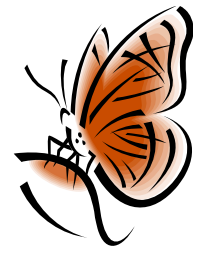


# The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

June, 2015 Newsletter



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



## Chapter Leader Notes from Toni

### Grieving Men

Shortly after the death of our 19 year-old daughter, Rachel, my husband and I had friends who took us out for coffee, just to get us out of the house. It was a simple but very thoughtful and kind act.

My friend, Sally, would pick me up and we would either sit in the car in the Dunkin' Donuts parking lot and drink coffee and talk or we would go to an out of town café for coffee or lunch. I would generally cry and recount the details of my daughter's car accident or funeral or tell her how horrible I was feeling. She would listen and listen and quietly make encouraging comments. It had to have been very draining and miserable for her.

I learned later, that when my husband's friend, Troy, would pick him up and go for coffee, they would go to the Starbucks that was in the Grayslake Jewel at the time. They would order their coffee, sit at one of the little café tables and proceed to read the newspaper. They had very abbreviated conversations about things of little significance. When their coffee was done, Troy would drive my husband home. It may seem inconsequential but it was very important to my husband. Troy made the effort to show his support and did it in a way that was comfortable for both of them.

This story underscores how people are unique and each person handles grief differently. Men grieve as profoundly as women do. Men grieve differently. I certainly don't pretend to have any expertise in the area of how men grieve but I have tried to do some research to gain a better understanding of it.

It is generally understood that boys are socialized to be strong and not show emotion. They are conditioned to be problem-solvers and are more concerned with thinking than feeling. Boys are taught to be protectors and providers for their family. Grief is seen as a challenge to overcome. This conditioning and behavior carries over to the area of grief and bereavement.

Author and researcher Carol Staudacher, identified four typical male coping styles that are fairly inherent and effective:

**1. Remaining Silent:** Men often keep the pain to themselves. They seem to not need to communicate their grief. This also helps to protect them from being vulnerable to emotions and sharing feelings.

**2. Secret Grieving:** Many men grieve when no one can see them in order to spare others from seeing and feeling that grief. This is done to stay within "cultural expectations".

**3. Taking Physical and Legal Action:** Being physically active or being actively involved in legal action in the aftermath of a death is a way to feel some control over a situation that is beyond control. This approach is often supported and rewarded by others as it is seen as being courageous and assertive.

**4. Becoming immersed in activity:** Returning to work or being "busy" all of the time is a method that many people, especially men, use in an effort to avoid thinking about the loss and feeling the pain of the grief.

"You will grieve in your own way, influenced by who you are, how you're made, what you've experienced and how you've been raised. "

"As a grieving male, the world may not see you as the bereaved person that you are. Because of your gender, in our society, you may be seen only as the support person – a role you probably play very well."

It may be helpful for men to consider the following points in their own grieving process:

- You may use fewer words than those around you.
- You're likely to seek a "map" to understand your grief's terrain.
- You will be inclined to use your strength to connect with and heal your pain.

(Continued on page 6)



## 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.

Terry & Jeanette Powell  
for their donation in loving memory of  
Reneé R Powell

Thanks to Leslie & Shirley Heise  
for sponsoring the January & April newsletters in  
loving memory of  
Lea Ann (Heise) Knuth

"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**  
**June 18 – 7:30 p.m.**  
Millburn Congregational Church  
Grass Lake Road & Rt. 45, Millburn, IL  
Open discussion

**Waukegan meeting**  
**July 2 – 6pm to 9pm Holy Family Church**  
450 Keller Street, Waukegan, IL  
Open discussion

(Chapter Leader Notes continued from page 1)

- You may choose to tap into your grief by taking action more than through interaction.
- You may place value on independence, quiet, and solitude as you grieve.
- You are likely to find meaning in caring for those around you as one aspect of your grieving process.
- You may wish to honor your loss through action that impacts the future more than talking about the past.

- You can use your courage to stand in the tension of grief.
- You can build on this grief experience and use it for your own growth.

- Lisa Athan, Grief Speaks

Again, people handle grief in different ways. Men process their grief differently from women. It is important to be recognized because neither way is better or worse. Respect for each way of grieving is important so that no one feels alienated. Grief is lonely enough. We don't want to intensify it for our spouses or partners by discounting the way they feel and the path they choose to deal with their grief.

"Whatever our form of grieving, we want to reach a place of integration where we can again feel engaged with life. That is the outcome of healthy grieving, no matter what form that grieving might have taken." - Elizabeth Harper Neeld, Ph.D.

"When we meet real tragedy in life, we can react in two ways – either by losing hope and falling into self-destructive habits, or by using the challenge to find our inner strength."

