



The Compassionate Friends

Topeka Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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NEWSLETTER - Volume 1, Issue No. 3
The Compassionate Friends, Inc.
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National TCF Website:
www.compassionatefriends.org

Topeka TCF Chapter Website:
www.tcftopeka.org

May ~ June 2016
Editor: Susan Chan
3448 S.W. Mission Ave.
Topeka, KS 66614-3629
(785) 272-4895

MAY MEETING

Monday, May 23, 2016
Most Pure Heart of Mary Church
3601 S.W. 17th St., Topeka, KS
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Forgiveness - Many bereaved people find that issues of forgiveness can play a big part in their healing process. Sometimes the inability to forgive can prove a stumbling block towards growth and healing on your grief journey. Let's talk about the topic of forgiveness—do we feel the need to forgive ourselves for something we may have said or done while our child was still alive? Do we need to forgive those we may feel were in some way responsible for our child's death? Do we need to forgive our child for actions they may have taken that resulted in their death? Forgiveness can be a complex topic and we will try and explore some of the reasons why forgiveness can be a healing element in our grief work.

JUNE MEETING

Monday, June 27, 2016
Most Pure Heart of Mary Church
3601 S.W. 17th St., Topeka, KS
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Men to the Right, Women to the Left - It has long been known that men and women are just "wired" differently and therefore the grief response and journey can be very different for mothers and fathers. This sometimes makes it difficult for couples to relate easily to each other following the death of their child. After our group opening together, we will divide into two groups by gender that will have the opportunity to talk, share and discuss the grief process and journey with others who may truly understand what they are experiencing. The different grieving styles of men and women may also impact your relationship with other family members as well. We especially encourage all fathers to plan to attend.

Meetings are always held on the fourth Monday of each month unless otherwise noted. Listen to radio & TV for cancellations due to severe weather conditions.

This newsletter is sponsored by:

Kathy & Danny Kaesewurm and Eleanor Burns in loving memory of brother and son Terry Edward Burns who was born on September 17th and died on April 15th

Mary J. Lindeen in loving memory of her grandson Drew Lindeen who was born on May 8th

Mark & Lori Neddermeyer in loving memory of her daughter Madison "Maddie" Naill who was born on June 17th

Warren & Beth Watson in loving memory of their son Michael Scott Watson who was born on June 4th

Daniel & JoAnn Wempe in loving memory of their son Christopher Lee Wempe who died on May 12th



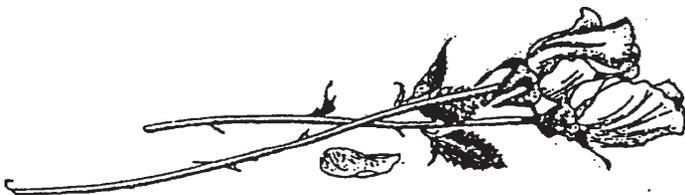
The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents. The purposes are to promote and aid parents in the positive resolution of the grief experience following the death of a child of any age, from any cause; and to foster the physical and emotional health of all bereaved parents, grandparents and surviving siblings.

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Our TCF Chapter will be holding its 23rd Annual Memorial Picnic and Dove Release on Saturday, September 17, 2016 at Shelter House #6 at Lake Shawnee

Watch for more information and an RSVP/ Dove Sponsorship Form in the July/August Newsletter



We Need Not Walk Alone

From the Newsletter Editor

Dear Compassionate Friends Family,

We are currently entering what can be two of the most difficult months for bereaved parents - May and June. These are the months of Mother's Day, Father's Day, Memorial Day, Graduations, Proms, and Wedding announcements. And, as we move into the heart of summer, it is often the time of year when families may have taken vacations together. All of these things take on a much different meaning for us following the death of our child. I remember wanting to be happy for my daughter's friends as they anticipated Prom Night and their upcoming high school graduations, and almost feeling jealous of their joy. When my first Mother's Day rolled around, I seemed to feel the pain of her absence even greater. The first gathering with extended family after Rachael's death was difficult; not because they were not all very loving and supportive, but because she **should** have been there. It seems these two months continually remind us of what we have lost and what "might have been". I hope you will be gentle with yourself during this time of year, hold fast to your memories and treasure the love with which you were blessed. Our loved ones may not be with us physically, but they reside deep inside our hearts along with the love we have for them. Love lives on - now and always.

