer than you had believed – even prayed – that it would be. When one day you find yourself able to do more than choose merely to live but also how to live, you will know you are leaving the valley of the shadow. There will still be more work to do, more struggle and choosing. The valley, however, stretches behind rather than in front of you.

When you have resolved your grief by reinvesting in life, you will be able to realize that nothing is ever “the same.” Life is change. We would not have it be otherwise, for that is the valley of the shadow. Change has the promise of beginning and the excitement of discovery.

Life is never the same. Life is change. Choose life!

Marcia F. Alig
TCF Mercer Area Chapter, New Jersey

“All art of living lies in a fine mingling of letting go and holding on.” - Henry Ellis



BROKEN HEART SYNDROME

As I prepared this month’s newsletter searching for articles and pictures related to the heart, since it is February. It occurred to me it might help someone else if I share my most recent diagnosis. In October 2018, I went to the ER, then was hospitalized and diagnosed with Broken Heart Syndrome (also known as stress cardiomyopathy). I just want other bereaved grandparents, parents, and siblings to know there is an actual physical heart condition known by this name. It is a treatable condition. I urge all bereaved to pay very close attention to their own physical health and visit their primary doctor as needed, and as often as necessary while on your journey. Try to take good physical care of your heart and make your loved one proud of you.

- Lisa Jo Adkison, Newsletter Editor

TO MY BROTHER



A laugh when I was crying
 A giggle when I needed it
 A good reality check when I was being dumb
 The truth even when I didn't want to hear it
 This is what you gave me
 You gave me a person I could laugh with
 A person that I could fight with
 A person that could make anybody laugh
 A person that could make the sun shine
 on a gloomy day
 This is the person you gave me
 Fear for where your life was going
 Fear of what might happen to you
 Fear of how deep you were getting into it
 Fear that I might lose you
 This is the fear you gave to me
 Hurt when you would tell a lie
 Hurt when you would think I believed you
 Hurt when you would blow off plans
 Hurt when you would use me
 This is the hurt you gave to me
 Sadness when you let the drugs take your life
 Sadness when you left me here
 Sadness when I realized I won't ever see
 your face again
 Sadness when I realized you won't ever make
 me laugh again
 This is the sadness you gave to me
 Memories of playing together when we were little
 Memories of serious talks together
 Memories of making each other laugh when
 we were down
 Memories of hugs and comfort
 These are the memories you left with me.

For Justin & others who've lost loved ones to substance abuse

*Written By Natasha Noll, published in
We Need Not Walk Alone Spring 2012*

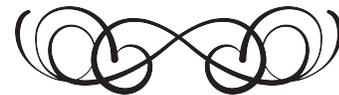
*Believe in yourself. You have survived 100%
of your worst days so far.*

FEBRUARY

In February we celebrate the birth of George Washington and Abe Lincoln. Lent begins. We wonder if the groundhog will see his shadow, and we have Valentine's Day. Candy, flowers and cards are often exchanged. Many cards are given and received between parents and children as a way of showing love for one another. Valentine's Day is another holiday on which bereaved parents remember the drawings, cards and gifts received from their deceased children.

Take time out to be good to yourself. Perhaps you could remember your child with a special flower, or could do something kind in your child's memory for someone in need. Most of all, take time to tell your living children and your spouse or someone special how fortunate you are to have them and how much they mean to you.

Lorraine Bauman
TCF Fairmont, MN



*Your presence we miss,
Your memory we treasure.
Loving you always,
Forgetting you never.*

A LOVE SONG



The mention of my child's name may bring tears to my eyes. But it never fails to bring music to my ears.

If you are really my friend, Please, don't keep me from hearing the beautiful music of his name. It soothes my broken heart and fills my soul with love.

Nancy Williams
TCF New Jersey



**The
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The mission of The Compassionate Friends: When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**Fort Worth Chapter Meeting
February 12th
at 7:00 pm**

Monthly Program:

“How to Write a Memoir of Your Loved One”
presentation by Sharon Austry,
chapter member.

Refreshments are provided each month by volunteers.
Please sign up to bring snacks to share. We ask no one
bring snacks containing any nuts.
Drinks and paper goods will be provided.

Join friends at the
ARBORLAWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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.

We meet the 2nd Tuesday of every month.