



The Compassionate Friends

Lehigh Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Volume 34 Issue I

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Jan, Feb & March 2020

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Chapter 1562**
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The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is an international non-profit self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families that have experienced the death of a child.

Our Mission: 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.

Our Vision: Everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

Our Chapter Meetings are held 2nd Monday each month from 7 to 9 pm at Sacred Heart Hospital (2nd Flr. Conference Center), 4th & Chew Sts, Allentown. Free parking is available in hospital parking decks. Newcomers please arrive a half an hour early for your first meeting

Meetings are open to all bereaved parents, grandparents and mature siblings. Separate sharing sessions are offered to new members. Participation in group sharing is confidential and voluntary. Our hope is that being among other bereaved parents you may feel free to talk, cry and share, but it is okay to just come and listen too.

We invite you to bring a picture of your child to display at the meeting for their birth or anniversary month or at any time.

Upcoming Meeting and Events Schedule

Jan 13 - Meeting - General Sharing

Feb 10 - Meeting – Memories from the Heart

March 9 - Meeting – General Sharing

Meeting Cancellations

Cancellations will be posted on our facebook page - facebook.com/TCFLehighValley, on our website homepage & calendar - www.lehighvalleytcf.org and on voicemail 484-891-0823. Please refer to these sources for updates on the meetings.

To Our New Members

Making the decision to come to your first meeting can be difficult. It can also be difficult to return for a second or third meeting, but we ask that you attend three meetings before deciding whether or not TCF will work for you. We cannot walk your grief journey for you, but we can take your hand and walk beside you if you allow us to. We have no easy answers or quick fixes, but we care, share and understand. Although our members circumstances may be different, we have all “been there”...we are all grieving the loss of a child and therefore we can truly say we understand. You are not alone.

To Our Seasoned Members

Think back to your first meeting, You were hurt, confused and felt alone in your grief. Remember the comfort you felt when you found you weren't alone and that others that had been where you were and survived. Remember the love and support you felt as fellow members offered on your grief journey. Now you are stronger and may not feel the need to attend meetings for aid and comfort. We need you though. New members need you. They need your encouragement, support and wisdom. If you haven't attended a meeting in awhile please consider coming back to offer hope to those who now feel lost and see no hope.

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Telephone Friends

For those times you need to connect with someone between meetings, the following members are available to listen and share	
Infant Loss -	Kim Szep 610-730-3111
Only Child -	Shelly Garst 484-241-5396
Addiction -	Nancy Howe 484-863-4324
Suicide -	John & Maria Szabo 610-866-5468
Homicide -	Ginger Renner 610-967-5113

TCF Online Support
www.compassionatefriends.org
 Click on "Online Support" under the "Find Support" tab

Chapter Notes

In Memoriam

We are all saddened by the loss of TCF Lehigh Valley Co-Leader Dawn DeLong on October 4, 2019. She was the loving wife of Gene DeLong and mother of Jamie and David. Along with her husband, Gene, she was a chapter leader, steering committee member and newly bereaved contact for The Compassionate Friends for 15 years. Dawn was a rare gentle soul whose was a blessing to countless families grieving the loss of a child. She was a talented artist who created the beautiful personalized Angel, Butterfly and Valentine Ornaments for the chapter that many of us treasure. True to her name, Dawn was a ray of light and positive energy to all. She will be sorely missed but we take comfort that after 29 years she has been reunited with her son, David.

Recent Events

TCF Candle Light Remembrance Service was held Dec. 9th. Thank you to all members and families that attended. Special thanks to Sacred Heart Hospital for use of the auditorium and beverages; Mary Ann Donuts for the donuts; Kim Szep for the beautiful slideshow of our children; all our readers helpers and volunteers, and everyone who brought the delicious treats to share.

Upcoming Meeting - February

Memories From the Heart - Please bring a memento, picture or memory of your child to share with the group.

