



The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

August, 2017 Newsletter



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



Chapter Leader Notes from Toni

DR. PHIL SAID . . .

Being newly retired is a wonderful thing. I now have *time*, precious *time*. Time to do projects that I couldn't wait to dive into - organize and clean my desk, clean closets, organize the kitchen cupboards, etc. But why rush? I have *Time*. And there is always tomorrow.

The reality is that my time and energy gets syphoned off by little things such as trips to the store, naps, reading magazines and newspapers from cover to cover and of course, TV. The TV is a conduit to many wonderful, informative shows, historical dramas, educational and travel programs, home renovation and news channels as well as the inevitable talk shows. I recently was reintroduced to Dr. Phil.

During a recent program, Dr. Phil was diagnosing someone on TV and said that she had, among other things, "**unfinished emotional business.**" The phrase caught my ear. It gave voice to how I feel about my child's death and the death of my brother and sister. Two of the deaths were completely unexpected and shocking. The third death was somewhat expected but we, the family, kept fooling ourselves, that there was more time than there was. I was left with many unanswered questions and unfinished conversations as well as moments that stare back at me forcing me to recall how I didn't seize the moment and ask the questions or finish the conversations.

I have since realized that grieving the loss of a child or sibling is synonymous with *unfinished emotional business*.

All three deaths haunt me because of – **unfinished emotional business**. When the experience of learning of the deaths is so traumatic and overwhelming that it can't be processed or internalized, it is unfinished. Many powerful emotions such as

guilt, fear, anger, anxiety, and depression hide behind the trauma, complicating any recovery.

We've identified it, so now what do we do with it - **unfinished emotional business??** I've discussed this with a therapist and we've talked about it at our TCF chapter meetings. There is no set of answers or protocols.

Uma Girish, an author on grief, suggests **taking action** by opening a journal, closing your eyes and envisioning one or two emotional incomplections that still haunt you. Write them down. Write down the smallest step that you can take toward resolution. This is completing something that is unfinished. An example would be to describe in your journal or a letter how you didn't take the time to tell your child, sibling or grandchild that you loved them prior to their death. Then write a few paragraphs on how much you loved them, what they meant to you and your life and how their death has affected you.

For someone who didn't have the opportunity to apologize or extend forgiveness, write a letter that outlines the issues and your part in it and then apologize or forgive. It is as important to forgive yourself for unfinished business as it is to forgive someone else. Keep the letter in your journal or a drawer or burn it in the fireplace if you feel that exercise could bring you a release. I have even held one sided conversations in my car when alone.

Dr. Phil said that *unfinished emotional business* has to be acknowledged. It has to be defined and discussed in the light of day. There are people/resources to help those of us who are grieving, whether that is a therapist, a pastor, a friend or a support group. I have used three out of the four resources and found them to be helpful and comforting.

Wishing you all a gentle end of summer.

Toni



GIFTS OF LOVE

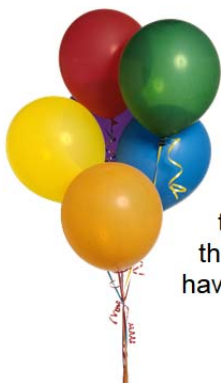
A love gift is a gift of money or of time given to the Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter of the Compassionate Friends. It is usually in memory of a child who has died, but donations can also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanksgiving that their 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.

Thanks to Charles & Diana Laufer
for their donation
in memory of their son
Adam Michael Laufer

Thanks to Carol Smith
for sponsoring the newsletter
in memory of her daughter
Anna Smith Miller

Thanks to Mary Ann & Robert Grazier
for sponsoring the newsletter
in memory of their sons
Barry J Grazier & Jim Grazier

"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.



Balloon Launch

Our balloon launch will be Thursday, August 17, 2017 at Millburn Congregational Church in Lake Villa at 7 PM (not the usual time of 7:30 so that we can do the release before the sun sets). We'll have our regular meeting at 7:30.

Meetings

Northern Illinois Chapter TCF
August 17 - 7:00 p.m.

