



The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

April, 2018 Newsletter

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



Chapter Leader Notes



Talk of Mountains

Over the past few years, it has become popular to frame motivational sayings and hang them on the wall or pose them on our desks or kitchen counters. They can be funny and make you grin or sweet and make you smile or serious and make you stop and think. And sometimes you will read an adage that speaks to you and happens to describe what is important and true to you.

After my daughter's death, I came upon such a quote soon after I returned to work. I copied it down on a post-it note and it hung by my desk for years. It said:

*Courage does not always roar.
Sometimes courage is the quiet voice
at the end of the day saying,
'I will try again tomorrow'*
- Mary Anne Radmacher

Every hour, every day that I was at work and tried to function 'normally' was a monumental feat of resignation, remembered routine and resolve. I felt fragile, full of pain and longing but knew that I

had to try to embrace my new life in order to improve my mental and emotional state.

Therefore, "... the quiet voice at the end of the day saying,

'I will try again tomorrow'" became my mantra. It helped.

I recently read another axiom that rang true for The Compassionate Friends and the monthly meetings. Again, I wrote it down on a post-it note and have it at my desk at home. It says:

*Tell the story of the mountain you
climbed.
Your words could become a page
in someone else's survival guide.*

- Morgan Harper Nichols

The monthly meetings, provide an opportunity for parents and siblings to share their experiences and talk about the mountains they've climbed in the world of loss and grief. We don't have any "cures" for grief but we can validate feelings and listen to experiences. We can share what worked for us in a given situation and what didn't. Each person is unique and their loss is unique but the pain is the same and the pain is one that no one understands except for another bereaved parent or sibling. The Compassionate Friends offers understanding and hope. Another axiom comes to mind, "Hope is important because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear." - Thich Nhat Hanh

Wishing you understanding and hope as spring arrives,

Toni



GIFTS OF LOVE

A love gift is a gift of money or of time given to the Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter of the Compassionate Friends. It is usually in memory of a child who has died, but donations can also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanksgiving that their own children are alive and well, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help in the work of your chapters. Love gifts are acknowledged each month in the newsletter.

"Gifts of Love" in remembering our children and siblings help to pay for Newsletters, Postage, Books for our Lending Libraries and Resources, Memorial Services, Candle Lightings, Telephone and Outreach, and Dues to the National TCF Office. Thank you.

Meetings

**Northern Illinois Chapter TCF
April 19th - 7:30 p.m.**

Millburn Congregational Church
Grass Lake Road & Rt. 45, Millburn, IL
Open discussion

**Waukegan meeting
May 3rd**

- 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Holy Family Church
450 Keller Street, Waukegan, IL
Meeting in Room 4
Open discussion

Enter by church office then down the hall to Room 4 on right.

"Tenemos un cuarto nuevo para las reuniones- Salon 4. Entre por la oficina de la iglesia y sigue en el pasillo al Salon



RE-POTTED PLANTS

Written by Connie Pike
From the Tampa Bay BP/USA
Chapter Newsletter

The past several months I have bemoaned the condition of our potted plants. "Look at them all; they're dying," I whined to my husband. He was the one with the green thumb, spending hours pulling weeds, tending to the flower beds, changing out the perennials with the seasons. But the condition of the potted plants was no pressing matter to him, no matter how many times I broached the subject. Finally, Bob said that WE should tackle this project together. I was not impressed. However, I accompanied him to the Home Depot and selected an assortment of new, large containers and huge bags of potting soil. "We should just throw them out," I said. "They are practically dead anyway." His response was that we were to be responsible caregivers of Mother Earth and leave our carbon footprint. Besides, they just needed some pruning, new soil, new homes and some love and care. I begrudgingly agreed but what about just composting?