Newsletter Notes

This newsletter comes to you courtesy of The Compassionate Friends, Lehigh Valley Chapter with the hope that it will be a helpful resource for you on your grief journey.

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter please contact the newsletter editor by phone at 484-891-0823; by email: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com or by mail: TCF News Editor, 2971 Pheasant Dr., Northampton, PA 18067

We welcome original stories and poetry from our members. We reserve the right to modify or reject submissions not in keeping with our mission.

All submissions must include the author's name and your contact information. Send to The Compassionate Friends, C/O Kathleen Collins, 2971 Pheasant Dr. Northampton PA 18067 or email to:

TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com by the following cutoff dates:

Newsletter	Cutoff Date	Newsletter	Cutoff Date
Jan, Feb, March	Dec. 1st	July , Aug, Sept	June 1st
April, May, June	March 1st	Oct, Nov, Dec	Sept 1st

NOTE: If you are Moving or going on Vacation and having your mail held or forwarded please inform the Newsletter Editor of your new address or of a hold or forward on you mail. The Post Office does not hold or forward the newsletter. They are returned at our expense and we in turn remove those individuals from the mailing list.

Love Gifts

Love Gifts are tax deductible donations that enable the chapter to continue to reach out to the newly bereaved and provide ongoing support to all members. They may be given in memory of a child or in memory of or in honor of a friend or relative. To make a love gift please use form in this newsletter.

We thank the following for their generosity

Contributor	Loved One
♥ James & Julia McLaughlin	Michael McLaughlin <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥ Eugene & Jamie DeLong	David DeLong <i>We miss you and love you very much</i>
♥ Eugene & Jamie DeLong	Dawn DeLong <i>We still can't believe you're gone</i>
♥ Fern Gerth	Loren Holl <i>Love you much and miss you very much. Love, Mom</i>
♥ Caroline Frisby	Joel L. Frisby <i>Always in our hearts. Mom and Brothers</i>
♥ Shirley Grozier	Robert C. Grozier, II <i>Happy birthday my Bob. I miss you & love you so much. All my love, Mom</i>
♥ Thomas & Eva Seibert	Steven Thomas Seibert <i>We miss you. Forever in our hearts. Mom, Dad, Nick, Krista & Mama</i>
♥ Peter Mather & Rob Mather	Beth Anne Mather <i>All our love forever. Love Dad and Brother Rob</i>
♥ Kathleen Kilker	Matthew A. Kolb <i>Your mom loves you and misses you</i>
♥ Linda Stewart	Jennifer Lynn Schaible & Aaron Michael Schaible <i>Missing you. Sending hugs and kisses</i>
♥ Rella Sisonick Daniels	Anthony & Jonelle Sisonick <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥ Douglas Owens	Kelly Shawn Owens <i>Together again with brother Kevin</i>
♥ Don and Sue Southgate	Troy G. Southgate <i>We love and miss you very much. Mom, Dad and Martin, his brother</i>

Donations & Contributions

- ★ **Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown**
for meeting room and drinks
- ★ **The Matt Kush Foundation**
In Memory of Matt Kush 8/1985 - 2/2001
- ★ **Giant Food Store Employees United Way Contributions**
In Memory of David Todd Smith
- ★ **Aetna Payroll Contributors**
- ★ **Mary Ann Donuts, Allentown**
- ★ **United Way Payroll Contributors**
- ★ **Everyone who volunteers their time and talents to the chapter and helping with the meetings**

To contribute through the United Way to The Compassionate Friends, Lehigh Valley, ask your employer for the appropriate form and use the number 12116 in the write-in

“Mourning, properly understood, is not a process of severing ties with those we love. Rather it is centrally a transition from loving in presence to loving in absence”

Author Unknown

Our Children Remembered

Please keep the parents, grandparents and siblings of the following children in your thoughts and hearts

