



The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

August 2022 Newsletter



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



Chapter Leader Notes from Susan

Dear Friends,

I was thinking about both of our meetings for the month of June. I invited you to bring a memory of your most cherished gift or gesture from your child, who has gone too soon. You could show a picture, share the gift, or tell us the story behind this memory. It was also ok to sit and listen and when you felt comfortable sharing, please share with us.

I wanted to say thank you to those who could attend one of our June meetings and shared a cherished memory with us. For those who were not with us, I hope you chose a cherished gift, gesture or memory and kept it in your thoughts and in your heart for the day.

As I listened to your stories, I felt very blessed to be in the comfort of others who understand. And as we shared our cherished memory, there were smiles, soft laughter and tears. We all enjoyed the stories. Towards the end of our in-person meeting we shared pictures of our children with each other. This made me remember our zoom meeting from February, Meet my loved one. I invited those joining the meeting to send me a picture or video of your child and I could screen share, or you were welcomed to screen share. It was so very nice to see your child and listen to you share the story of your child.

It's always so uplifting to listen to the stories of our children and to hear in your voices and see on your faces the pride and love you have for your child. Then, I hear in your voice and see on your face, the heartfelt sorrow of how much you truly miss your child. And I hope that in the stories that we share and as we listen to each other's memories of our children we can find peace and joy.

Our meetings are for all of us; To bring comfort and hope to all and to all a safe place to be, to rest, to share our stories, to listen, to share tears and to be alright for a short period of time with others who truly understand.

I found a picture of you
One that I had not seen in awhile
I held it gently in my hands
Lost for a moment in your smile.
I found a card from you, written in your own
special way
I held it gently in my hands, lost for a moment
in the day.
Memories, sweet gifts from you to allow my
heart a breath
To let me be lost for a moment,
To remember life not just death.

~Author Unknown~

Take care, your friend,

Susan

Westley's mom



Lake Villa Meeting Northern Illinois Chapter TCF

The third Thursday of the month meeting will remain as an in-person only meeting. The location is at the:

Millburn Congregational Church
19073 West Old Town Court
Lake Villa, IL 60046.

Park in the parking lot behind the church, enter through the double glass doors.

Holy Family Church

The first Thursday of the month meeting will remain a Zoom meeting only. This will change to in-person the date is to be announced.



Upcoming events for our Chapter.

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Chapter.

For our meetings in the month of June, I would like to invite you to bring a memory of your most cherished gift or gesture from your child, who has gone too soon. You can show a picture, share the gift, or tell us the story behind this memory. It's also ok to sit and listen and when you feel comfortable sharing, please share with us.

Thursday September 15 The HeART Remembers. We will create art in memory of our loved ones.

Saturday October 8 Adopt a Highway Clean – up, rain date Saturday October 15.

Sunday December 11, 2022, Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony; The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting on the 2nd Sunday in December unites family and friends

around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. *More information will be shared to our members.*

If you have any questions about the mentioned events, please call, email, or text Susan at 847.366.9375 or Lanwesmar@comcast.net



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GIFTS OF LOVE

A love gift is a gift of money or of time given to the Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter of the passionate 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 Rose Hernandez

For her gift of love

On the anniversary of Mathew Moran's death

He was the father of her daughter

Victoria Pickett

"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.



OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED 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

Lindsay Wilczynski	August 3	Daughter of Christine Pado
Jose Barrera	August 6	Son of Lorena Alcala & Orsy Barrera
Andrew Perkins	August 12	Son of Richard & Thelma Perkins
Andrew Muno	August 18	Son of Darlene & Bart Muno
Blake Logan Palmer	August 21	Son of Amber & Brian Palmer Grandson of Lois Cooper Grandson of Gina Palmer
Kelsey Heaps	August 22	Son of Dawn Heaps Brother of Steven Heaps
Ashley Seay	August 25	Daughter of Mike and Shannon Seay Granddaughter of Dennis & Georgene Manley
Josh Summers	August 27	Son of Tina Carlson Grandson of Larry & Cheryl Armstrong
Nicole Parfitt	August 30	Daughter of Robin Parfitt
Chris Houchin	September 3	Son of Scott Houchin & Heather McDonald
Shannon McCarty	September 5	Daughter of Kevin McCarty & Pat Hayes
Mary Margaret (Maggie) Miles	September 5	Daughter of Jim & Mary Lou Miles
Kevin Lopez	September 13	Son of Diahnn Estes Lopez
Anthony Alexander Sosa	September 16	Son of Yvette Sosa
Shane Betar	September 21	Son of Leia Betar
José De Jesús Hernández	September 24	Son of Jesús and Virginia Hernández
Donette Klawonn	September 30	Daughter of Raymond & Dorothy Klawonn
Tony Trejo	September 30	Son of Martina Williamson & Victor Trejo