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

Waukegan meeting

September – 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

*(OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND
SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN
AUGUST & SEPTEMBER CONTINUED FROM PAGE
3)*

Tim Curtis

Sept 17

Son of Sonya Curtis

Aaron R Moore

Sept 19

Son of Rob & Sherry Moore

Joshua William Bowman

Sept 26

Son of Robin Bray
Nephew of Kimberlee Christensen

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



OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN AUGUST & SEPTEMBER

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>Lindsay Wilczynski</i>	August 3	Daughter of Christine Prado
<i>Andrew Perkins</i>	August 12	Son of Richard & Thelma Perkins
<i>Andrew Muno</i>	August 18	Son of Darlene & Bart Muno
<i>Blake Logan Palmer</i>	August 21	Son of Amber & Brian Palmer Grandson of Lois Cooper Grandson of Gina Palmer
<i>Ashley Seay</i>	August 25	Daughter of Mike and Shannon Seay Granddaughter of Dennis & Georgene Manley
<i>Josh Summers</i>	August 27	Son of Tina Carlson Grandson of Larry & Cheryl Armstrong
<i>Roman Gabriel Cano</i>	August 28	Son of Simona & Daniel Rhodes
<i>Nicole Parfitt</i>	August 30	Daughter of Robin Parfitt
<i>Shannon McCarty</i>	Sept 5	Daughter of Kevin McCarty & Pat Hayes
<i>Mary Margaret (Maggie) Miles</i>	Sept 5	Daughter of Jim & Mary Lou Miles
<i>Anthony Alexander Sosa</i>	Sept 16	Son of Yvette Sosa
<i>José De Jesús Hernández</i>	Sept 24	Son of Jesús and Virginia Hernández
<i>Eduardo Chavez-Nuño</i>	Sept 27	Son of Maria Del Carmen Nuño
<i>Donette Klawonn</i>	Sept 30	Daughter of Raymond & Dorothy Klawonn
<i>Tony Trejo</i>	Sept 30	Son of Martina Williamson Brother of Victor Trejo

ANNIVERSARIES

<i>Lindsay Wilczynski</i>	August 1	Daughter of Christine Prado
<i>Adam Rubin</i>	August 1	Son of Linda Rubin Brother of Nicole Rubin
<i>Tony Trejo</i>	August 1	Son of Marina Williamson Brother of Victor Trejo
<i>Brian Keough</i>	August 2	Son of Kathleen Keough
<i>Jammi Shonlei Hui</i>	August 5	Daughter of William & Joyce Hui
<i>Pressley Suzanne McHugh</i>	August 5	Daughter of Shawn & Kari McHugh
<i>Sandra Elena Varela</i>	August 5	Daughter of Sandra Prez
<i>David Spannraft</i>	August 12	Son of Elizabeth & Dan Spannraft
<i>Barry J Grazier</i>	August 13	Son of Robert & Mary Ann Grazier
<i>Raphael E Vidal</i>	August 20	Son of Raphael & Mirtha Vidal
<i>Brian Scott Ludlow</i>	Sept 1	Son of Ronald & Karen Zaylik
<i>Levi Nichols</i>	Sept 5	Son of Bambi Nichols
<i>Anthony Alexander Sosa</i>	Sept 12	Son of Yvette Sosa
<i>Marleea Gerfen</i>	Sept 13	Daughter of Marsha & Lee Bell
<i>Brian Scott Engle</i>	Sept 13	Son of Louise Engle
<i>Heidi Anne Herrmann</i>	Sept 14	Daughter of Bonnie Brackus

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Talking with friends who have lost a child

by Linda Waxler

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The Providence Journal-Bulletin
September 19, 1999, Sunday, All EDITIONS

Our son Jonathan died almost four years ago at age 26. Since then, we have realized that many people feel uncomfortable when approaching parents who have lost children. Perhaps from fear or misconceptions, even friends shun the bereaved, thinking, "I don't know what to say." In fact, at times, it seems people are purposely avoiding the bereaved. As a result, I want to share with you some ideas that might make it easier to help friends who are living with the loss of a child.

Do not worry that mentioning the name of the child will "remind" bereaved parents of their child. We remember our child every minute of every day. We want to talk about our child. Mention his name. One of our biggest fears is that he will be forgotten and one of our biggest joys is to hear his name.