January, February, March Birthdays and Anniversaries

	Birth	Anniv.
James Balloch - Grandson of Bill Gerth & Fern Gerth	Feb 22	Sep 4
Graham Beckhorn - Son of Alice Keyes; Brother of Christopher & Patrick Beckhorn	Apr 20	Feb 14
Kevin Blosky - Son of Jack & Janet Blosky; Grandson of Jack & Nancy Blosky	Jan 28	Oct 4
Riccardo Brown, Jr. - Son of Lizbeth Gonzalez	Feb 18	May 28
Brian Burke - Son of Rich & Mary Burke; Brother of Melissa Burke	Jan 3	Oct 9
Rachel Dallas - Daughter of Robert & Linda Dalla; Sister of Sadie Dallass	Jan 21	Jun 14
Hope Davidson - Daughter of Dean & Donna Davidson; Sister of Nicholas Davidson	Aug 8	Feb 8
Sheila DeBoer - Daughter of Barbara DeBoer & the late Henry DeBoer; Sister of Leslie & Cory DeBoer	Jan 29	Jul 27
Mark Dilts, Jr - Son of Mark & Joy Dilts; Brother of Beth Dilts	Jan 6	Jul 8
Wayne Ernst - Son of Doris Ernst & The Late Julius Ernst	Jan 6	Dec 24
Maggie Faber - Daughter of Harry & Carol Faber; Sister of Heidi, Harry, Randi & Eric	Jan 17	Jan 17
Brenda Fehr Hatrak - Daughter of David & Eileen Fehr, Sr.; Sister of Barbara R. Burgin & David A. Fehr, Jr. Granddaughter of Warren & Rose Fehr & Elwood & Mary Mann	Aug 31	Jan 8
Joel Frisby - Son of Caroline Frisby; Brother of Richard, Gregory, Michael & Timothy Frisby	Mar 26	Jun 4
Benjamin Fry - Son of John & Cynthia Chryst; Brother of the late Peter & Paul Fry; Twin Brother of Jeff Fry; Grandson of Charles & Rose Giltner	Oct 6	Mar 14
Eileen Collins Gant - Daughter of The Late John & Dorothy Collins; Sister of Brian, John, Steven, Kathleen & MaryAnn	Mar 25	Feb 14
Kevin Garrison - Son of Kathleen Garrison	Dec 2	Jan 16
Erik Gaughran - Son of Rita Gaughran	Mar 29	Dec 10
Sgt. Christopher Geiger - Son of George & Patricia Geiger ; Brother of Roseanne Reenock, Michael, Terrance, David & Timothy Geiger	Mar 30	Jul 9
Aaron Groff - Son of Leon & Debra Manuel; Brother of Melissa LaBar	Feb 11	Mar 5
David Grozier - Son of Shirley Grozier; Brother of Laurie, Brenda & Vance Grozier	Jan 15	Jan 14
Robert Grozier, II - Son of Shirley Grozier; Brother of Laurie, Brenda & Vance	Feb 15	Jun 11
Rita Guerrieri - Daughter of Art & Mary Guerrieri; Sister of Maryrose Guerrieri-Nesbitt	Sep 29	Mar 11
Brian Gum - Son of Geary & Brenda Gum	Feb 21	Mar 5
Brett Harris - Son of Chester & Carol Kinsey, Jr.; Brother of Terry & Lisa	Dec 10	Jan 14
Heather Hawm - Daughter of Mike & Cathi Tirrell; Sister of Holli & Chad	Feb 25	Dec 25
David Heard - Son of Susan Heard; Brother of Daisy Heard	May 20	Feb 10
Jennifer Hendershot - Daughter of Candi Lynn; Sister of Kevin Strohl	Jan 13	Dec 12
Jonathan Keller - Son of Dennis & Lori Keller; Brother of Amy Keller	Oct 25	Mar 23
Kimberly Kissel - Daughter of Michael & Gloria Kissel, Jr.; Sister of Colleen & Micheal Kissel & Lisa Zelko	Feb 6	Dec 22
Matt Kush - Son of Rick & Ann Kush ; Brother of Mike & Jenn	Aug 24	Feb 10
John Leonard, Jr - Son of Jack & Jule Leonard; Brother of Karen	Jul 27	Jan 6
Andrea Luecke - Daughter of Louise Luecke; Sister of Jennae Luecke	Jan 30	Oct 23
Anne Marie Mabus Heater - Daughter of Wayne & Frances Mabus; Sister of Steven Mabus	Jan 7	Nov 25
Michael McLaughlin - Son of James & Julia McLaughlin; Brother of Matthew & Patrick McLaughlin	Mar 16	Dec 24
Ed McNally - Son of Don & Connie McNally; Brother of Sean McNally	Jul 29	Feb 11
Emma McNulty - Daughter of Jessica & Susan Katzbeck	Nov 19	Mar 11
Jonathan Melendez, Jr - Son of Jonathan & Michelle Gilbert Melendez; Brother of Jonah Nieves	Sep 3	Jan 17
Michael Milot - Son of John & Patti Milot; Brother of Jill	Jun 30	Feb 2
Jim Minter - Son of Jim & Barbara Minter; Brother of Jeanine Minter	Aug 15	Mar 14
Michelle Motchos - Sister of Nicole Motchos	Mar 24	Apr 11
Kelly Owens - Son of Judy Dorward & Douglas D. Owens	Jan 24	May 20
Mardelle Parenti-Blume - Daughter of Brian & Nancy Kleckner	Feb 9	Mar 1
Buddy Pearson - Son of Bob & Shelly Garst	Jul 12	Mar 24
Michael Powers - Son of Richard & Margaret Powers; Brother of Billy, Richie, Tara & Ryan	Jul 9	Feb 10
Angelo Providakis - Son of Michael & Joanne Providakis	Feb 7	Apr 9
James Ralls - Son of Tina Ralls; brother of Timothy & Geoffrey	Jan 2	Aug 17
Anthony Romig - Son of Edward C. Romig, Sr & Lois Pearsall; Brother of Edward C. Romig, Jr.	Sep 12	Jan 20
Joey Russo - Brother of Jena & Jevin Russo	Jan 1	Feb 23
Eric Rute - Son of Linda Cavanaugh	Feb 15	May 20