As I began to attack each plant with my shears, cutting back all the dead leaves in preparation for re-potting, I became lost in thought of what the plants really represented. One year ago, our 21-year-old son, a Junior at the University of South Florida, was leaving to go to San Francisco for a brief business trip before starting summer classes on May 15. He returned from his adventure and spent the weekend of Mother's Day here with us in our Apollo Beach home. We had a great Mother's Day. I made him do the shopping for me. We had a steak dinner. I requested extra hugs. He, his sister and two friends spent the night and stayed up late playing music upstairs. At 2 a.m., Taylor decided to go for a spin on his motorcycle. He loved to drive fast and was just out for a spin around the block. Just a half mile from home, he "failed to navigate a curve" as the newspaper article penned it, hit a curb and was

(Continued on page 7)



OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN APRIL & MAY

Each month we remember the children who are sadly missed. Please take a few moments, place them in your thoughts, and remember them on their day together with their parents. None of us ever forget our special days and messages that say "I care" help us to get through them. Our children's lives will go on, as long as we remember them and celebrate their lives.

BIRTHDAYS

<i>Lea Ann (Heise) Knuth</i>	April 2	Daughter of Leslie & Shirley Heise
<i>Michael Sean Gaede</i>	April 8	Son of Maureen Gaede
<i>Mike Reardon</i>	April 10	Son of Sonia & Jim Reardon
<i>Scott Ewing</i>	April 11	Son of Alan & Renee Ewing
<i>Qua'Shawn Wade</i>	April 12	Son of June Andrejewski
<i>Alyssa Carranza</i>	April 15	Daughter of Luz Barrera Granddaughter of Angel & Raquel Gasco
<i>Jammi Hui</i>	April 25	Daughter of William & Joyce Hui
<i>Sean Jones</i>	April 26	Son of Octavine Jones
<i>Timothy Reece</i>	April 27	Son of Joanne Pihoda-Reece
<i>Erin Dinklenburg</i>	May 1	Daughter of Kelli Brooks
<i>Rachel Salomonson</i>	May 2	Daughter of Toni Nesheim & Denny Salomonson
<i>Amy Fry-Pitzen</i>	May 3	Daughter of Alana Anderson
<i>John Francis Thumel</i>	May 6	Son of Laura & Mike Thumel
<i>Rachel Elizabeth Szech</i>	May 9	Daughter of Chester & Vicki Szech
<i>Sven Christian Reinhard</i>	May 28	Son of Astrid Reinhard
<i>Adam Michael Laufer</i>	May 30	Son of Charles & Diana Laufer

ANNIVERSARIES

<i>José De Jesús Hernández</i>	April 1	Grandson of "Charlie" Johnson
<i>Mathew Tisch</i>	April 10	Son of Jesús & Virginia Hernández
<i>Stephanie Andrea Zamarron</i>	April 11	Son of William & Barbara Tisch Daughter of Vicky Zamarron & Juan Mungula Granddaughter of Alejandra Rodriguez & Cédar Rojas
<i>Daniel Wang</i>	April 13	Son of Millie Yu
<i>Shannon McCarty</i>	April 18	Daughter of Kevin McCarty & Pat Hays
<i>Westley Banks</i>	April 19	Son of Susan Banks
<i>David Nesheim</i>	April 24	Brother of Toni Nesheim
<i>Lisa Rosemann</i>	April 25	Daughter of Pat & Craig Rosemann
<i>Edward G Davis III</i>	April 28	Son of Edward G Davis Jr.
<i>Timothy Reece</i>	April 29	Son of JoAnn Pihoda-Reece
<i>Anne Thomson</i>	April 30	Daughter of Nancy & Tom Thomson Donette
<i>Klawonn</i>	May 1	Daughter of Raymond & Dorothy Klawonn
<i>Josh Summers</i>	May 3	Son of Tina Carlson Grandson of Larry & Cheryl Armstrong
<i>Amanda Lauren Cecchi</i>	May 10	Daughter of Kim & Steve Cecchi
<i>Amy Fry-Pitzen</i>	May 15	Daughter of Alana Anderson
<i>Anthony (Tony) Clemente</i>	May 16	Son of Becky Wolf
<i>Adam Michael Laufer</i>	May 19	Son of Charles & Diana Laufer
<i>Roman Gabriel Cano</i>	May 21	Son of Simona & Daniel Rhodes
<i>Rusty Anderson</i>	May 30	Son of Forest & Christine Anderson

Please let me know if I have omitted a child, misspelled a name or have published an incorrect date.