Make Plans to Attend 23rd Annual Memorial Picnic/Dove Release - We will be holding our picnic on Saturday, September 17th from 11:30 a.m. -2:30 p.m. at Shelter House #6 at Lake Shawnee. We hope you will plan to join us for this special event honoring the lives of all children, grandchildren and siblings who "left too soon". Be sure to watch for an RSVP Form and Dove Sponsorship opportunity in the July/August issue of this newsletter. We hope to see you there!

An Update on the Chapter Newsletter - We have culled the newsletter mailing list of those families who did not return their renewal form. We have also established an electronic list of those requesting to receive the newsletter via email. Remember, you can also always access the current and past issues of our newsletter on our Chapter website at www.tcftopeka.org under "Newsletters". All those who requested to remain on the hard copy mailing list for the newsletter will continue to receive the mailing as usual. Those families whose loved one died in 2015 or thus far in 2016 are automatically kept on the mailing list for one full year unless they request in writing to have their name removed. You are all asked to send any address changes (hard copy or email) to tcftopeka@gmail.com/ Also, please see the update on submission of Memory Pages on the next page.

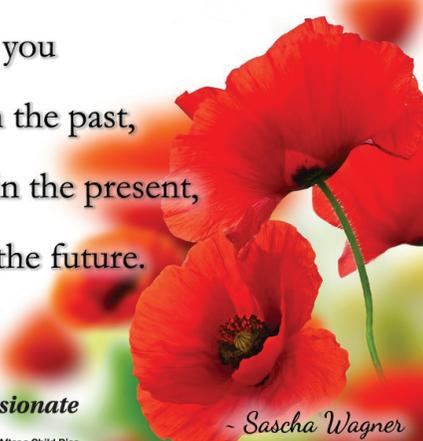
An Update on Dillions Community Rewards Program - The Chapter has received its second check from the Dillions Community Rewards Program for about \$66.00, and this accounts for the participation of **only 8** TCF Chapter families. Imagine how much more funding our Chapter could generate if more families would just take the time to sign up. If you have not signed up to support the Topeka TCF Chapter through this program, I encourage you to go to www.dillions.com/community-rewards and click on "Register" at the top of the page. When you enroll you will be asked to designate which charity your wish to support. The Topeka Compassionate Friends Chapter NPO number is 65403. Once you have done so and have a Dillions Shopper's Card, every time you make a purchase at Dillions a portion of your total will be donated to the Topeka TCF Chapter. Participating in this program costs you nothing and does not affect your fuel points for gasoline purchases. If you need assistance in setting up your account, call toll-free at 1-800-576-4377 and select Option 3. Since we charge no individual dues or fees to participate in our TCF Chapter, this passive income helps us meet the expenses of the Chapter including the printing and mailing of this newsletter.

Until next time, be gentle with yourself and let the healing happen.

~ Susan Chan, Rachael's Mom

Memories

will bring you
love from the past,
courage in the present,
hope for the future.



- Sascha Wagner



The Keepers of Time

You make friends because you have things in common. We are friends because of our children. The older ones, the younger ones, the ones who never had a chance to breathe. They are our reason for being, our heartbeat, our life's blood. Whether we have lots of memories or a few, we are joined by an unbreakable bond. We are the ones left behind to remember and carry the torch for those we remember so lovingly. We are there for ourselves and each other because we understand the pain of loss. We must also be there for those who unfortunately join our ranks. Because we are parents of lost children, the bruised hearts, the keepers of memories.

~ Cheryl Pelletier, TCF, Concord, NH

Love Gifts

Your Love Gifts Help Spread the Message of Hope & Healing ~ Won't You Help Today?

