



The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

April 2019 Newsletter



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

Chapter Leader Notes



A FRESH START - SPRING!

We can all rejoice! Spring has arrived! I look forward to planting flowers for instant color and watching the birds build their nests. The longer days of sunshine, more blue skies and the greening of the grass always improves my mood and brings on a sense of optimism.

For me, Spring represents hope and a fresh start. The hope I feel is for an improved sense of place and a lessening of the weight of the grief that I feel. The sense of a fresh start comes with the act of planting and anticipating a beautiful flower garden as well as fresh vegetables to eat. Metaphorically and in reality, Spring is a fresh start that lightens my heart. It creates a respite from the burden of grief or maybe it is just a pleasant distraction. In either case, I look forward to the sunshine and activity that it promotes.

The Bereaved Parents of USA recently published 3 ways to help you with your grief in Spring. Briefly, those ways are:

1. **Spring Cleaning** - You can start by cleaning *anything* - your desk, the garage, the closet. You can pick something that has the path of least resistance and will not create a great deal of emotional turmoil. Painting a room and rearranging furniture can help to elevate your mood and make you feel like you've initiated a fresh start.

2. **Plant Something** - Planting seeds or starts of flowers help to remind you of life and how good it can feel to be participating in it. Watching things grow and bloom over the summer is its' own reward. Being outside to do gardening or just to sit and watch the birds can bring a sense of calm and peace.

3. **Start Something New** - If you work full-time it is more difficult to do but perhaps you can volunteer at the food shelf or join a book club or start making photo & family history books. A new activity, done at least an hour a week, can help you to distract you from your grief as well as give you something to look forward to.

"But keep in mind, just because you're starting something new or changing things up doesn't mean that you have to leave anything behind. Your loved one would want you to enjoy the relief from the cold and take advantage of the wonderful things that spring has to offer."

-Chelsea Hanson, BPA

"As flowers bloom and the sun shines,
I will forever remember you!"

-Amanda Gaba

"Spring reminds us that
Resilience is only a season away."

- Unknown



Meetings

Lake Villa Meeting Northern Illinois Chapter TCF April 18

7:30 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.
Millburn Congregational Church
19073 W Grass Lake Rd
(Corner of Grass Lake Road & Rt. 45
Lake Villa, IL 60046
Open Discussion

Waukegan meeting May 2

7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Holy Family Church
450 Keller Street
Waukegan, IL 60085
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
Open Discussion

(Our Children, Grandchildren, and Siblings Loved, Missed and Remembered in April & May)

Anthony (Tony) Clemente	May 16
Son of Becky Wolf	
Adam Michael Laufer	May 19
Son of Charles & Diana Laufer	
Roman Gabriel Cano	May 21
Son of Simona & Daniel Rhodes	
Rusty Anderson	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

is the theme of next year's event, which promises more of this year's great National Conference experience. 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.

WHEN YOU LOSE AN ONLY CHILD

The loss of an only child is neither greater nor less than the loss of one of many children. However, the loss of an only child is experienced differently. It is different because you lose your parenthood, which is such a large part of the life of any parent.

1. With the death of an only child, you lose the one person who could use all of the love you had to give every hour of every day.
 - a. One of the secrets of parenthood is that from birth, children teach us that we have a greater capacity for unselfish love than we thought possible.
 - b. When your only child dies, you may feel that you are drowning in the parental love your heart continues to generate for the child you have lost.
2. With the death of an only child, you lose so much of your own future that was tied to your child's future.

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42ND NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The 42nd TCF National Conference will be held in Philadelphia, on July 19-21, 2019. "Hope Rings in Philadelphia"



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>Adrien Gonzales</i>	April 21	Son of Lauren Gonzales
<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 Prihoda-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>Rachel Elaine Robertson</i>	May 21	Daughter of Regan Robertson
<i>Sven Christian Reinhard</i>	May 28	Son of Astrid Reinhard
<i>Tony Trevithick</i>	May 28	Son of Tony Trevithick Jr.
<i>Adam Michael Laufer</i>	May 30	Son of Charles & Diana Laufer