Understand that we are parents without the right number of children. Because of this we experience over and over again fear, anger, guilt, sorrow, loss of future, isolation, abandonment. These are not steps that we work through but feelings that will continue to return forever with various intensity and in different forms.

Keep in mind that there really is no "closure" to the grief for the loss of a child. How can there be? Such loss is against nature and against all that we understand in the passage from one generation to the next.

What you say to bereaved parents is less important than that you say something. Ignoring bereaved parents is only adding to the burden of grief. Simply asking, "How are you doing?" can be very helpful. But do it often.

When bereaved parents return to the workplace, make sure that you stop by, even if it's just to say "hello." After the loss of a child, parents often feel as if they are starting all over. This "new life" is just in the infancy stage and a friendly word makes a difference.

Call bereaved parents just to let them know you are thinking about them. Don't be insulted if they do not call you. Grieving saps energy for a long time.

Never think that grieving parents are somehow "holding onto their grief." There is no such thing. The loss of a child causes endless grief that becomes part of the bereaved parent's inner self forever.

Remember that grief is not a process that one goes through a step at a time. Grieving is a roller coaster ride, and it is circular. The first couple of years, we are numb. When the numbness goes away, we are shocked to see that the world has gone on without our child. When we come out of this numbness, we are different people with a new sense of what it is to be "normal."

When parents lose their child, their hearts are broken. A huge hole is left. This hole will never heal - only the jagged edges around the hole may heal with time. Our grief, not always in the same form and maybe not as intense, will be with us the rest of our lives.

It does not matter how a child died or whether he was one week old or sixty years old. Nor does it matter whether there are surviving children. There is something absolute about the loss of each and every individual child.

Certain times of year will trigger intense sadness. Birthdays, anniversaries of the death, holidays, Mother's and Father's Day, weddings and funerals are just some. We can never properly prepare ourselves for these days. A simple "I am thinking of you and I know this day must be hard" goes a long way with bereaved parents.

Although I can no longer see my son Jonathan's face except in pictures or hear his voice except on a family video, I am beginning to realize, with the help of Compassionate Friends, that he is nestled in the hole in my heart and that for as long as I live, he will be with me wherever I go.

Linda Waxler and her husband Bob live in North Dartmouth with their other son, Jeremy.





MEMORIES OF LOVED ONES

By Roy Peterson - A Dear Friend of BP/USA

Absolutely nothing can be as painful as the death of a loved one and our journeys through the valley of the shadow of death leave us little room to

do anything other than mourn.

However, somehow we do reach that plateau, that point, that place in time where we resolve to renew our lives, to seek to put everything into perspective. Marlo Thomas (when remembering her father, Danny) said, "it's just not enough to survive—you have to thrive! It doesn't matter whether you are freshly bereaved or whether it happened years ago and you are just coming to terms with the death."

Memories are part of our awesome job of survival and part of healing and restoring ourselves. Our loved ones have died and our lives have been changed—in ways we hardly ever imagined as possible. "Why?" people ask! "Why do you bring back painful memories? For what purpose? Wouldn't it be better to avoid confusion and forego any need to understand why?"

Am I never again to acknowledge the life and death of someone so precious, so much a part of my waking and sleeping life? How could I not remember? And, even though remembering is disruptive, a loss without memories cannot be possible.

Each month, each week and each day brings us the chance to put that loss in perspective. We need to grab each chance to build memories to help relieve the pain, or at least to change its level of intensity. We believe that whatever pain we bring to gatherings is pain that we share, just as we share with each other our love for our children. Memorial services are such emotional and satisfying activities because they allow us to face and remember our losses; us to reorder our lives. The healing that occurs is an important aspect of the restoration of our inner selves.

Eventually it is possible to realize that our loved ones were normal. They were good, indifferent, full of mischief, ambitious or on the road to success or failure. In realizing that they were normal, we start down memory lane. We discover memories lost in the fog of our grief. We unearth long buried treasures.