What is a Love Gift? A Love Gift is a gift of money (or books, etc.) to The Compassionate Friends. It is usually in memory of a child, grandchild or sibling who has died, but it may be from individuals who wish to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanks that their children are alive, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help. The Compassionate Friends charges *no individual dues* or fees and depends on such Love Gifts to meet the Chapter's expenses, including the printing and mailing of this newsletter. **When you make a donation, make sure to check to see if your employer may have a "matching gifts" program** as this could double the amount of your donation. If you are not sure whether your company has such a program, check with your Personnel Department. This month we thank:

- ♥ *Bert & Elaine Bandstra in loving memory of their daughter Diane Bandstra who was born on May 28th*
- ♥ *Phil & Louise Jenkins in loving memory of their daughter Teresa Jenkins Carson who died on June 17th*
- ♥ *Mark & Lori Neddermeyer in loving memory of her daughter Madison Rae Nail who was born on June 17th*

Thank you for your gifts which enable us to print this newsletter and reach out to newly bereaved families. Donations are our only source of income and are **tax deductible**. If you would like to sponsor a newsletter, the cost is \$30.00. If we have more than one sponsor, we recognize all of them. If you wish to send a Love Gift, any amount is appreciated. It is whatever you feel you can give. Donations of books that you have found helpful to the Topeka Chapter Library are also greatly appreciated, and it is a nice way to remember your child or other loved one. If you would like to send a Love Gift or a Newsletter Sponsorship, you may do so by sending it to: The Compassionate Friends, c/o Susan Chan, 3448 SW Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. For Newsletter Sponsorships, please indicate which issue you wish to sponsor (Jan/Feb, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, or November/December). Makes checks payable to "TCF".

Update on Memory Pages

We are once again accepting Memory Pages for the newsletter. However, while they will not be published in the printed edition of the newsletter, they will appear in the online PDF version of the newsletter which is posted and viewable on our TCF Chapter website at www.tcftopeka.org < This option helps to not only save printing costs, but will also allow us to include Memory Page photos in full color rather than in black and white. If you have questions, contact Susan at chanx2@cox.net

TCF National Office email:
nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

Compassionate Friends web address:
www.compassionatefriends.org

Topeka TCF Chapter web and email addresses:
www.tcftopeka.org tcftopeka@gmail.com

Kansas Regional Coordinator:
Marty & Renda Weaver - (785) 823-7191
mweaver@cox.net

TCF Mission Statement: 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.

Upcoming Events/Dates to Remember

July 8-10, 2016 - The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Scottsdale, Arizona, will be the site of the 39th TCF National Conference. "Hope Rises on the Wings of Love" is the theme of next year's event. The 2016 Conference will be held at the The Fairmont Scottsdale Princess Resort. Hotel reservations and Conference Registration are open at www.compassionatefriends.org/ . The Conference will offer over 100 workshops, sharing sessions, a Memorial Candle Lighting and a Walk to Remember among many other things. Plan to share this supportive and healing event.

September 17, 2016 - Topeka Chapter 23rd Annual Memorial Picnic and Dove Release at Lake Shawnee.

Our Thanks to: Midland Care Connection for giving us a mailbox and Most Pure Heart of Mary Church for allowing us to meet at their facility. A special Thank You to ProPrint for helping to underwrite the printing cost of this newsletter.

Pro 
 **Print**

DIGITAL PRINT AND COPY SERVICES

**838 MASSACHUSETTS ST
LAWRENCE, KS 66044
785.842.3610**

**1033 SW GAGE BLVD, STE 200
TOPEKA, KS 66604
785.272.0070**

And We Remember.....

Because of the potential for the hurtful crime of identity theft, TCF Chapter Newsletters will now only publish the date of a child's birth or death without listing the year of each event. This is a directive from the National TCF Office to protect all TCF members. Due to space constraints, only those families who remain current on our newsletter mailing list will be included in the We Remember section

Matt Arnold, son of Don and Susan Arnold, born on July 28th

Diane Joy Bandstra, daughter of Bert and Elaine Bandstra, died on July 28th

Maximus Blindt, son of Heather Blindt; brother of Brad and Natalie; who was born on July 25th

Teresa Jenkins Carson, daughter of Phillip and Louise Jenkins, died on June 17th



Patrick Cummings, son of Carol Cummings, died on June 27th

Michael Donoho, son of Dennis and Tammy Donoho Collins and stepson to Ed Collins and Debbie Donoho, born on June 24th

Randy Flanagan, son of Dennis Flanagan, who died on June 10th

Amber Flear, daughter of Darla Hughes and Terry Flear, who died on July 7th

Jeremy Scott Goehl, son of Danny and Kim Goehl, who died on June 17th

Spencer Michael Haynes, son of Shelly Frederick-Haynes, who was born on June 17th