ANNIVERSARIES

<i>José De Jesús Hernández</i>	April 1	Son of Jesús & Virginia Hernández
<i>Mathew Tisch</i>	April 10	Son of William & Barbara Tisch
<i>Stephanie Andrea Zamarron</i>	April 11	Daughter of Vicky Zamarron & Juan Mungula Granddaughter of Alejandra Rodriguez & Cédar Rojas
<i>Jennifer Corbett Dennis</i>	April 12	Daughter of Joan Corbett
<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>Griffin Schumow</i>	April 26	Son of Jeff & Krista Schumow
<i>Edward G Davis III</i>	April 28	Son of Edward G Davis Jr.
<i>Andrew Naydihor</i>	April 29	Son of Kelly Kozel
<i>Timothy Reece</i>	April 29	Son of JoAnn Prihoda-Reece
<i>Anne Thomson</i>	April 30	Daughter of Nancy & Tom Thomson
<i>Donette 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>Alina Mejdouli</i>	May 12	Daughter of Amada Booras
<i>Amy Fry-Pitzen</i>	May 15	Daughter of Alana Anderson

(Continued on page 2)



In the Springtime of Your Grief

by Judi Fischer
Cleveland, Ohio

Spring has fragile beginnings; a tiny shoot of green that emerges from the cold earth, a hint of pastel against the brownish grass, a bud that awakens with the morning sun. Sometimes spring comes so quietly we almost miss it, but once it begins, it is impossible to ignore the daily growth and change. The morning sun brings sounds that were not there before. The breeze carries warmth that invites us to venture outside of ourselves. A promise is released with the budding and blossoming surrounding us. Hope emerges for the beginning of a new season; change is in the air.

What we experience in the springtime of the year is what we can experience in the springtime of our grief. There begins to be a growing radiance. The radiance is not just around us, it is within us. A gradual warming of the heart silences the chill of intense pain. The natural unfolding of the grief process moves gently to remind us that we will survive.

Life is changing, and growth emerges through the changes. The song of our hearts that seemed off key, begins to experience a harmonious blend of the past and the present. The songs of the birds invite us to join them in a celebration of new life. In the springtime of our grief, there can be a new song for us to sing. It will be a song we composed through the heartache of loss.

Optimism for a better day may awaken us one morning. Hearing laughter and discovering it is coming from within ourselves gives us promise for today. Dreams and hopes for a better tomorrow shine brightly with the morning sun.

Surviving the winter of our grief with the openness to embrace change is a decision to embrace loss and integrate its impact into the fabric of our lives. It can be a willingness to explore new possibilities that create a different landscape to behold. We can make a decision that we will begin to appreciate what we still have, not just focus on what is missing.

We will know when we have made that decision. Something buds; something opens. The harshness of winter is softened with new life and new growth. It is not something we can force; it is something that unfolds when the time is right. The springtime of grief arrives with no dramatic entrance, no flashing lights. The stillness of the beauty unfolds and captures our attention. It is happening around us, but it is also happening in us.

If spring has already crossed the path of your personal journey of grief, rejoice! But if the chill of winter remains in your heart, be encouraged; spring is on its way. Look for it, expect it, and it will be yours to experience around you and in you!

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Thoughts From a Parent Who Lost an Older Child

Perhaps I had my child longer than you had yours, but thirty-eight years does not seem so long. Perhaps there are more memories to hold in my heart, but I know yours are just as dear to you as mine are to me, even if your memories are memories of only one or two days. Your dreams for your child are gone. So are mine. Never did I imagine that I would have to deal with my child's death instead of him having to deal with mine. In thirty-eight years there was time to give me a legacy of three grandchildren. This is a very special blessing and one that I do not take for granted. My mission is to sustain the relationship with my three granddaughters who now live three thousand miles away from me.

My child died from a terminal illness that is not one of the "acceptable" diseases. My child died of alcohol and drug addiction. The tools for remission of this disease are placed in the hands of the person who has the disease. Even with the help of four treatment centers, the recovery was not to be. One day at a time, my recovery is taking place. The pain, after 2 ½ years, has gone to a place where it can be tolerated. My story and my age may be different from yours, but the bottom line is the same: my child has gone to a place where I cannot go and I miss him so much. The pain of grief is still there, but I am living life one day at a time enriched because my son came through my body into my life.

