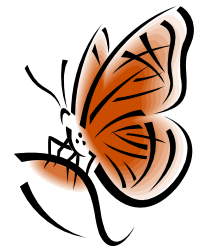




The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

February, 2016 Newsletter



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



Chapter Leader Notes from Toni

WHAT BECOMES OF THE BROKEN HEARTED?



*"What becomes of the broken hearted
Who had love that's now departed?
I know I've got to find
Some kind of peace of mind.
Maybe."*

Jimmy Ruffin sang those words in 1965 and the song became a hit. It is a beautiful song about lost love and the need to recover from the loss.

February is heart health month. So we ask the question, is there such a thing as a broken heart? As grievers, we know that there is but what does science say?

Mayo Clinic defines broken heart syndrome as a temporary heart condition that is often brought on by stressful situations, such as the death of a loved one. People with broken heart syndrome may have sudden chest pain or think that they are having a heart attack. In broken heart syndrome there is a temporary disruption of the heart's normal pumping function, while the remainder of the heart functions normally or with even more forceful contractions. Broken heart syndrome may be caused by the heart's reaction to a surge of stress hormones. It is treatable and people recover."

As grievers, we know that the broken heart is real. Some of us experienced the shock and stress of a sudden death in the family and others experienced the stress of a long and unkind illness. The pain is the same and the realization that life is out of our control and that bad things can happen to us is lasting.

The broken hearts that bereaved parents and siblings and grandparents feel cannot be treated medically but it is within each of us to help ourselves and each other. Some simple "healing" activities to keep in mind:

1. Accept the pain of loss and accept your feelings.

A tumult of new, intense emotions and physical exhaustion are normal. There is no "right way" to feel.

2. Talk about the death of your loved one with friends and family. This should help you to internalize what has happened and strengthen your support system.

3. Know that you won't get over it but you must try to get through it. Spend the time that you need to in bed but then try to get up and reengage with people who understand. Slowly, begin to return to former routines and activities and be mindful of how you feel and what you can tolerate.

4. Take care of yourself and your family. Each day is an opportunity to help yourself and others in the family by eating well, getting exercise (short walks!) and rest.

5. Remember and celebrate the life of your loved one. Talking about your child or sibling is important. It can also be helpful to do such things, in the name of your loved one, as plant a garden, framing photos, donate time or money to a charity, or creating holiday rituals that include the loved one.

6. Reach out and help others dealing with loss. Helping others in a support group situation is one way to cope and help others. Volunteering for charities that help children or families provides a social benefit as well as making the bereaved person feel better.

Whether it is a medical condition or an analogy for profound grief, being broken hearted is real and it is important to acknowledge it and consciously take steps toward "mending" the broken heart.

As Jimmy Ruffin concluded in his song,

What becomes of the broken hearted
Who had love that's now departed?

(Continued on page 2)



GIFTS OF LOVE

A love gift is a gift of money or of time given * 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 Terry & Jeanette Powell
for their donation in memory of their
daughter, Reneé Rochelle Powell

"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
February 18 – 7:30 p.m.

Millburn Congregational Church
Grass Lake Road & Rt. 45, Millburn, IL
Open discussion & Show & Tell
"Bring any memento, photo, toy,
art work, writings, etc. of your loved one
and share it and its significance to you
with the group"

Waukegan meeting
March 2 – 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Holy Family Church
450 Keller Street, Waukegan, IL
Meeting in Room 4
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 4.

"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)

(WHAT BECOMES OF THE BROKEN HEARTED?)

Continued from page 1)

I know I've got to find,
Some kind of peace of mind,
I'll be searching everywhere
Just to find someone to care.
I'll be looking everyday
I know I'm gonna find a way.
Nothing's gonna stop me now,
I'll find a way somehow.

You are important to more people than
you know. Your mental, emotional and
physical health matters to **them** and to
you. So in this month of February –
heart health month – care for your
heart, your head and all that matters to
you.