Bradley "Brad" Hurla, son of Mike and Judy Hurla, who was born on July 21st

Jonathan Kaspar, son of Jeffrey and Susan Kaspar, sister of Jen Kaspar who died on June 4th



Joel Andrew Knight, son of Jim and Gloria Knight, born on June 24th

Andrew Garrett Lindeen, grandson of Mary J. Lindeen, died on July 29th

Richard L. "Rick" Linder, Jr, son of Richard and Pat Linder, born on June 26th

Amy Lundin, daughter of Ralph and Judy Lundin, died on July 28th

Nicholas Artck McCarthy, son of Sabrina Cruz, who was born on July 26th Clay Meyer, son of Jim and Linda Meyer, born on July 26th; died on June 27th

Madison "Maddie" Rae Naill, daughter of Lori Neddermeyer and Eric Naill; step-daughter of Mark Neddermeyer; sister of Jesse and Allie Naill; step-sister of Cale and Braden Neddermeyer; and granddaughter of Bruce and Ginny Miller and Allan and Marge Neddermeyer, born on June 17th

Janet Pace, daughter of Barbara Hale, sister of Carla Gilbert and Sara Wallo, and mother of Shauna Andersen died on June 10th

Aurora Mae Philippi, daughter of Chris and Triste Philippi, born and died June 17th



Kasey Pike, grandson of Grace Reichle, who was born on July 3rd

Sarah N. Rice, daughter of Gary and Peggy Rice, who was born on July 19th

Kathryn (Katie) Rush, daughter of Thomas and Barbara Rush, born on July 6th

Alexis "Lexie" Diane Salmon, granddaughter of Candy Morgan and Robin Heuer, who was born on July 11th and died on June 5th

Rachel Diana Sowers, daughter of Bill and Diana Sowers, born on July 30th

Tony Stewart, son of Barbara Stewart, who died on July 2nd

Donald (Donnie) Warren, son of Nancy McCune, who died on June 28th

Michael Scott Watson, son of Warren and Beth Watson, who was born on June 4th

Eric Edward Gordon Wiebler, son of David and Laura Wiebler, died on July 12th



Tony Willey, son of Diana Willey, who was born on July 3rd

(Use the form below to submit your listing if you have not already done so. Once you have submitted your listing you **do not** have to do so every year as long as you remain active on our mailing list. . Your child's name and dates will remain on the We Remember database unless you request their removal. This month's listing includes birth and death anniversary dates for June and July)

And We Remember - If you wish your child, grandchild or sibling included in the We Remember section of this newsletter, please fill out the form below and return to: Susan Chan, 3448 S.W. Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. You may also email the information to chanx2@cox.net< We do not automatically list your information just because you are receiving this newsletter. We only list information for those parents requesting it. If you have previously submitted your child's information and it has appeared in the newsletter during the past year, you **do not** need to resubmit it. If you have just begun receiving this newsletter, or have never submitted this information, you will need to do so in order for it to be included. **Please type or print clearly.**

Child's Name _____ Son__ Daughter__ Grandchild__ Brother__ Sister__

Date of Birth _____ Date of Death _____

Father _____ Mother _____

Note: Please list your address and phone number. You will only be contacted if there is a question about your listing.

Is this a change of address for you? (please circle) YES NO

A Special and Important Message to Our New Compassionate Friends

If you are newly bereaved and have recently attended your first Compassionate Friends meeting, you may have left the meeting feeling overwhelmed and emotionally drained. With the heavy load of grief you are carrying, you cannot bear to hear about all the pain shared at meetings. Consequently, you may have decided not to return. We would like to let you know that these feelings are common to all our members, many of whom resolved not to expose themselves to such anguish again, but were drawn back by the knowledge that they were among those who "know how you feel".

Please give us at least **three** tries before you decide whether or not the meetings are for you. You will find a network of caring and support which will help you as you travel your grief journey, and most assuredly, you will find hope along the way. We truly care about you and want to make certain that no bereaved parent ever needs to walk this path alone.

---Topeka TCF Chapter Steering Committee

Additional Support Group Resources

HEALs - Healing after loss of suicide offers support to all survivors affected by the loss of a loved one to suicide. Meetings are at 7 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month. Pozez Center (north side of Stormont Vail). Contact Information: Sandy Reams 785-249-3792 or email sreams67@gmail.com

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Group - Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month from 6-8 p.m. at the Pozez Education Center. The group, which has regular meetings to share information and experiences, also has a blog for members that offers communication, resources and support. If you are interested in learning more about the blog, please email lrosen@stormontvail.org. For information call (785) 354-5225.