Helen Godwin - TCF, Orange Park/Jacksonville, FL
From the TCF National Newsletter, Spring 1994
Greater Kankakee IL Area TCF © 2009 Volume 8 Number 4
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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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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>

THOUGHTS ABOUT PROGRESS

One thing that is frequently discussed at our meetings is the despair of thinking you are on the road to "recovery", when all of a sudden you seem to be back at square one. But are you really?

Let's keep in mind most of us have had no previous experience "recovering" from the loss of a child. There

fore, we have no point of reference – It's all new to us. Actually, the "roller coaster" of emotions is perfectly normal. In the very beginning most of us seem to vacillate between dead numbness and excruciating pain. Constant crying, to not a tear left – just dried up and limp. We actually are living minute-to-minute.

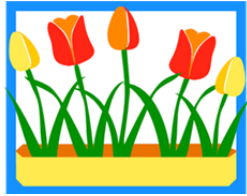
After a couple of months we might actually have a few hours that we have not cried or felt that deep overwhelming despair. Then, WHAM – back to where we started. We tend to panic and think something is wrong with us. Let's be realistic!! There is something wrong – terribly wrong: we have each lost a child.

Let's be fair to ourselves. We started to play a role to the outside world. Like the old song says, "laughing on the outside – crying on the inside." We want to be acceptable to society. "You are doing so well," we hear. If only they knew! We may feel we have to fool others, but let us really be honest about our feelings. To deny our feelings, particularly to ourselves, is to block the road to recovery. Remember that recovery in this case does not mean "getting over it"; it means to gain control of our lives again.

So, let's not worry about what other people think, say, or expect. Our friends (well meaning as they are), sometimes members of our family, even someone who has lost a child, should not sit in judgment. Each person grieves differently, due to a person's general make-up and the relationship with the dead child. Unless someone has totally withdrawn from everything and everybody over a lengthy period of time, the chances are all is in the realm of normalcy.

Only after we have walked down the long road of grief and can look back, remembering those early days and weeks, can we see we really are not on square one again. We have just slipped backwards for a time. That is all. Allow yourself that, and then strive forward again. It takes time, a lot of time! We tend to expect too much from others, others expect too much from us and therefore, we tend to expect too much from ourselves.
~Mary Ehmann, TCF/Valley Forge, PA

(Lovingly lifted from TCF/Phoenix, AZ - Feb/Mar 2003 Newsletter)



SPRING: HOPE OR MORE PAIN

By Margaret Gerner
BP/USA St. Louis, MO Chapter

Here it comes! Spring! Flowers blooming, weather warming, the cold of winter is behind us. We're coming up out of our pain. Right? Wrong!

My six-year-old son, Arthur, was killed by an automobile on Friday, May 28, 1971. The Easter before was the last time we were together as a complete family. For years after, spring and especially the Easter season, began again the realization that we were no longer a complete family and never would be again. Each year brought a new year of pain.

When the first spring came after Arthur was killed, I thought I would be better. Buds popped out and my sadness was deeper. Easter came and my pain was no less. The temperature rose but the coldness in my heart never left. Many more springs came and none of them brought the relief I prayed for. For me the hope and renewal that was supposed to be a part of spring was a lie.

Ironically though, the beginning of the resolution of my grief began in the spring of 1978. My grief, which by this time had become prolonged and distorted, created a number of other problems in my life. Among them was the deterioration of my marriage. We began seeing a marriage counselor. I couldn't believe it when he told me that it was not only acceptable but necessary to face Arthur's death and talk about the pain and emotions I had been encouraged to suppress all these years. Mine is a long story of struggle and determination, of steps and missteps and pain and sadness and loss. But it's also a long story of change and growth. The beginning of the resolution of my grief may have started then but it didn't all happen in spring. It took place over many seasons.

Various seasons are significant for all of us. The Christmas holidays may be significant for you. The middle of June may be significant for someone else. A colorful fall may be significant for another. But, for some reason, we are led to believe that spring will bring a lessening of our pain. This is not true.

Spring is simply a time of year. It's a date. It's a season. It's symbolic. But spring is not magic.