I know how important it is to bereaved families to have their children remembered. vszech@comcast.net - 847-573-1055

WHAT TO DO, WHAT TO DO?

Rabbi Earl A. Grollman said, "Time may heal. It may help to dull your pain. But the medicine of time, taken by itself, is not sure. Time is neutral. What helps is what you do with time."

In the early days after the death of a child you may be so numb that it is all you can do to get out of bed in the morning. You toss and turn unable to sleep or you sleep for hours or days.

You can stumble through your days unaware what is happening around you. Eating is not something you can or want to do.

If you have other children it will affect how you function or not, depending on their ages.

Eventually you will begin to want to join the world but may have a hard time in certain situations and you may have to retreat back to the safety of your "cocoon".

Be kind to yourself. Don't let others tell you "isn't it time you got over "it" and moved on with life?" You have to take all the time to grieve and begin to heal that is necessary. Each person is different, even spouses grieve differently.

When you begin to get comfortable in your world, your changed world, you can begin to think of how you want people to remember your child.

This may be a time for you to join a support group. Compassionate Friends is where you can talk about your child. You can celebrate their birthday. You can show pictures of your child. It is a place where no one has the answers but they are willing to share what has worked for them and what hasn't. It is a place where we do not judge or tell you that you are wrong in what you are doing. We are there to hold your hand, to offer love and support, to listen to your story. Someone said you have to tell your story at least 100 times. Your family and friends may not be able to listen 100 times but your Compassionate Friends will. Why?

Because we have been there and someone listened to us so it is our turn to give back what has been given to us. This is what we do. This is what we do with time.

Our children, grandchildren and siblings will never be forgotten as long as we share them with others. We can set up scholarships, plant memorial gardens, purchase benches engraved with their names, start a foundation to support a cause or disease connected with their death, volunteer our time with a charity, help

other children with one on one mentoring and many more ways.

As we travel this painful road we can reach out to other bereaved people with love and hope that is what to do.

HUGS, Betty Farrel, Sarah Louise's Nana
bfnana@aol.com Arlington, VA Chapter TCF

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~reprinted from Arlington, DC, Leesburg, Prince William, and Burke-Springfield-Fairfax Virginia Chapters April 2008

About Feeling Guilty

Do you blame yourself?
Are you strangled by the burden
of things you did not do and things you should
have done,
as if these were the things that killed him.
What can you do
with this relentless torment?

Dear Griever,

Take time to remember
that grief makes all of us look
for escape routes
where there may be no escape.



Death is not in your hands.

Grief makes you look for reasons,
where often there are no reasons.
Blame is not the answer.
Hold to your heart now
with the tenderness
your love deserves.

~by Sascha from Winters



CHOICES

The issue, finally distilled to its essence, is revealed as not so much who you were as who your example inspired us to be. Because we walked beside you in life, we grew strong enough to handle grief, determined enough to endure emptiness, wise enough to cry when hurting, brave enough to start over every day.

We are different people from the ones who accompanied you on your journey. We don't think the same or look the same and we certainly don't feel the same. Every event plowed and furrowed our souls, shaping us into fields of unconditional love capable of bearing an inexhaustible harvest that will always and forever exceed our need.

Our choices in the new world thrust upon us are whether we shall limit our experience to daily memories of grief, pain and sorrow, or opt for deliberate expansion of heart and mind. Whether we shall define your passing as the ending of all we cherished and sought and dreamed, or lean into the loss to reveal an opening we never thought possible or let ourselves see.