How awful it must be to be robbed of memories! Not to recall our loved ones as they were would be life's worst blow. Somehow we must reach a place where our love and memories are

liberated from the painful emotions linked with the deaths of our loved ones. It is in that liberation that we find an awakening to new possibilities, to new understandings and to growth. As we acknowledge that healing and restoration are occurring, a path out of the depths of despair opens. It is then that we can say, "even though our loved ones died—our love for and memories of them will never go away."

BROKEN SEASHELLS - BROKEN HEARTS

By Pamela Leonhardt



Recently while on a trip visiting my sister in Oregon I came across a lovely and heartfelt book entitled *My Beautiful Broken Shell* written by Carol Hamblet Adams and illustrated by one of my favorite seascape artists, D. Morgan. The words of the tender reflections in this book resonated with my heart as I walked along the sandy shores of the Oregon coast collecting seashells.

Adams shares the brokenness of her heart and spirit as she struggled through a difficult time. In her book, she describes her experience walking along the sandy seashore searching for perfect seashells to add to her collection. As she gazes at the sea of broken shells, she comes to realize that the broken ones reflect her own broken heart. In each shell, Adams sees those who are hurting and who have lost loved ones; those who are frightened or alone; and those who are living with unfulfilled dreams. Like all of us, each shell in the vast sea is tremendously resilient after fighting so hard to keep from being totally crushed by the pounding surf. We, too, come to realize that it takes courage to remain on the shore after being "tossed by the storms of life and worn down by the sands of time" despite the unrelenting pain and suffering in our hearts. Like each of us, broken seashells represent our tears, deepest sorrows and pain from the loss of our precious child. The turbulent crashing waves of the sea followed by the calm waves teach us about the true meaning of strength, courage and faith. The brokenness of each shell comes to remind us that when our hearts are shattered beyond belief, we can survive even the most horrific storm in our own lives. As each beautiful broken shell doesn't pretend to be perfect or whole, it allows for its bro-

(Continued on page 6)

(BROKEN SEASHELLS - BROKEN HEARTS
continued from page 5)

kenness to be seen, knowing that within the center of the shell lays immense beauty.

Broken seashells don't exist alone but are surrounded by a vast number of seashells, each broken in their own unique way. Like all of humanity, when you truly look around, you see that we are all wounded in one way or another. As rare as it is to find a perfect shell in the midst of hundreds of shells lying on the beach, it's equally rare to find any one of us who has not experienced deep pain and sorrow. As the broken shells lie close to one another, we are reminded that we, too, live in community with each other and when we draw upon the strength and courage of others it helps us through the most difficult times.

After reading this tender and heartfelt book, I walked the sandy Oregon shore, no longer in search for the perfect seashell for my collection but rather recognizing the strength, courage and beauty of all the broken shells that lay scattered along the shore. With each broken seashell I picked up and placed in my hand, I admired its own uniqueness and strength. It was through gazing at them, I was reminded of my own brokenness and the tremendous courage it has taken me to survive the most turbulent storm in my life. Through my brokenness I have emerged stronger, more compassionate and loving and able to recognize and embrace my own internal beauty from that struggle.

Like many others, I find my deepest peace and serenity by the seashore, mesmerized by the crashing waves followed by the slow, gentle retreat of the water back into the sea. As one of my favorite quotes so profoundly states, "nowhere on earth are heartaches better tended," I feel the sadness in my heart soothed and my soul restored and nourished as I experience all the beauty that the sea offers. As I prepare to leave next week for another retreat to the sea, I will notice and cherish each broken shell knowing the strength and courage it took for each of them to survive the turbulent storms of the sea and be reminded of my own healing journey. Next time you find yourself walking along the shore's edge, pick up a broken seashell that speaks to you and see yourself reflected in the broken edges. Recognize the strength of the shell to survive being tossed through the crashing waves just as your heart has survived and grown stronger after the most horrific and tumultuous storm.

©2005, Pamela Leonhardt, PsyD.

Pamela is a Licensed Psychologist in private practice in Boulder and bereaved mother to Angel Child, Michael (12/2/76 - 7/14/98)

She can be reached at pleonhardt@comcast.net.
My Beautiful Broken Shell (1998), Carol Hamblet Adams, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR.