Yes, it holds promises, but those promises are only brought to fruition when we work at them. Spring can be the impetus for change. The changes that take place in nature can cause us to do what we need to do to resolve our grief. The beauty of spring can be the factor that encourages us to find beauty in our lives again. Yes, we see growth and change and renewal all around us in spring. But it won't happen for us unless we make it happen.

In early grief, we hardly see spring come. We are so immersed in our pain and desolation that it is hard to see anything. Just as winter comes before spring, dark, painful grief work comes before we begin to see the light of comfortable life again. Don't expect to sidestep the healthy, albeit painful, normal and long process of grief. Don't endow a season with magic to make changes in you.

Hard, painful grief work is what will get you to the other side of your child's death, not a date on the calendar.

(WHEN YOU LOSE AN ONLY CHILD continued from 2)

- a. The first day of school
- b. Sports
- c. Learning to drive
- d. A first crush, a first date, a first heartbreak
- e. High school
- f. College
- g. Career
- h. Marriage
- i. Children, grandchildren, great grandchildren

Your only child lost all of this from his or her future. And so did you.

3. With the death of an only child, you suffer many tiny losses that cause pain only another grieving parent can comprehend.

A. You have lost the joy of checking the cereal aisle to see if Cocoa Puffs are on sale.

(Continued on page 7)



How Dare It Be Spring

My daughter, Colleen, died on March 29th and was buried April 1st, 1989. I noticed, through my haze, that spring was coming and I got so angry! I saw the first shoots of flowers in my garden,

something that I had always tended so carefully, and I didn't care. I never even picked one of those lovely, fragrant lilies of the valley that grew just outside my front door. I don't think that I could even smell them.

It seemed to me an insult to see mothers pushing their children in strollers on those first warm days. How could they do that when I no longer could? How dare kites dance on spring breezes? I remember coming out of the hospital the morning that she died and seeing a jogger at the lake across the street. It seemed so strange that he could continue his routine when the world had just fallen apart. Just seeing the sun shining isolated that spring, seeing everyone else enjoying nature at its most beautiful. It hurt so much! I couldn't make myself do any of the things that had given me so much pleasure in springs of the past, it was just too painful.

The next year I felt a little better, but my heart still wasn't in spring activities, I forced myself to do things for my surviving daughter's sake. Those first walks felt so alien without a stroller to push that I often had to cut walks short. I did pick my flowers but they didn't seem quite as sweet as I remembered them. I no longer hated other moms who walked their children, I just avoided looking at them.

Now, it is my third spring. It still hurts, but it no longer seems like spring was invented just to torment me. I look forward to working in my yard and garden this year. I take walks and my arms don't ache for a stroller to push. I will always love and miss Colleen. I still think about her everyday, but the pain no longer overpowers everything else.

For those of you who are experiencing your first spring without your child, hold on. It really does get better. I remember very well those words at my first several TCF meetings. I listened politely, all the while thinking, "But you don't know how horrible MY pain is. Somehow mine is worse and I'll never get better!" You probably think that too. Even if you don't believe us right now, you've got to hang on, it DOES get better!

by Kathy McCormick
TCF, Lower Bucks, PA

(WHEN YOU LOSE AN ONLY CHILD continued from 6)

- b. You have lost the reason to keep up with the top ten hits on the pop music charts.
- c. You have lost the joy of caring what prize is in a box of Cracker Jack.
- d. You have lost the joy of getting up early on a Saturday morning for kids soccer, basketball, or bowling.
- e. You have lost the reason to hope for a December snow.
- f. You have lost the person who thought you made the best cocoa on a cool December evening.
- g. For me, I lost a gentle, kind, generous child who loved, watched for, and shared beautiful sunsets.

The loss of an only child is a devastating loss. Your child has lost his or her life. And you have lost an important piece of your own life, your parenthood.

The Compassionate Friends chapter near you is there to help you acknowledge and grieve these losses by sharing your pain with others who have known their own pain.

by Bill Snapp, Atlanta (Tucker) TCF
In Memory of his son Billy Snapp 6/23/81 - 2/25/96

Lovingly lifted from Atlanta, Ga TCF newsletter
Jan/Feb 2003

Greater Kankakee IL Area TCF



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 Road, Winthrop Harbor, IL. 60096** 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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