Our Children Remembered

Please keep the parents, grandparents & siblings of the following children in your thoughts & hearts

January, February, March Birthdays & Anniversaries

	Birth	Anniv.
Nicholas Savacool - Son of Howard & Laura Savacool; Brother of Brandon, Candace & Lacie	Feb 27	Apr 1
Jennifer Schaible - Daughter of Linda Stewart; Sister of Andy Schaible	Feb 18	Feb 26
Andrew Siegfried - Son of Rich & Ruthann Siegfried; Brother of Ben Siegfried	Mar 27	Apr 18
David Todd Smith - Son of David & Kathleen Smith ; Brother of Stephanie Seifert	Feb 25	Sep 17
Troy Southgate - Son of Don & Sue Southgate; Brother of Martin Southgate	Feb 25	Oct 30
Andrew Staub - Son of Mark & Louise Stahley	Jan 4	Jan 12
Constance Stewart - Daughter of Joanne Stewart; Sister of Keith & Kevin Stewart	Sep 23	Feb 1
Michael Stocker - Son of Calvin & Kay Stocker; Brother of Megan Fibrick	Oct 14	Jan 26
Jon Sulick - Son of John Sulick; Brother of Aymae Sulick	Feb 9	Sep 15
Debra Sweeney - Daughter of Richard & Doris Hosler; Sister of Donna Mallard	Nov 16	Jan 5
Shane Uttard - Son of Brenda Deubler	Jan 15	May 13
Sheena Villa - Daughter of Bill Villa; Daughter of Barbara Maquera; Step Daughter of Angie Villa	Mar 23	Mar 24
Sheena Villa - Sister of Patrick Villa, Cruz Maquera & Gianni Villa	Mar 23	Mar 24
Stephanie Volkert - Daughter of Joanne Fimiano; Sister of Zachary Volkert	Sep 22	Feb 12
Victoria Volkert - Daughter of Joanne Fimiano; Sister of Zacary Volkert	Jan 14	Feb 16
Chad Wagner - Son of Carl & Pamela Fehnel ; Brother of Cori	Mar 13	Dec 23
Joshua Wersinger - Son of David & Joanne Wersinger ; Brother of Patrick, Hope, Joeseph, Gertrude & Marjorie Wersinger	Jan 19	May 17
Avery Williams - Daughter of Joshua & Ashley Williams	Jan 5	Jan 6
Steven Winkler - Son of Ellen Winkler; Brother of Jennifer; Grandson of Arnold Abramowitz	Jan 12	Jul 26

