



The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Fort Worth Chapter | Phone (682) 201-0837 | tcffortworth@gmail.com

Chapter Website:

www.thecompassionatefriendsfw.com

Steering Committee

Chapter Leaders

David & Suzanne Wilkinson

Hospitality

Christine Anderson
Jerry & Sharon Austry
Peter & Tessie Kau

Librarian

Val Mitchell

Newsletter Editor

Lisa Jo Adkison

Secretary

Becky Long

Treasurer

Peter Kau

Welcome Bags

Janet DuPertuis

Additional Members

Charles & Genie Dean
Jeff & Marty Martin
Lydia Moore
Jaye Sanford

Regional Coordinator

Bill Campbell
(972) 935-0673
jojobill@sbcglobal.net

TCF National Office:

The Compassionate Friends, P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
Call toll free: (877) 969-0010 9 AM-5 PM,
CST, Monday-Friday. Email:
nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org
Website: www.compassionatefriends.org
Facebook: The Compassionate Friends/USA
In Spanish: Los Amigos Compasivos/USA
Twitter: Text follow TCFofUSA to 40404

FOR THE NEW YEAR

Where there is pain,
Let there be softening
Where there is bitterness,
Let there be acceptance
Where there is silence,
Let there be communication
Where there is loneliness,
Let there be friendships
Where there is despair,
Let there be hope.

*Ruth Eiseman
TCF Louisville, KY*



*May cherished memories comfort each of you,
may caring friends & peace be with
you and your family in 2020!*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We welcomed these new members at our December meeting:

*Chelsea for the loss of her son Tristin
Tammy for the loss of her grandson Tristin
Butch & Heather for the loss of their son Dalton.*

To the not so new members help create an inviting and safe atmosphere for the newly bereaved by meeting and reaching out to these new members. We all benefit from each other's experience. This can be especially crucial for the newly bereaved.



COMING UP

- January 14, 2020** - monthly meeting
February 8, 2020 - Steering Committee Meeting 10 AM in the home of Austry family
February 11, 2020- Bring a memento to this monthly meeting
March 10, 2020 - monthly meeting



CELEBRATE LIFE

The Birthday Table will be available this month. If your loved one's birthday falls in January plan to participate in our Birthday Table this month. Bring a photo or memorabilia.

BIG THANK YOU!

To those of you who attended our Annual Candlelight and Memorial in November we thank you for sharing your journey with us. Special events are a big success due to so many volunteers working together. We would like to acknowledge a few people for their help:

- Staff at Arborlawn UMC for their assistance and use of their facility
- Mount Olivet for votives & set up
- Steering Committee for desserts
- Jerry & Linda for the plants and flowers in memory of Devon
- Lydia for the carnations in memory of Nicole and Victoria
- David & Suzie for the catered meal in memory of Michael and Michelle
- Peter Kau for the program & picture presentation in memory of Christopher and Cindy.

LOST POTENTIAL

Last year I attended a workshop presented by a specialist in grief named Dr. Cable. Dr. Cable said many important things about the grief process, but as a bereaved parent one thing stuck in my mind.

He said that if you ask a bereaved person to describe his deceased mother, he will say, "Oh, she was so sweet. She always wore flowered dresses and loved to bake cookies." But, if you ask a bereaved parent to describe her deceased child, she will say, "Oh, he would be five this year and just starting kindergarten," or, "She would be twenty-two this year and graduating from college."

You see, we bereaved parents grieve the lost potential of our children. Our children don't stop growing in our minds. We grieve again and anew each year as our child would have been a different age.

Chris Anderson
TCF, Walla Walla, Washington

Be the things you loved most about the people who have gone.

LEADERSHIP IN 2020

Beginning January 2020 our local chapter will be under the leadership of David and Suzie Wilkinson. We appreciate their willingness to serve as Co-Chapter Leaders. If you do not know them please take the time to get to know them both. David and Susie are longtime Arlington residents and local business owners. Both of them have attended our meetings for some time.

"The reason we found The Compassionate Friends was on October 11, 2015 Suzie lost her sister Michelle after a life long struggle with Schizophrenia and then on November 9, 2015 we lost our son Michael to a drug overdose. The Compassionate Friends has become a key part \ safe haven during this painful journey that will last the rest of our lives." - David Wilkinson.

Our chapter totally depends on volunteers with a heart to help others on their journey of bereavement. David and Susie have such hearts! May we all be available to help those who need us in 2020.

TO START A NEW YEAR

If I can concentrate on the moral and spiritual side of the holidays

I can make it through.

If I can absorb the love and warmth that was the beginning

I can give love back.