ANNIVERSARIES

Lindsay Wilczynski	August 1	Daughter of Christine Pado
Adam Rubin	August 1	Son of Linda Rubin Brother of Nicole Rubin
Tony Trejo	August 1	Son of Marina Williamson Brother of Victor Trejo
Brian Keough	August 2	Son of Kathleen Keough
Jammi Shonlei Hui	August 5	Daughter of William & Joyce Hui
Pressley Suzanne McHugh	August 5	Daughter of Shawn & Kari McHugh
Sandra Elena Varela	August 5	Daughter of Sandra Prez
David Spannraft	August 12	Son of Elizabeth & Dan Spannraft
Danielle Trevithick	August 12	Granddaughter of Tony Trevithick
Barry J Grazier	August 13	Son of Robert & Mary Ann Grazier
Nathan Clyde	August 17	Son of Valerie Clyde Sister of Michaela Clyde
Raphael E Vidal	August 20	Son of Raphael & Mirtha Vidal
Kevin Pomianek	August 21	Son of Brenda & Eugene Pomianek
David Sloop	August 21	Son of Charron Sloop

(Continued on page 7)

Why Does Healing Feel Like A Betrayal?

By *Katja Faber*

In the first years after my son's death, the mere mention of the word 'healing' made me recoil.

Healing. It's a simple, comfort word, right?

A concept that all right-minded people believe is a healthy thing, supposedly the ultimate goal for those who are suffering.

So why, I used to ask myself, DOES HEALING FEEL like a betrayal?

Terminology is a tricky thing. The use of the word 'healing' tends to confuse most loss parents. It's not surprising. We associate healing with 'getting over' something, much as one would if you'd broken a leg and it had healed 'nicely' as doctors are apt to say.

If you heal, it means you're better and that you're no longer sick or injured. It means you're back to normal; it means you've got over your injury; it means you're now well.

To me, healing seemed an aberration.

If there's one thing loss parents know it's that grieving the death of our child doesn't mean we're sick. Nor are we stuck. Nor do we want to 'move on'. We are grieving. There's no fixing this. Our child is dead. What we yearn for is understanding and not some quack remedy for our devastating loss.

When well-intentioned friends and family used the word around me, it felt as if my grief wasn't being acknowledged. It sounded as if they were sweeping aside the magnitude of my loss. That they felt so distressed at seeing me traumatized that their need to white-wash my soul-crushing grief took precedence over my feelings. I wept for their lack of understanding.

Yet, in these four years since my son was killed, I have learned that healing is possible.



It doesn't look or feel like I thought it would but the fact is that it can and is happening. A work in progress. Day by hard day. It's tough, grueling grief work. Often, I'm too tired to even contemplate the rest of my life without my son but I sense that healing is happening nonetheless.

And that's because healing following the death of our child is all about transformation. It has nothing whatsoever to do with 'moving on' or 'forgetting'. It's about inner change. It's about becoming the best new version of ourselves as we wrap our heart around our grief. It's about using grief to teach us how to build a new, different life where joy and loss reside together. It's about gently cradling the grief like we would our child and using it to help us towards the light.

I liken it to a metamorphosis. This healing changes us to our very core. We are no longer who we were. The death of our child transforms us so profoundly that it's as if we emerge into a new world, never to return to our old pre-loss state.

So why did I reconsider my view on healing?

Before I could do so, I had to crawl my way out of the abyss that was acute raw grief for long enough to catch my breath. Believe me, that took a while, not months but years. And then, as insipid colors began to filter back into my life, what

(Continued on page 8)

Kidnapped!

By Chris Harder -- Sacramento-South Placer County Chapter Bereaved Parents of the USA

My friend Chaplain Terry Morgan wrote a book which he titled, "What to do When Grief Kidnaps Your Soul." What an accurate description of what the death of our child does to us! It's like we disappear from life, and those around us wonder if we will ever come back again. I've heard adults whose sibling died when they were young say that they not only lost their brother or sister, but their parents as well, because their mom or dad couldn't quite get back into life again.