For The New Year

Instead of the old kind of New Year's resolutions we used to make and break, let's make some this year and really try to keep them.

1. Try not to imagine the future; take one day at a time.
2. Allow yourself time to cry, both alone and with your loved ones.
3. Don't shut out other family members from your thoughts and feelings. Share these difficult times. You may all become closer for it.
4. Try to be realistic about your expectations of yourself, your spouse, other family members and friends. If each of us is unique and different, how can there be perfect understanding?
5. When a good day comes, relish it. Don't feel guilty and don't be discouraged because it doesn't last. They will come again and multiply.
6. Take care of your health. Even though the mind might not care, a sick body will only compound your troubles. Drink lots of water, take stress-type vitamins, rest (even if you don't sleep), and get moderate exercise. Help your body to heal as well as your mind.
7. Share your feelings with other compassionate friends and let them share with you. You will find that as you begin caring about the pain of others, you will start to come out of your shell - a very healthy sign.

I know that following these resolutions won't be easy, but what has been? It is worth a try. There is nothing to lose and perhaps much to gain.

Mary Ehmman, TCF Valley Forge, PA

Snow

By Denise Falzone, TCF, Lake Area, MI

Every snowflake that falls is unique and has its own individual design. There are beautiful patterns in each snowflake and even the tiniest of flakes have their own markings. These patterns change again and again, even after the flake touches the ground. Each snowflake is a cause for wonder, each flake is one of a kind. No two are exactly alike.

Like the snowflake our beautiful children were each unique and special; some we only dreamed about and some danced upon the earth. They filled our lives with wonder and transformed our world. We held them to briefly, but we hold them in our hearts forever. We shall remember them always.

At this time of remembering, it may help to reflect upon how our lives have been enriched by the love we have given and the love we have received from our children. Our children leave treasures behind that time can never take away.

Beating The Winter Blahs

Loving lifted from the Carmel, In. TCF Newsletter

DIAGNOSIS: Grieving parents' depression seems aggravated by the cold weather and snow.

PRESCRIPTION: Force yourself to follow one or more of the suggestions listed below when the blahs strike.

WARNING: Don't expect miracles but appreciate the little lift these things will give you.

*Start a summer project - something for your yard from the workshop, something to wear from your sewing machine, seedlings to transplant when the ground thaws - and challenge yourself to get it done in time to use it on the first warm day.

*Redecorate - Anything.

*Make it seem like spring by treating yourself to fresh flowers. Buy a single carnation or mixed blooms.

*January and February are slow months for restaurants so they often run 2 for 1 dinner specials to increase their business. Watch the newspaper for those coupons and treat yourself to a night out as often as you can. And remember,

you're worth it!

*Go to the matinee movie often. It's a good way to unwind for a couple of hours and both your mind and body will appreciate that brief relief from tension.

*Try to make the winter easier for the birds and squirrels in your yard and you'll feel better about yourself too. They need water that isn't frozen as well as food.