From Victims to Survivors - Support group for families who have had a loved one murdered. The group meets the fourth or last Wednesday of each month at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 4775 S.W. 21st. For more information, call Bill Lucero at 232-5958 or see <http://fromvictimstosurvivors.com>.

FREE online subscription of TCF's national magazine, *We Need Not Walk Alone*, now available

The Compassionate Friends national magazine *We Need Not Walk Alone* is now available free through an online subscription. TCF is also archiving past editions at TCF National Magazine and Archive. Those who do not wish to subscribe can view the magazine in the archive once the next issue has been published. Past issues of *We Need Not Walk Alone*, starting with Winter/Spring 2011-2012, are available in the archive. On the home page (www.compassionatefriends.org), click on Find Support, then Online Community, then Sign Up for National Publications. You can also sign up for the TCF E-Newsletter at this site to keep up with all that is happening in the organization.

Are You Moving?

If you move, please let us know your new address so you can continue to receive this newsletter. It costs the Chapter 71 cents every time a newsletter is returned by the Post Office with an outdated address. Please send address changes to: Susan Chan, 3448 SW Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. You may email address changes to chanx2@cox.net. We appreciate your cooperation as this will save the Chapter money which can be better spent on bereavement outreach. If, for any reason, you wish to have your name removed from our mailing list, please drop me a note or email and I will take your name off the list.

What is Proactive Grieving?

"Proactive Grieving is a journey of self-discovery; we find ourselves broken and we soon realize that all the king's horses and all the king's men cannot put us back together again; we cannot fix grief. If something cannot be fixed we toss it out, put it on a shelf, or we re-purpose it. There are some who do not survive a significant loss in their lives, there are many who sit broken on the shelf, and for others there can be a transformation so powerful it can change the world. Proactive grieving is utilizing the transformational power of grief to re-purpose our lives. To turn our loss into legacy that not only honors our loved one who died, but celebrates their life and seduces joy back into ours. We are human and we can carry both joy and sorrow simultaneously."

~ Mitch Carmody, www.Heartlightstudios.com

The Children's Cemetery

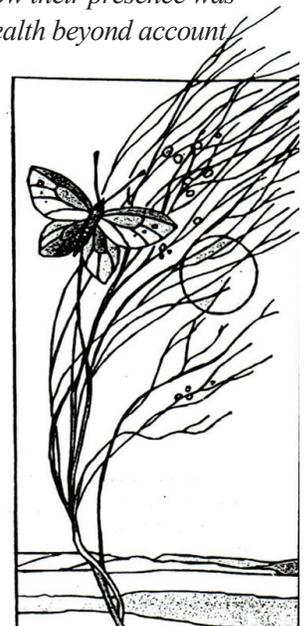
*Here where their silent voices speak to us
where wind and cloud and stone bear out their names.
Here where their laughter touches our tears,
and where their image conquers space and time.*

*Where memories tremble between love and pain.
and where their glory kindles our lives.
Here where their beauty reaches out to us
and where their kindness warms a tired world.*

*Here let us stand and look unto their graves
to find their faces gentle in the sky.
Let us remember how their presence was
a treasure and a wealth beyond account.*

*Here let us weep.
Here let us love.
Here let us thank them
for the joy they gave
to our living and to our hope*

~ Sacha Wagner



Grief Isn't A Summertime Song

By the late Darcie D. Sims Ph.D
First published in Bereavement Magazine
5125 N. Union Blvd.
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

June is a season of beginnings. School is out summer begins. Graduation occurs, freedom begins. Weddings are held, marriage begins.

June is also a season of endings. Schools ends, graduation closes the chapter of high school antics and freedom from responsibility. Weddings mark the ending of bachelorhood, the dating game, ready cash and freedom.

June could probably be best described as the "Hello" and "Goodbye" month, for each hello has an accompanying goodbye, and each goodbye opens the possibility of a new hello.