Child loss also changes a marriage relationship. Sometimes people are consumed by their grief for so long that they no longer recognize each other and find that they've grown apart. Friends become uncomfortable around us... they don't know what to say any more.

Unlike a kidnapping where the person disappears and people hope for their safe return, when our soul has been kidnapped by tragedy, we are still visible to those around us. They see us and wonder how long it will take before we will get over it and return to our "old self." It's confusing to everyone...even us! It's as if we become the walking dead because we feel empty and lifeless inside. We maneuver through the day without seeing what's going on around us because our mind is held captive by our grief.

Some people say, "time heals all wounds," or "just give it sometime, you'll get over it." They're confused, aren't they? The truth is time doesn't do the healing. It's what we do during that time that allows healing to take place so we can get through it. One of the difficulties is that there is nothing we could have done in advance to be prepared for losing a child. What we need to know about

dealing with grief has to be learned while we are struggling.

So where do we start?

First, I'd encourage you to take care of yourself. Eat healthy, drink healthy fluids, rest (even if you can't sleep), and don't try to self-medicate with drugs or alcohol. As your strength returns, get some exercise. It relieves stress and gets you moving again, even if it's a short walk around the block. Take time for yourself and remember to find something that will bring you enjoyment by providing a little retreat from your grief.

Next, learn about the grieving process. Talk to people who have been through it. Attend a grief support series, the kind that teaches about grief systematically such as *Grief Share* (www.griefshare.org), *Grief Care* (contact Pam Brubaker 916.300.8776), or *Journeying Through Grief* (www.GriefToolbox.com).

Read about the grief journey others have experienced... there's a wealth of knowledge between the covers of the

(Continued on page 6)

(KIDNAPPED continued from page 5)

thousands of books that have been written on the subject. There are endless resources on the Internet for bereaved parents, and some on-line support groups are helpful.

This may sound odd, but there are many movies and television programs that include grief situations that we may not have noticed before. In my opinion, most of them are pretty accurate in their portrayal of grief. They won't teach us all we need to know about grief, but by observing these situations, they will help us figure it out for ourselves.

There are also conferences you can attend where you can learn from experts about dealing with grief. National bereaved parent organizations such as Bereaved Parents of the USA www.bereavedparentsusa.org have national conferences each year during the summer months. (See page 7 for more details)

Connecting with other bereaved parents who truly understand is important beyond measure. When we are with people who understand, we don't have to wear the mask that says, "I'm ok." We can just relax and be ourselves. In time, you may be the "safe place" for someone else who is newly bereaved, or even someone who has stuffed their grief for a while and is now looking for help.

The good news is, we are created to be resilient! We are survivors! Most of us want to get through it and we don't want to give up. We may feel overwhelmed for a time, and we may feel pushed back by those waves of emotions, but we are inclined to get back up and keep moving forward.

The death of a child will change us forever. We may look the same on the outside, but we will never be the same on the inside. It will change our perspective on life, hopefully for

the better. It will make us stronger. Arleah Shechtman, author of *My Beloved Child, My Journey Since the Death of My Daughter* said, "The biggest surprise I've had after Sharon's death is that my grieving has opened me up to all that is beautiful and wonderful about this world. My appreciation for others and their struggles is greater, and I stop to smell the roses more often – something I call 'living from the gut'."

If you're reading this and you're new in your grief, you may be doubtful that you'll ever feel this way. I think, though, that in time, you'll be surprised at how true this will be for you. Later in her book, Arleah goes on to say, "It might comfort you to realize that the life you build from this point on wouldn't have been possible without the love you felt – and still feel – for your loved one. In a very real way, he or she is still a vital part of who you are."

When a kidnapped person returns, they are not the same person they were before. If you reach out for help and do the work, you will be able to figure out who you are again so you can function as the new person you have... or will... become. Yes, it's true... grief does kidnap your soul... but it doesn't have to be forever.

Borrowed from a Journey Together, National Newsletter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA, Volume XXIV No. 3, Summer 2019, www.bereavedparentsusa.org



The 45th TCF National Conference August 5-7, 2022 in Houston, TX.

TCF 45th National Conference
Houston, TX - August 5-7, 2022

We are very pleased to welcome back TCF's annual national conference, this year in person!