*If you've got one, light a fire in the fireplace, fix a warm drink of some kind, wrap yourself in a comforter and snuggle in with a good book. Something funny or totally absorbing that you can get lost in.

*Bake some bread. The smell will make you feel good even if it flops (and no bread is bad hot)

*Take a long hot bubble bath.

*Put on some upbeat, happy music. It'll get you moving whether you feel like it or not.

*Start a pillow fight.

*Brew a pot of smokey tea. The scent will remind you of the great outdoors in summer time.

*Close the blinds to hide the snow.

Valentine Message

By Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF, Katy, TX

*I send this message to my child
Who no longer walks this plain,
A message filled with love
Yet also filled with pain.*

*My heart continues to skip a beat
When I ponder your early death
As I think of times we'll never share
I must stop to catch my breath.*

*Valentine's Day is for those who love
And for those who receive love, too
For a parent the perfect love in life
Is the love I've given you.*

*I'm thinking of you this day, my child,
With a sadness that is unspoken
As I mark another Valentine's Day
With a heart that is forever broken.*



Grief Manifestations

PATIENCE

Patience, it's said, is a virtue. I care not if it's virtuous; I only know in our situation, it's a necessity. I have often wished I could find the button that says, "Push to stop the hurting - NOW". It would have to have been a sturdy button, for I would have put it to the test! But, since there's nothing easy about losing a child, that button just doesn't fit into the picture.

I have learned that there are no miracle cures; it takes time, and one of the hardest things I have had to do is to learn to be patient when time seems to crawl by so slowly. I do not expect time to "heal"; instead, I expect it to let me learn, not only ways to help myself, but also ways to live with my loss a little easier. I have and am developing PATIENCE.

Mary Cleckley

TCF, Atlanta, Georgia

ANGER

Anger sometimes builds inside of me. Even the hot coals of furious rage! If only I could take my fists and thrust blows at something, but then again, it will not really change my circumstances.

Does this all sound intimately familiar? Worse yet, do the overwhelming feelings manifest at the most unexpected times? While observing mothers pushing their child in a shopping cart in a market? While praying in church and catching glimpses of families who are all together?

Then, the subsequent feeling provoked by life's reality that some parents have been able to keep their children, while others have not. Yes, anger can be such a stabbing emotion that it can paralyze an accent to the future.

Anger stems from hurt and we have to be taught to control our tempers. How do we climb out of the conflict? First, to recognize that it is normal and then to express our feel-

ings, in spurts, to a loved one or a friend. To attend the Compassionate Friends meetings, for those who have shared similar feelings can gather and bring comfort to one another. Repression of feelings can only lead to further depression, while expression, a necessary catharsis, vents pent-up emotions and shines a ray of light on a saddened and darkened spirit.

Floryana Walker

TCF Lower Cape Cod

DEPRESSION: SYMPTOMS AND SOLUTIONS

A key symptom of depression is a feeling of deep pervasive sadness and hopelessness that lasts for longer than two weeks.

Other typical symptoms may be:

- loss of appetite or overeating
- insomnia or sleeping more than usual -inability to enjoy anything
- apathy/restless or anxious behavior
- preoccupation with thoughts of suicide, or wishing to be dead
- difficulty in concentrating, making decisions and or poor memory
- can't cry / won't cry / can't stop crying -guilt
- withdrawal from friends & relatives
- headaches/body aches (more colds and illnesses)
- self-criticism, pessimism, discouragement
- neglect of appearance
- irrational anger
- alcohol and drug abuse

Some suggestions for coping with depression:

- acknowledge your depression, accept responsibility for alleviating it
- depression serves a purpose. Face it and work through it -TALK, it could help avoid serious depression
- redirect energy into constructive channels, to make more pleasure in your life. Pleasure is a source of energy, (take a trip, evening out, etc.)