Families gather to celebrate the triumph of youth over studies and to witness the march of the newlywed down a flower-strewn path to the reception (where the happy couple will enjoy their last non-casserole meal for many years to come). It is a month of remembering and for re-awakening grief as we mark the celebrations of hello and goodbye by the number of empty chairs at the table or by the missing faces in the family picture. We didn't expect to hurt in June. We thought IT would be "over" by then. Grief doesn't seem to fit as well in June (like the bathing suit we had last year).

Grief is understandable in the fall and winter months. We can wrap ourselves in woolly shirts and heavy sweaters and hide away in the winter. We can spend long hours turning the pages of the scrapbooks while the snows rage outside the window, reflecting the rage within. Even in spring, grief has a place. We brace ourselves to begin anew just as the tender leaves and blossoms speak of a renewing earth. But by June, by the time we gather to celebrate the family's passage into summer, grief should be OVER.

Grief has little place at the graduation ceremony. Grief seems wrong at the wedding table. Grief doesn't fit at the beach (where nothing fits as it should except on those who has never tasted the sinful deliciousness of a chocolate bunny). Grief isn't a summertime song.

Grief doesn't belong on the playground. Its rhythms are all wrong for the gentle sounds of waves washing on the beach. It doesn't feel as good as the warm sand beneath our bare feet, and a heavy heart has no place in the garden. The smell of coffee brewing and bacon frying over an open flame should not be accompanied by the memories of other campfires and other cookouts. Summer should be a fun time, a time free of the burdens of grief.

The sounds of June should be those of carnivals, circuses, "Pomp and Circumstance" played by the school band, the tinkle of the ice cream-truck bell and the music of children laughing. The winds are warm and gentle, the air slightly moist and the only clouds are those high, fluffy ones that look like marshmallows. We lie on our backs in the grass and gaze at those clouds in June, seeing all sorts of wonderful shapes. Do you remember those warm, easy days of cloud watching? June is the month for that, not for suddenly seeing loved one's face etched in that skyward fluff. June is for skipping pebbles across the pond, not for seeing the reflection of tears in the water's ripples.

June is the month for camp, swimming holes, fishing trips and salads. It's the month for flying kites, mowing lawns and hanging wash on the line. It's the month for running barefoot and picking dandelions and watching beetles wander across the sidewalk. It's the month for pulling weeds and sitting under the tree in the backyard and daydreaming.

But for many of us, June seems to be a painful month. Each glorious

moment brings renewed hurt and emptiness – each bird's song a reminder of someone not there to listen with us. Each blossoming flower is an empty joy – no dandelion bouquets to be delivered or received – footprints beside ours in the sand.

June is Father's Day, Flag Day, Graduation Day, Wedding Day, Hello Day and Goodbye Day (a card seller's dream month!). June is thirty days of summer, filled with what should have been and what is no more; highlighted by buzzing bees and dazzling garden gifts. How can grief survive such a summer song?

In June, I sit in my rocking chair, tucked away in a corner of the porch and watch the water, wash across the stones near the shoreline. And grief finds me. I run to my mountains, hiking to the remotest points, yet grief finds me. I listen to the playground music, lost in the songs of a son I no longer know; I bake cookies with a recipe I can no longer share with the cook, but grief still finds me in June.

We mark the passage of time by the tides of those around us. We measure moments by the events of others; baby's first step, first day of school, graduation, first job, marriage, promotions, moving, death. We may lose track of all time, yet we never forget the day. And when thoughts of *that* day creep into our June time, we squirm and squiggle and feel out of sync with the rest of the world who have "gone fishin."

Grief has endured the winter with you; it has become a part of you. Not like an overcoat that you can shed when it gets too warm, but rather like a thread in your tapestry – a living part of who you are. We cannot "get over" grief, there are no seasons for grief. It is a part of who we are – but only a part.

At first it consumed us, seemingly replacing all parts of us. It overtook all our thoughts and emotions, wiping clean the memory banks and leaving only pain in its path. But as we have struggled through the months and years of this journey, grief has changed with us. We are different than we were before, not better, not stronger, not worse, not weaker – just different!!

But the seasons march on and soon it will be the heat of summer and then the sliding into fall and once again we will drift into winter, always carrying our grief with us.