An opening that beckons and promises a transcending, a separation from the grief everywhere-present like the fine dust of an explosion. A hidden place where tears give way to freedom, hearts recover and songs begin to play again. A shelter where your legacy of victory heals, revealing the power of seeking joy in sorrow and the bliss of finding peace in what is.

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Lawrenceville, GA TCF
In loving memory of Lance Porter Hopkins,
July 1975 to November 1999

~reprinted from TCF Atlanta March/April 2002
Newsletter

<http://www.tcfatlanta.org/MarApr2002.html>

Reflections

With the death of my sister came some painful realizations -that life isn't fair or predictable, that sometimes even my best isn't good enough, and that from the day of her death, the happy events in my life would always be tinged with sadness.

Despite the pain and loss, death has also left me with some valuable Lessons and Precious Gifts. As a result of my sister's death - I have a greater appreciation of life and a greater Compassion for those who hurt.

I have learned to be a survivor - to have a successful career and productive life in the face of tremendous grief and loss. I have been gifted with good friends and special people to help me through the rough times. But most of all - I have been given the gift of time - time to heal and time to replace Painful memories of death with Priceless memories of my sister's life.

~By Cathy Schonberg - from This Healing Journey - An Anthology for Bereaved Siblings



Bereaved Parents of the USA
 NATIONAL GATHERING CONFERENCE
 AUGUST 3-5, 2018 MEMPHIS, TN

Join us August 3-5, 2018 for the next Bereaved Parents of
 the USA National Gathering in Memphis, TN!

Introducing Our Speakers!

Mitch Carmody, Ann Irr Dagle, Pam Vredevelt, and Stephane

Gerson
 2018 Schedule

Location Info

Whispering Woods Hotel & Conference Center

7300 Hacks Cross Rd

Olive Branch, MS 38654

<http://www.wwconferencecenter.com/>

Please enter the code "BPOU" when you book your reservations in order to receive the special discounted rate.

We need a grieving room for all of us who are mourning, a quiet, safe place of solace where emotion is sacred and the continual falling of tears generates the energy for our healing.

We need a grieving room with thick walls to keep despair outside and hope secure within, and, on the floor, comfortable pillows to remind us to rest.

SAFE PASSAGE: WORDS TO HELP THE GRIEVING HOLD FAST AND LET GO by Molly Fumia, Conari Press, Berkeley, CA 1992



The Butterfly

You flit about without a care
 Searching for food on morning's air.
 Pure icon for a soul set free
 Of life, of love and liberty.
 Your wings abound with colours true
 Of orange, brown, red, green and blue.
 Like noble's shields in days gone past,
 Displayed the patterns that were cast
 In perpetuity to see;
 Now all the world doth envy thee!
 Yes, seasons come and seasons go
 But I remain, and even though
 My child has left this life of pain
 To be reborn on high again,
 Your life is short lived too, it seems
 Like visions of a shattered dream.
 So Papillon, can you not see
 Why you're so special now to me?
 Of all God's creatures great and small,
 You are, no doubt, the best of all.
 My garden is your second home
 Free spirit fly, where I may roam
 To watch your path on silken wings;
 My thoughts then turn to other things.
 And so with coloured form and grace
 The pride of Lepidoptera's race,
 Is thus now set to symbolize
 The changed form up above the skies.
 Now I must wait and watch for thee
 And long for some serenity.

John Bartlett TCF Queensland. Australia



41ST TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE JULY 27 - JULY 29

The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that St. Louis, Missouri, will be the site of the 41st TCF National Conference on July 27-29, 2018. "Gateway to Hope and Healing" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of this last's great National Conference experience. The 2018 Conference will be held at the Marriott St. Louis Grand Hotel. We'll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our [TCF/USA Facebook Page](#) and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

(Repotted PLANTS continued from page 2)



hurled from his bike into a railing. His friends heard the accident and woke up Bob and I.

What followed was a 911 call and a rush to the scene. Taylor was already gone; a blunt trauma to the neck which severed his brain stem, aorta

and heart. His helmet was cracked and of no protection for such an impact. We beat the paramedics and police to the scene. No parent should ever have to...