This year's conference will be held at the Marriott Marquis Houston. Reservations can now be made at:

<https://book.passkey.com/event/50293231/owner/14793349/home> at TCF's dedicated reservation link. TCF's discounted room rate with Marriott is \$149 per night plus tax. Please note that each attendee will only be able to reserve two rooms. Since the conference begins early on Friday and pre-conference activities are offered on Thursday evening, attendees usually find it beneficial to arrive on Thursday.

Our Children, Grandchildren, and Siblings Loved, Missed and Remembered in August & September continued from page 3)

Ryan James Nichols

August 22

Son of Jackie & Jim Nichols

James (Jim) Grazier

August 24

Son of Mary Ann & Robert Grazier

Michael Lee Brandon Hamilton Frederick
August 25

Son of Jan Frederick

Grandson of Sharon Frederick

James McClintock

August 28

Son of Charles & Louise Knoll

Brandon Reif Ward

August 30

Son of Marcy Reif

Justin Cody Ortega

August 31

Son of Susie Meggs

Brian Scott Ludlow

September 1

Son of Ronald & Karen Zaylik

Donyel Prather

September 1

Son of Donna Prather

Levi Nichols

September 5

Son of Bambi Nichols

Anthony Alexander Sosa

September 12

Son of Yvette Sosa

Marleea Gerfen

September 13

Daughter of Marsha & Lee Bell

Heidi Anne Herrmann

September 14

Daughter of Bonnie Brackus

Mike Curtis

September 17

Son of Sonya Curtis

Victoria Pickett

September 17

Daughter of Rose Hernandez

Aaron R Moore

September 19

Son of Rob & Sherry Moore

Joshua William Bowman

September 26

Son of Robin Bray

Nephew of Kimberlee Christensen

Kelsey Heaps

September 26

Son of Dawn Heaps

Brother of Steven Heaps

(Why Does Healing Feel Like A Betrayal? page 4)

brown-skinned chest. I understood because I helped me to understand that transformative healing was possible was the slow realization that it was fear that was making me recoil at the idea of it. Fear? Why did I fear healing? Because it felt like a betrayal.

Did other loss parents feel that way too? Most certainly, yes. I was not alone. Almost everyone I spoke to who'd lost a child felt uncomfortable at the mention of the word 'healing.'

So, I decided to identify the source of my fear so as to challenge my concept on healing.

Six points to consider if healing feels like a betrayal:

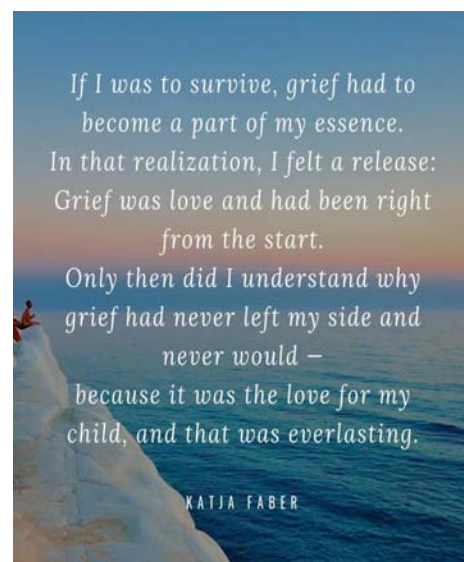
1. **If I heal it means I don't love my child enough. Certainly, this was my greatest fear. Rest assured, healing has zero to do with how much you love your child and everything to do with acceptance. Accepting that love is eternal and that I would grieve my child for the rest of my life allowed me to understand that healing wouldn't diminish my grief or love but instead could transform me.**
2. **If I heal, I'm being selfish by putting my needs before those of my dead child. Irrational fear disguised as guilt was hijacking my thoughts and turning them upside down. Learning to parent a dead child is hard work and challenges us in every conceivable way. You'll need energy and focus to undertake grief work as you carry the love of your child within you. Practice self-compassion and self-care, and allow yourself to transform into the best version of you as a loss parent.**
3. **If I heal it means I'm forgetting my child. Trust that you will never forget your child any more than you'll forget how to breathe. Our children are always with us. Always.**
4. **If I heal people will think I'm not grieving or that I don't care enough.**

Grief is as unique as a fingerprint. Each one of us grieves in our own way. Some loss parents are extremely private about their pain, others talk about their loss, and some set up foundations. Whatever your way of grieving, it is yours, as is your healing. No one can take that away from you and neither should they judge. If they do, perhaps it's time to expunge them from your life.