- exercise helps you to relax, work off tension, sleep better
- Allow yourself to experience the many feelings you get, such as anger, guilt, etc. Express your feelings...hit a pillow, scream, cry, etc.
- get involved with others, do volunteer work
- try deep breathing, it stimulates physical energy -good nutrition very important
- think pleasant thoughts, hard as it may be (1 minute at a time)
- alcohol is a depressant, avoid it
- work on self-esteem, do something that you do well. Try harder to like yourself, be gentle with yourself
- remember -- YOU DO HAVE A CHOICE. Depression can be managed. It doesn't have to ruin lives. - if the depression is so severe that suggestions such as these don't help you, please don't hesitate to seek professional help.

from POMC Inc. Newsletter, Greater Cincinnati Chapter

CRAZY

One of the most common things we hear from bereaved parents is that they think that they are going crazy. If you feel this way, let us assure you that you are not. Grief and the resultant depression, fits of crying, and the feeling you are going to pieces may lead you to these feeling or often to the feeling you no longer want to continue living. It is not uncommon to have these feelings, but most grief-stricken people do not go crazy or commit suicide.

It is most important at these times for you to have someone to talk to -- to share your feelings -- and for you to be able to verbalize your pain to.....We of Compassionate Friends want to help. We encourage you to call on us. We have all been where you are now, and we understand your pain.

Fay Harden,

TCF, Tuscaloosa, AL



May you always walk in sunshine
 And God's love around you flow
 For happiness you gave us
 No one will ever know
 It broke our hearts to lose you
 But you did not go alone
 A part of us went with you
 The day God called you home
 A million times we've cried
 If love could only have saved you
 You never would have died

Traditional Irish Poem



Laughter is not a sign of "less grief". Laughter is not a sign of "less love".
 It's a sign that many of our thoughts and memories are happy ones. It's a
 sign we know our dear children would have us laugh again. It's okay to laugh.

Patricia Lufty Nevitt, TCF Austin TX

Letting Go vs Forgetting

By Judy Cloer' TCF Tampa FL

When my brother passed away, I had a difficult time distinguishing between "letting go" and "forgetting". I felt that to let go of T.C. would mean to start forgetting him. Needless to say, I was unwilling to do this. Eventually I learned I could let go without forgetting my brother. Learning to let go was and is a day-to-day process. The memory of my brother is stronger and clearer today because it is not as clouded by pain. With each day there is more acceptance.

The reason I'm sharing this with you is because I used to be very concerned that T.C.'s friends would forget him. It hurt to think of all of them going on with their lives without T.C. My family received visits, cards, and letters when T.C. passed away. Slowly, however, the contact

became less and less.

I met a woman the other day who recognized my name. We talked for awhile and I learned that her daughter was very close to my brother. I also learned that her daughter continues to visit the accident site and remembers T.C. and their friendship.

This made me understand that the power of love is stronger than I ever imagined. Not only has my memories of my brother remained clear, but he is remembered by his friends. I'm sure some of you can understand these feelings and I wanted to share this with you. Maybe it will help you to understand that you can let go without forgetting. Maybe it will remind you that a person lives on in the hearts of many.

Just for Siblings

Remember...

Its okay: To cry and feel depressed. You've lost a great deal. If the feelings get to scary or overwhelming, find a caring friend (no matter what age) and talk about it.

Its okay: To want to copy some of your siblings habits and interests, but be yourself too.

Its okay: To live "in the past" for a little while. It is one way to keep alive the memory of your sibling. However, you have a life too -one that should be lived to the fullest.