So, then there is the funeral to plan, followed by all these flowers and plants. THESE dying plants—they are all from his funeral. These plants were neglected. Grief is hard work. You get distracted. They were all dying, to be sure. So here we were at a crossroad—dump the dying plants or bring them back to life. Is there some symbolism here? What about my grief, my decisions of how to process it—continue living or die? These plants, my spirit, my life force, my faith—they all have something in common.

Some say that our greatest spiritual growth comes to us in our greatest pain. I believe that. As with these plants, our spirit and our faith can die or thrive. It is a choice. For the plants, do we dump them or do we nurture them? For me, now a bereaved parent, do I die away or do I nurture my spirit and thrive despite the tragedy and loss? I'm glad we chose to revive our plants. I learned a lot today even though I don't like to get dirt in my fingernails.

In assessing the plants, I noted that there was a lot of dead growth. It needed to be pruned away. I've learned to prune away a lot of unnecessary activity this year in order to heal. I've spent more time in nature, walking outdoors instead of going to a gym, doing yoga instead of shopping, letting go of anything in my life not serving my healing. In so pruning, I allow new growth through my journaling, prayer, attending my Bereaved Parents group, spending time with Bob and my daughter, Megan, fostering friendships with Taylor's friends; even my work has become more meaningful.



Many of the plants had been deprived of water or were in a pile of putrid, sour soil from over watering and no drainage. I've learned this past year about "watering" my soul. The balance is necessary. With regard to tears, they are an important part of grief. The tears must fall, yet too many tears can cause a break down or a spiral into a deep depression. The soul loses vitality either way. There is a time to weep and mourn, but also a time to dance, as the Bible so aptly advises.

As I clipped away half or more of each plant, I was amazed at how resilient these plants really were. All this new growth was there, waiting underneath just to be nurtured. They were all root-bound from spending too much time in their "homes". As we set them free into a bigger home and fresh soil, I could almost feel them beginning to breathe more deeply and settle into a healthier way of being. "And so can I," I thought, "So can I!" My heart can grow bigger. My son's death took a part of my heart away, but, if I do this grief thing well, I can become a better person for all the pain and suffering. My faith and my ability to love can grow.

Mother's Day is approaching. We've planned a trip to the beach. May 14 is the first anniversary of Taylor's death. We'll light some candles and talk about good memories. Will I survive it? You bet, just like all those plants we repotted today.

LOVE GIFTS

Enclosed in a check in the amount of _____ to be used as follows (check all that apply):

In loving memory of _____

In honor of _____

Sponsor the newsletter for _____ (month) (\$25 pays ½ monthly cost)

Pay for a book for the chapter's Lending Library _____

Check here to keep receiving the newsletter _____

It is important for our children to be remembered. Please understand that in order for your child to be included in the "special days" list each month in the newsletter, you must fill out this form that gives us permission to list this information. If you are making a donation please make the check payable to **The Compassionate Friends**. Return to **Tammie Barrera, 821 Roberts Way, Winthrop Harbor, IL. Julyson2@gmail.com**

We welcome your comments and/or items submitted for use in the newsletter. Short articles, poems, or book reviews are always appreciated. Please include author of any written works. Send your items for the newsletter to Vicki Szech at vszech@comcast.net or 31023 Prairie Ridge Road, Libertyville, IL 60048.

The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit, self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved families. Its' mission is to assist them in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information and education to help others to be supportive
TCF National Office, P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522 3696 - PH 877-969-0010 - Fax: 630-990-0246

The Compassionate Friends home page can be found at www.compassionatefriends.org
There are seven TCF Internet chat sessions weekly. To participate, visit the TCF home page and select the "Chat" button.

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REMEMBRANCE SECRETARY Thelma Perkins 262-279-6178 *Andrew C Perkins* Age 17 – Auto Accident

LIBRARIAN Kathleen Rettinger 847-922-7456 *Alexander Rettinger* Age 18 – Of suicide

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