~reprinted from Denver Metro Area Newsletter July 2005

Pennies From Heaven



I found a penny
today
Just laying on the ground,
But it's not just a penny
This little coin that I found

Found pennies come from heaven
That's what my grampa told me,
He said angels throw them down
Oh, how I loved that story.

He said when an Angel misses you
They toss a penny down
Sometimes just to cheer you up
To make a smile out of your frown.

So don't pass by that penny
When you're feeling sad or blue
It may be a penny from Heaven
That an angel tossed to you.

Note from Jackie: I have this poem hanging up at my desk. It's very special also as I've collected \$2.63 in coins from "heaven". I'm sure everyone has heard this poem but it's nice to read every once and awhile."

In Loving Memory of Matthew Hinson
4/24/90 - 6/16/05



TRIAL BY FIRE: 9 TIPS FOR GRIEVING COUPLES

by Lisa Church.

Adapted from a book "Hope is Like the Sun; Finding Hope and Healing After Miscarriage, Stillbirth or Infant Death" Lovingly lifted from TCF/Jackson, Alabama July 2007.

1. Give each other the freedom to grieve in an individual way. Resist the temptation to feel that your way is the only way to handle loss. Do not be fooled if it seems that your spouse has not been affected by the loss.
2. Remember the good times. Think about activities you enjoy as a couple and make time to do them—even if you do not feel up to it.
3. Expect tough times. Be tolerant and understand that you are both going to fail each other during this turbulent time.
4. Do not lash out at one another. In a weakened state of grief, this will only push you apart. Find constructive ways to release the stress and anger of grief.
5. Prepare for change. Loss and grief change people and it will change the face of your marriage. Decide together that this trial will bring you closer and commit to your relationship.
6. Reach out. Resist the urge to spend time away from your mate or reach out to others who better understand your grief.
7. Avoid placing blame. Tossing accusations at your spouse will only place a wedge in your relationship. Understand that feelings of guilt, anger and confusion are normal during this time.
8. Love each other. Be sure to offer the hugs, cuddling, and love that each partner needs to feel secure and supported.
9. Seek information and support. Educate yourselves on grief and try to understand one another. If you are having difficulties resolving your grief as a couple and you feel your marriage is in trouble, get help immediately. Do not wait until it is too late to seek help.

There are no easy answers for couples dealing with the loss of a child. It is crucial that you make the decision to put your marriage first and then do it.

"Human pain does not let go of its grip at one point in time. Rather, it works its way out of our consciousness over time. There is a season of sadness. A season of anger. A season of tranquility. A season of hope. But seasons do not follow one another in a lock-step manner, at least not for those in crisis. The winters and springs of one's life are all jumbled together in a puzzling array. One day we feel as though the dark clouds have lifted, but the next day they have returned. One moment we can smile but a few hours after, the tears emerge...It is true that as we take two steps forward in our journey, we may take one or more steps backward. But when one affirms that the spring thaw will arrive the winter winds seem to lose some of their punch."

"A Gift of Hope" How we Survive Our Tragedies
Robert Venigna, 1985 (Provo Chapter
TCF Newsletter)

In this sad world of ours
sorrow comes to all.
It comes with bitterest agony.
Perfect relief is not possible,
except with time.
You cannot now realize
that you will ever feel better.
And yet this is a mistake.
You are sure to be happy again.
To know this,
which is certainly true,
will make you some less
miserable now.
I have experienced enough
to know what I say.

*Abraham Lincoln
16th President of the US
and a bereaved father.*

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 Vicki Szech, 31023 Prairie Ridge Road, Green Oaks, IL 60048 or call 847-573-1055 or send an email to vszech@comcast.net.

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.

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP Toni Nesheim 847-204-7585 tnesheim@sbcglobal.net Rachel Salomonson Age 19 – Auto accident

TREASURER Tammie Barrera 847-872-9684 Julyson2@gmail.com Aaron Barrera Age 29 – Auto accident due to Diabetes

SECRETARY Bambi Nichols 262-220-9323 lcbtsec@aol.com Levi Nichols Age 19 - Accidental death

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

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Vicki Szech 847-573-1055 vszech@comcast.net Rachel Szech Age 16 – Horseback-riding Accident

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Raphael, age 17, suicide