Toni



OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN FEBRUARY & MARCH

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. 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

BIRTHDAYS

Kevin Pomianek	February 4	Son of Brenda & Eugene Pomianek
Aaron Barrera	February 6	Son of Tammie & Ernie Barrera
Daniel Garza	February 16	Son of Gloria Garza
David Quade	February 20	Son of Pat & Dave Quade
Megan Candice Grace	February 24	Daughter of Tim & Marilyn Grace
Anne Thomson	February 25	Daughter of Nancy & Tom Thomson
Kyle Glueck	March 4	Son of Dolores Krason
Elizabeth Mary Foresta	March 8	Daughter of Al & Mary Foresta
David Sloop	March 9	Son of Charron Sloop
Rusty Anderson	March 11	Son of Forest & Christine Anderson
Eric Pederson	March 14	Son of Debbie & John Pederson
David Spannraft	March 18	Son of Elizabeth & Dan Spannraft
Adam Rubin	March 28	Son of Linda Rubin Brother of Nicole Rubin

ANNIVERSARIES

Rob Petit	February 2	Son of Nancy Ervin
Susan Nesheim Allbee	February 5	Sister of Toni Nesheim
Darien Wilson	February 11	Son of Tammy & Tim Olvera
Douglas Ramsay	February 12	Son of Carlene Ramsay
Michael Stice	February 13	Son of Dora & Gary Stice
Kelly Klawonn	February 14	Son of Ray & Dorothy Klawonn
Ashley Seay	February 18	Daughter of Mike and Shannon Seay Granddaughter of Dennis & Georgene Manley
Mary Margaret "Maggie" Miles	February 19	Daughter of Jim & Mary Lou Miles
Edgar O Villareal	March 1	Son of Guadalupe Villareal
Jeremy Govekar	March 2	Son of Maggie McGaughey
Blake Logan Palmer	March 13	Son of Amber & Brian Palmer Grandson of Lois Cooper Grandson of Gina Palmer

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

SYMBOLS



--By Marilyn Heavilin TCF

Redlands

We are fast approaching Valentine's Day, filled with symbols of love ... hearts and roses. As a young schoolgirl, I can remember wishing I would get a valentine from someone special. My friends and I would count how many valentines we had received, feeling certain that the more you received, the more it indicated your popularity.

As I grew older, I was thrilled when I received flowers from that special someone. Surely this was, true love. As a married woman, Valentine's Day was always special. Glen and I usually went out to dinner, and I often received flowers or a special gift that said, I love you! While those gifts were much appreciated, I would be hard pressed now to tell you what we did or what I received.

However, one Valentine's Day will stay frozen in my memory forever, February 14, 1983. Glen took my arm and steadied me as I walked into a mortuary to view the body of our 17 year old son Nathan, who had been killed by a drunken driver on February 10. We had ordered a spray of seventeen red roses to be placed on his casket. When I ordered those flowers, I was stunned to discover how high priced roses are on Valentine's Day! At first, I had decided I would be content with carnations. Then the florist saw in my eyes how much I wanted my last gift to my son to be the very best...red, long stemmed roses. The florist promised she would provide us with roses, regardless of how little we could afford to pay.

That afternoon, I drank in every detail of my boy, his hair, the bruise on his face, the National Honor Society pin on his lapel, those wonderful, strong hands. Then I pulled myself together for a very special appointment. I was the Academic Counselor at Nathan's high school, and we had arranged a special viewing for the students prior to the general visitation. I watched as young girls brought beautiful bouquets of red roses they had received from their boyfriends, but now they were placing

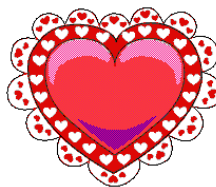
them below our son's casket - their final act of love for a very dear friend.

It has taken me a long time to be able to actually celebrate Valentine's Day in a normal fashion. In fact, I guess I never will be able to do that. Valentine's Day is no longer a superficial type of holiday where I just send cards or give candy or flowers without much deliberation beforehand. The symbols are still there; I just see them differently now:

THE ROSE: A symbol of love that cannot be separated by death. □ THE HEART: Broken, bruised, and bandaged, but not defeated. □ And now, there's one more symbol: □ THE HAND: As we offer our hands to each other in friendship, in understanding, in strength, we are saying:

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE, WE ARE THE COM-PASSIONATE FRIENDS!

May your Valentine's Day be filled with roses that will encourage your broken heart and give you strength to offer a helping hand to others who are grieving.



Precious Valentine Memories

-by Darcle Sims

The lace has grown yellow with age. The edges are tattered and the glue that held the pieces together has long dried up, leaving only a slight stain on the faded red paper. It is much smaller than I remembered. Perhaps time has caused it to shrink. It seems so fragile, resting here in my palm. The words have nearly faded and even the heavy crayon marks have lost their luster over the years. There's a smudge of unknown origin on the back, near where the paper was rubbed dangerously thin by the uncounted erasure marks. The name is barely legible, the pencil lines so weak that only the mind can read the letters.

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A Marital Lesson In Grief

When our son was killed, I remember thinking through the haze of pain that this most horrifying of life experiences would somehow bring us closer. Sharing the loss of a child created and loved by both of us for 20 years would surely deepen the bond between us. I was in for a surprise.