June is a month of memories, and they flood us almost whimsically. Yet, it's when the day is gentle and the song is slow that the heart is open and summertime flows even into the winter places in our beings

Grief is now a part of our hellos and good-byes. It always has been, we just didn't know it before. So, even though it doesn't feel quite right, bring your grief into June and into summer and let it live. Recognize it, address it, and let it go, casting it in small pieces onto the waves and winds that clear the canvas every day in summer.

Grief isn't a summertime song, it is a lifetime song; but it doesn't have to be a sad song forever. Let it begin to become gentle in your memory. Don't be so afraid that you will forget that you hold too tightly to the pain. Just as you still remember those summertime's of your youth, rest assured you will never forget the melody of the love you shared!

Come join me on the porch and swing a bit in the summer breeze. The memory winds come calling anytime, even in the summer.



*There is no hand
so small....that it cannot
leave an imprint on the world.*

Grief Resources from TCF

Online Support Community

Please Note: Times posted on the schedule are based upon Eastern Time. Central Time is ONE HOUR earlier.

The Compassionate Friends offers “virtual chapters” through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you’re experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions.

To learn more and/or join a group go to: http://www.compassionatefriends.org/Find_Support/Online-Community/Online_Support.aspx

All sessions have a moderator to assume no unauthorized individuals participate in online discussions.

Monday

9:00 - 10:00 AM EST

Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

9:00 - 10:00 PM EST

Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

10:00 - 11:00 PM EST

Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

Wednesday 9:00 - 10:00 PM and 10:00 - 11:00 PM EST

Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

Thursday 8:00 - 9:00 PM EST No Surviving Children

9:00 - 10:00 PM EST Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

Friday 10:00 - 11:00 AM EST Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

9:00 - 10:00 PM EST Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

9:00 - 10:00 PM EST Pregnancy/Infant Loss

10:00 - 11:00 PM EST Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

Saturday 9:00 - 10:00 PM and 10:00 - 11:00 PM EST

Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

Sunday 8:00 - 19:00 PM Survivors of Suicide

9:00 - 10:00 PM EST Parents/Grandparents/Siblings

Disclaimer: Views expressed in The Compassionate Friends Online Support Community sessions are the opinions of individual visitors and do not necessarily represent the views of the organization.

Webinars

The Compassionate Friends provides its webinars free of charge as a service to the bereaved. If you have questions about the webinars please email TCF at NationalOffice@compassionatefriends.org. The following is a list of past webinars that you can access via the TCF website (www.compassionatefriends.org) Many topics are covered and new webinars are to be held. Check out the following that are currently achieved in the TCF webinar library by going to: http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Special-Events/Webinarlibrary.aspx

“Proactive Grieving” (Turning Loss into Legacy)

Presenter: Mitch Carmody

“How Can I Help My Child” (Who is grieving the loss of their sibling)

Presenter: Alicia S. Franklin

“The Aftermath of Suicide”

Presenters: Dr. Doug and BJ Jensen

“When Your Child Dies from a Substance Related Cause”

Presenter: Barbara Allen

“Children’s Grief in Today’s World”

Presenter: Hazel Woodward

“On Becoming Childless”

Presenter: Marie Levine

“The Nation Mourns and Together We Heal”

Presenters: Dr. Gloria Horsley, Dr. Heidi Horsley, and Pat Loder

“Dreams a Blessing in Disguise for the Bereaved”

Presenter: Carla Blowey

“Handling the Holidays”

Presenter: Darcie Sims

“A Father’s Grief”

Presenter: Dennis Apple

“Grief and Today’s Family”

Presenter: Scott Davis

“Seven Dos and Don’ts for Staying Connected as a Couple During Grief”

Presenter: Chandrama Anderson

“Siblings Grieve Too”

Presenters: Drs. Gloria and Heidi Horsley

“Coping with Guilt During Bereavement”

Presenter: Dr. Bob Baugher

“Caring for Your Health While Grieving”

Presenter: Dr. Coralease Ruff

Getting “Stuck” and “Unstuck”

Presenter: Vicki Scalzitti

“Handling Grief Through the Holiday Season”

Presenters: Drs. Gloria and Heidi Horsley

The Compassionate Friends

Topeka Chapter, c/o Midland Hospice Care., Inc.
200 S.W. Frazier Circle, Topeka, KS 66606-2800

A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents and siblings.

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We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us.
Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.
We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships.
We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief,
but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers.
Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace.
But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share,
just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together.
We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace,
share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.