If I can share the grief and love that is in me through these holidays

I can start a new year.

Tom Spray
TCF Ventura, CA

LOVE GIFTS

Thank you to these members for their Love Gifts we received last month in memory of their loved ones:

Christine Anderson, Tiffany Hamilton, and Gary & Julia Smith.

Your tax free donation to our chapter helps fund the mailing of this newsletter, special events for our community, supplying our Lending Library, etc. Donations are accepted at monthly chapter meetings, received [ONLINE](#) through our local chapter website and/or received by mail to our treasurer:

Peter Kau at 8304 Asta Court in Benbrook, TX 76126.

SHARE THE PAIN

I was watching the news tonight when they announced that the 27 year old son of Bill Cosby had been murdered today. I felt that now familiar sickening in my gut again...as one more young person beat us adults to the grave. Such a senseless waste...and such pain.

They read a statement from Mr. and Mrs. Cosby which said in part "..., this is a tragedy that is very difficult to share with anyone." The death of a loved one is such a personal thing...a direct wound to the heart. His statement is so full of truth. In fact, it may be impossible to share the loss completely with anyone...but I think we have to try.

When my 21-year-old son Michael was killed three years ago by a drunk driver, the pain was so intense...so incredibly powerful...that I just didn't think I would survive. It is a miracle that I ever did. I remember feeling so alone...so completely alone. People were hovering around me day and night...yet I felt so far away from them. My pain was a very personal pain...one I knew they could never comprehend. I was right I think...they didn't or couldn't understand. It was that realization which caused me to seek out someone...anyone...who did understand. Was it a coincidence that I had recently signed on to the Internet?

I found a place on the Internet called "alt.support.grief." It's one of the Usenet Newsgroups. When I arrived, there were only a few "posts" there, but enough that I could sense the mood of the group. I was totally new to the Net...and had never posted to a Newsgroup before. It took a lot of courage...but I mustered enough to type: "My name is Bill...and my 21year old son Michael was killed in a car crash on October 23, 1993. My life has been forever changed."

I have been typing that same message now for over three years...and it is still true today. Michael's life...and his death...forever changed me. But...that day...when I shared my pain for the first time on ASG...my life changed even more. I felt some relief almost immediately...even before people had responded. As the responses to my message (back then, only a couple!) began to get posted...my heart warmed. I had no way of knowing then just how important these precious people would be to me. In the end...they literally saved my life.

Something powerful happens when we write about our grief and share it. Even before it is shared...just the writing of it seems to help. I think it helps to move us out of our denial. Somehow, seeing my own words in print helped me to center on the reality of Michael's death. But if writing it is helpful...sharing it is miraculous!! As I always say on ASG..."A miracle happens when we share our pain here. I don't know why it works...but it does!"

I remember hearing some years ago about an experiment conducted at an eastern university. It seems they lined up 50 barefooted students and had them come one at a time and place one bare foot into a bucket of ice. They timed each student to see how long he could keep his foot in the bucket before the pain overwhelmed him. After each student was clocked, they lined them up again...this time with a partner to stand next to them...holding their hand. On average, each student was able to keep their foot in the bucket twice as long as when they were alone!

The obvious conclusion that the scientist drew from this experiment was that somehow the students could endure more pain when they were not alone. I think perhaps the scientist may have missed the most important factor in the formula. You see...the student holding the participant's hand...had his foot in the bucket only minutes before. He knew what it felt like!!

Talking to a therapist...writing in a journal...sharing with a relative...all of these are positive ways to express our feelings of grief. But...there is something very special...very powerful...about sharing with someone who has been down the path you are walking. Find them at a Hospice grief group...at "The Compassionate Friends"...or right here on the Internet...just find them. And once you have found them...don't let them go until you have told them EVERYTHING! It will be a big favor you are doing for yourself...and an even greater favor you will be doing for them!

Love & Peace, Bill Chadwick

Used with permission, article originally appeared on the Website of TLC Group which specializes in publications for transition, loss and change.

*"In this life we cannot do great things...
We can only do small things with great love." ~Mother Theresa*



The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

324 Hidden Lake Court

Burleson, TX 76028

Chapter Phone: (682) 201-0837

Chapter E-mail: tcffortworth@gmail.com

www.thecompassionatefriendsfw.com

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

**January 14th
at 7:00 pm**

Hear Rich Elder Tape - Monthly Meeting with Discussion

Snacks are provided by volunteers each month. Please sign up to bring snacks to share.

We only ask DO NOT bring snacks containing nuts.

Drinks and paper products are 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.