We clung almost blindly to each other until the shock began to give way to ugly reality. As we each moved to our individual pattern of grieving, differences began to emerge. I felt like a time bomb about to explode, I needed desperately to talk about our son. My husband refused to verbalize his feelings and became angry at my overtures. I stopped trying to communicate.

This was beyond my comprehension. Where was my helpmate, my best friend? I felt rejected, unloved and terribly alone. Anger overwhelmed me as I bitterly realized that I wasn't going to be able to share my grieving with the person who meant the most to me in the world. I knew that many marriages fail after the death of a child. Dear God, how could we possibly survive an additional tragedy?

We attended a few Compassionate Friends meetings and I continued alone. The gentle acceptance of other who had lost a child permitted me to talk or cry without guilt. Our problem was definitely not unique many other parents expressed similar frustrations. So many couples experience marital difficulty after the death of a child that it is now considered the norm. We weren't going crazy; just because our grieving styles were different didn't mean that our whole marriage would fall apart. My anger began to dissipate as I slowly face the fact that I had been placing unrealistic expectations on my husband. Hurting at least as much as I, he simply could not meet my needs for support.

We began to have some honest discussions, agreeing that we needed each other's nurturing in order to survive and find meaning in life. We learned to respect each other's feelings. We tried to please each other in little ways, a hug, a special meal, anything that expressed caring. Patience with each other soothed over

many rough moments. Time spent alone together was very healing. It took a conscious decision from both of us to try harder. Some days we didn't have any energy left when grief was particularly painful. It wasn't always easy as we still couldn't talk about our son for a long time.

Much later the knowledge that support had been there all along from my friends if I had only asked for it saddened me. I had to admit that I simply had been too proud to reveal myself as a suffering person in need of help. I will be forever grateful to The Compassionate Friends for being there with loving, open arms.

As I look back, ignorance of grief and the impact it can have on a marriage was the basis for our problems. But, in retrospect, how could we possibly have been prepared for the onslaught of paralyzing emotions that overwhelmed us? Anguish of this intensity can reveal a spouse you've never seen before. Deeply wounded, you will both be inevitably changed from the experience of losing a child. Understanding these simple facts would have helped immeasurably.

Pat Retzlloff/TCF/Oshkosh, WI



((Precious Valentine Memories continued from page 4)

I found it the other day, while doing one of those winter chores: cleaning closets. It's nearly 25 degrees below zero outside and it seemed like a good idea to clear away some of the trappings of a thousand years.

February is a middle-of-winter month and most of us have fewer choices in this month than in any other. For those of us here in the Great North, it is

(Continued on page 7)

For All Our Lost Children

□I will see you again, in the fullness of time.

You will reach out your hand, I will take it in mine.

As together we walk, all the sorrow filled years

Will dissolve as a cloud, in the midst of our tears.

I will see you again, we will laugh as before,

□I will kiss your dear face, as I pass through the
door,

To a place where you are, and a bright shining sun,

Will assure my glad heart, that my life has begun.

I will see you again, though the journey be long,

I will try, for your sake, to sing some kind of song.

As for you, I'll endeavor to live through my pain

'till the moment dear child, when I see you again.

Betty Kenna/TCF, UK

Losing An Adult Child

Parents who lose adult children can suffer discrimination that is different from that suffered by other bereaved parents. With the loss of an adult child the focus of attention usually centers around that child's spouse and children. Because the deceased is an adult, concern is directed towards her/his own immediate family. Frequently, there is little appreciation that this individual, possibly a parent themselves, is still a child to his or her own parents. Consequently, bereaved parents of adult children are left with a lack of validation and some- times excluded.

This exclusion many times leaves them missing the crucial support they need. It may leave them omitted from important activities after the death, that could help them cope with their grief. The focus is simply not on

them, as it would be if the child were younger.

The relationship between the adult child and parent has a number of characteristics that can make the child's death much more difficult. It frequently complicates the bereavement process. Family, friends and caregivers must recognize these issues in order to effectively and lovingly comfort this overlooked population of bereaved parents.

Therese A Rando/Parental Loss of A Child

Valentine's Day



It is that time again. February 14 is approaching. If your sad heart has been in mothballs, it's time to air it out and use it. Well all miss the darling little valentines from our children and the buying of heart candies and the various ways we showed our love for each other. But we still have all those precious memories. You say you've lost the feeling, you feel nothing inside, Valentine's Day has lost its meaning for you. I remember the love I felt for my son. I still have the capacity to give love to someone else.