Its okay: To have fun, enjoy life and laugh again

Its okay: To forgive yourself for fights, arguments and mean things you said or did to your sibling

Its okay: TO GO ON LIVING !

from the TCF pamphlet "When a brother or sister dies"

Love Gift Form

*Please consider making a Love Gift to support the Compassionate Friends today.
Your gift will help defray the cost of chapter expenses such as the newsletter mailings, meetings & our outreach to the newly bereaved.
The Compassionate Friends is a 501c(3) non-profit organization & your donations are fully tax deductible.*

Submission Deadlines: Issue 1 - Dec 1st; Issue 2 - March 1st; Issue 3 - June 1st; Issue 4 - Sept 1st

Contributor Name (this will be the name that appears in the newsletter)

Address

Phone

Mail to:

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS,
LEHIGH VALLEY
C/O BRENDA SOLDERITCH
415 S. HOKENDAUQUA DR
NORTHAMPTON, PA 18067

Email Address

I would like to make a donation In Memory of In Honor of A Chapter Gift (without memorial or honorarium)

Name of person gift given for

Edition to be published in. Deadlines listed above. *Late submissions will be published in the next edition*

Special Text - Brief Messages Please. Poems & story submissions are always welcome & should be sent directly to the Newsletter Editor for inclusion in the newsletter.

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____ Lehigh Valley Easton *Note: Please mail Easton gifts to the address below*

The Compassionate Friends, Easton C/O John Szabo,
1514 Sculac Dr., Bethlehem, Pa 18020

If your gift is for Lehigh Valley please designate which of the following your gift is for (you may circle more than one)

Newsletter Expenses Postage Office Expenses Outreach Program Special Events

Member Update Form

Please use this form to change* or update* information or permit publication of child's Birth & Anniversary dates in "Our Children Remembered" (OCR) section.

Mail this update form to: Kathleen Collins, 2971 Pheasant Dr., Northampton, PA 18067 **or email updates to:** TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com

The following is Information change or update Address or Phone change Permission (check this box to grant OCR publication Newsletter/ Web permission)

Your Name _____ Signature (required) _____ Relationship to Child _____ Email Address _____

Mailing Address (where your newsletter is to be sent to) _____ Phone Number _____

Child's Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Date of Death _____

Parent / Guardian Names _____ Child's Sibling's & or Grandparents Names to be listed (We publish only Parents/Guardians, Grandparents & Sibling names)

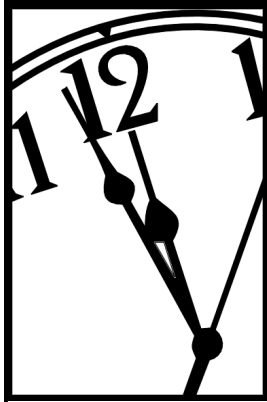
*** IMPORTANT:** If this is a information change, specify what change(s) are (i.e. correction, sibling name addition etc...) Use another piece of paper if necessary



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, LEHIGH VALLEY

Phone: 484-891-0823

E-mail: tcflehighvalley@gmail.com



"Time itself does not heal, it is what we make of that time that heals... We cannot sit back and say "time will heal me." Time is simply the movement of the clock. Our successful return to comfortable living is what we do while that clock is moving."

Margaret Gerner, TCF, St. Louis, MO

Other Local TCF Chapters and Support Groups

TCF Carbon County Chapter - 1st Tuesday 7-9 pm Leaders - Dave & Lora Krum, Phone: 484-719-6753 Email: tcfcarboncounty@gmail.com

TCF Easton Chapter- 2nd Thursday 7 - 9 pm Leaders John & Maria Szabo, Phone: 610-866-5468 Email: szabojanos1@verizon.net

TCF Quakertown Chapter - 2nd Tuesday 7:30 - 9 pm Phone: 267-380-0130, Email: contact@tcfquakertownpa.org

TCF Pocono Chapter - 1st Monday 7:00pm Leader Teresa Myers Phone: 570-350-6695, Email: tcfpoconochapter@gmail.com

GRASP (grief recovery after substance passing) Contact: Nancy Howe 484-863-4324; 484-788-9440; nancyhowe@ymail.com or Jenny Kemps - 610-442-8490

The Compassionate Friends Credo

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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.

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