5. **If I heal, I'll start living life again and that thought frightens me. Living life again will happen slowly and will come from within. It'll be about learning to live in a new way. It'll be a different you, with grief as your teacher and the love for your child guiding you every step of the way.**
6. **Healing feels like a betrayal and I can't even contemplate such an idea. Give it time. Explore your feelings and identify which ones serve fear and which bring comfort. Don't push the fear away but instead, listen to it and find out why it resides in your heart right next to the love for your child. Trust in your love. It's the love that will conquer the fear. It always does.**

Borrowed from a Journey Together, National Newsletter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA, Volume XXIV No. 3, Summer 2019, www.bereavedparents.org

www.bereavedparents.org





Can you sit with this ocean of grief? Can you feel the gravity of what is happening without rushing towards silver linings or happy endings?

Let the wound bleed a little longer without running to cauterize it with certainty or guarantees.

Let the lacerations cut a little deeper carving lessons of the great mystery into your flesh and lean in close to the pain.

Can you soothe without numbing? Feel the deep and raw somatic sensations that swell and ooze through each subtle body layer.

Paint new landscapes with your frayed nerves

as your tongue searches for words in a language that you have never had to speak before. Feel the searing truth that nothing is certain not today or tomorrow not the very next breath.

It never was but in this moment we cannot ignore that. Death sits close right now we have a front row seat to the cycles of living and dying.

*Feel the shakiness of your trust
the gnawing fear
the sting of loss
the burning anger
the confusion leaving you grasping
for why
and how
and when will this end?
Dissolve into the stillpoint
beyond thinking and doing
and feel the exquisite ache
of the heartbreaking
heart-opening act
of surrender.*

~ Gina Puorro

www.ginapuorro.com/

Borrowed from a Journey Together, National Newsletter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA, Volume XXV No. 3, Summer 2020, www.bereavedparentsusa.org

When you remember me, it means that you have carried something of who I am with you, that I have left some mark of who I am on who you are. It means that you can summon me back to your mind even though countless years and miles may stand between us. It means that if we meet again, you will know me. It means that even after I die, you can still see my face and hear my voice and speak to me in your heart.

~Frederick Buechner

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

We welcome your comments and/or items submitted for use in the newsletter. Short articles, poems, or book reviews are always appreciated. Please include the 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 - 48660 Pontiac Trail, #930808, Wixom, MI - 48393 PH 877-969-0010 - Fax: 630-990-0246. The Compassionate Friends home page can be found at www.compassionatefriends.org

Steering Committee 2021 – 2022

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP Susan Banks 847-366-9375 lanwesmar@comcast.net – son, Westley Banks Age 21 of suicide

TREASURER Tammie Barrera 847-872-9684 julyson2@gmail.com son, Aaron Barrera Age 29 Auto accident due to Diabetes

COMMUNITY OUTREACH Sue Battis 847-445-7004 suebattis@yahoo.com son, Nick Battis Age 24 of suicide.

HOSPITALITY Kris Frisby 847-366-3170 Kefrisby88@comcast.net son, Camden Frisby Age 15 of suicide.

SECRETARY / LIBRARIAN

REMEMBRANCE SECRETARY Shannon Seay 224-456-2891 Seayseven1@comcast.net daughter, Ashley Seay Age 17 Auto accident.

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WOODLAND WALK COORDINATORS Christine Pado 847-455-6642 chpado@gmail.com - daughter Lindsay Wilcynski Age 29 Pulmonary Embolism

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FACILITADORES EN HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH WAUKEGAN, IL. Española e inglés. Mirtha Vidal 847-293-1658 mirthavidal1213@yahoo.com & Raphael Vidal rvidal1027@yahoo.com, hijo Raphael Vidal de 17 años de suicidio. Mirtha está disponible por teléfono o correo electrónico.

Northern Lake County IL Chapter #1511 <http://www.iltcf.org/index.html>

NORTHERN LAKE COUNTY COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS FACEBOOK page <https://www.facebook.com/cfoncil>

Facebook Pages for Siblings - The Sounds of the Siblings: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/21358475781/>

TCF SIBS: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/tcfsibs/>