Love is still there waiting inside us, ready to give whenever the occasion demands it. It's selfish and self-centered not to use it. In fact, love has to be given from the heart to be replenished, just like blood; it comes right back! So if we don't continue to give it, we're filled with lonely feelings, empty thoughts, and NO valentines. Love begets love; it is that simple. Someone you care for would be delighted to receive your valentine. You know and I know this to be true. Go make your valentine list and send those love missiles flying in all directions!

Gloria Gersten - TCF Miami

either shovel the walk or clean the closets, and it's warmer in the closet (although not by much!) So, armed with a dust rag, trash bag and the radio, I opened the door and slipped in...not really about what I might find. I thought I was just going to clean the closet.

But, that first box sent me spinning. I found things I hadn't even remembered I'd lost! I finally found the holiday gift bought for my sister last year and then so carefully had hid away. I found snow boots and sand pails, a beach towel, three old paperbacks, a pile of magazines (all saved because I wanted to clip something "important").

I found shoelaces for shoes no longer "alive" and several other things that had once been alive. I found a half a chocolate-covered cherry and part of a deck of cards. It was quite a treasure box, filled with junk that once had had some meaning to someone, maybe even me.

I sorted through the coats and clothes, painfully aware that "someday" would probably not arrive in my lifetime. The too short hemline and the too-small waist would not be mine again. I packed those things away, mindless of the hours and the drifting snow outside the windows.

When I found the box of scrapbooks, I sat down, now that the closet had some actual floor space. I touched the bindings, not quite sure I possessed the courage required to open the pages. The phone rang and forced me away from that decision. I left the closet and did not return until now.

That's when I found the old paper Valentine, tucked away between the pages of a life lived long ago. As I held that once sticky, but now only stained, piece of construction paper, I felt a connection with other valentines, in other lifetimes. I heard a whisper of another voice: my own mother's exclamation over my offered gift. It blended with my voice, speaking across the generations of children bringing home paper messages of love. OH! I had forgotten THAT - it had become lost in the pain of losing you.

It was a peaceful hour in that closet, listening to the sounds of my life, lived long ago and now remembered through the pages of the scrapbooks. I found my own laughter and that of my friend, joining the laughter of my own children, seeking the laughter of tomorrow's bearers of paper hearts. Time does pass on. Generations of hearts have been delivered and received. Generations of love have been shared just as generations of hurt have been endured. It felt timeless in the closet ...as if when I opened the door, the giver of this Valentine would still be waiting!

Perhaps that is exactly what is happening, perhaps the engineers of all of our hurts and happiness are still waiting - waiting for us to claim that love and bring their light back into being. There were so many years when I could not bear this exchanging of paper hearts! There were so many years when I counted FIRST what was missing, never realizing that in the measuring of my losses, I was truly losing what I did have.

The snow had drifted deep across the yard: only the tips of my flamingos' knit-capped, covered heads are visible in the white. But my vision has been cleared somewhat this afternoon by a visit in the closet where I found a memory that no length of time could fade. The lace is faded, the edges tattered, but the heart always remembers and through the tears, the sounds of love given and received echo back to me.

So now, this little paper message from both my past and my future sit on my dresser, reminding me each morning to make room for the happy memories as well as the hard ones.

I had "lost" that Valentine form so long ago, but the bearer of that most precious gift of love has

NOT been lost to me. Our loved ones die, but the love we share between us can NEVER BE DESTROYED. Love continues past all change and becomes the memory trace that guides the human spirit. Love isn't enough, but without it, the world grows cold and frozen, and the sidewalks never get shoveled and the closets never get cleaned, and the memories get lost in the confusion of pain not healing.

Go find a Valentine, clean a closet, rummage through a drawer, search for some tangible evidence that, indeed, your love DID LIVE - and what a sweet treat that will be!



~lovingly lifted from Sunflower Chapter, Wichita, KS
Feb Newsletter & TCF Atlanta Online E-Newsletter

"Where there is love, there is life"

Valentine Memories

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

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

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Regional Coordinator, Mary Seibert PH: 815-468-6443 nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

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 OPEN – PLEASE VOLUNTEER

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

NEWSLETTER PRINTING & MAILING Mary Foresta 847-986-4133 Elizabeth Foresta Age 11 – Septic Shock, Heart/Lung failure

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Charon Sloop 847-623-2264 charronsloop@AOL.com David Sloop Age 33 – Motor Cycles accident

Mirtha Vidal 847-293-1658 mirthavidal1213@yahoo.com & Raphael Vidal rvidal1027@yahoo.com,

Raphael, age 17, suicide