The Dalai Lama

## A FATHER'S DAY POEM

### Dear Mr. Hallmark . . . One More Time

Hello there Mr. Hallmark man,  
I wrote to you in May  
To ask that words of love be shared  
With my mom on Mother's Day.  
Just as there is no card for Mom  
To let her know I care,  
There is no card for my dad too,  
And I have so much to share.  
It's very hard for my loving dad  
To know that I'm okay.  
To protect me was his job, he feels,

(Continued on page 3)





## OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN JUNE & JULY

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](mailto:vszech@comcast.net) - 847-573-1055

### BIRTHDAYS

<b>Edgar O Villareal</b>	<b>June 2</b>	Son of Guadalupe Villareal
<b>Edward G Davis III</b>	<b>June 8</b>	Son of Edward G Davis Jr.
<b>Lila Ruffolo</b>	<b>June 12</b>	Daughter of Jenny & Rick Selle
<b>Pressley Suzanne McHugh</b>	<b>June 20</b>	Daughter of Kari McHugh
<b>Bryan Casaca Martinez</b>	<b>July 2</b>	Son of Alesley Martinez
<b>Michael Stice</b>	<b>July 4</b>	Son of Dora & Gary Stice
<b>Renee' Rochelle Powell</b>	<b>July 7</b>	Daughter of Terry & Jeanette Powell
<b>Liam Budill</b>	<b>July 7</b>	Son of Joe and Amanda Budill
<b>Brian Scott Ludlow</b>	<b>July 19</b>	Son of Ronald & Karen Zaylik
<b>Elizabeth (Liz) Willding</b>	<b>July 27</b>	Daughter of Gigi Wilding
<b>Steven Anthony Sostre</b>	<b>July 31</b>	Son of Jorge Sostre

### ANNIVERSARIES

<b>Eric Friedle</b>	<b>June 2</b>	Son of Dennis & Diane Friedle
<b>Bryan Cantafio</b>	<b>June 26</b>	Son of Jerry Cantafio
<b>Anna Smith Miller</b>	<b>July 6</b>	Daughter of Caro Semple
<b>Elizabeth (Liz) Willding</b>	<b>July 14</b>	Daughter of Gigi Wilding
<b>Amy Jo Baldwin</b>	<b>July 17</b>	Daughter of Mike & Sheila Baldwin
<b>Rogelio Lopez Jr</b>	<b>July 17</b>	Son of Angelina & Rogelio Lope
<b>Johnny Garcia</b>	<b>July 22</b>	Son of Tomas & Minerva Garcia

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.

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### Like the Butterfly

It fluttered there, above my head,  
Weightless in the soft breeze  
I reached up my hand,  
It lit upon my finger.

Waving glistening wings gently,  
It looked at me for timeless moments.  
I smiled, reaching deep, and  
Finding all those cherished memories

As it flitted off through the sunlit morn,  
I knew we had said hello  
Once more.

Lezlie Langfort-sibling  
TCF, North Platte, NE



**LORD GRANT ME THE GRACE  
TO SEEK A RAINBOW –  
BUT, NOST OF AL, GRANT  
ME THE COURAGE TO GO  
INTO THE RAIN.**



Bereaved Parents of the USA  
**2015 NATIONAL GATHERING**  
 HARTFORD, CT • JULY 24 - 26

**Hartford, CT Bound.** *We are working very hard getting ready for this year's National Gathering. Our hope for this year's Gathering, is for you to receive many gifts. During your Gathering experience, you will hear amazing speakers and attend wonderful workshops. We will offer you the gifts of Hope, Peace, Love, Laughter, Strength, Comfort, Courage and Friendship.*

Registration information is now available for you at

<http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org/Gathering.html>.

Please let us know of anyone who needs a registration packet mailed to them by providing us with their name and address.

*The 2015 BP/USA National Board and Gathering team welcome you and we cannot wait to meet you in Hartford, CT.*

## Father's Grief

By Rebekah Mitchell

"I'm so sorry!" "I'm so sorry!" I sobbed to Byron after Jonathan's death was confirmed. Between his own tears he asked me why I was apologizing to him. I felt as if I had failed him as a wife and as a mother to his children.

After Byron and I spent time alone with Jonathan, we wanted to share him with our family and friends who were waiting in an empty labor room down the hall. I was wheeled down there as Byron followed holding our tiny, lifeless bundle. One of my sisters says it is a sight

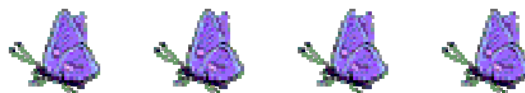
she will never forget. I was very groggy during this sharing time, but I remember seeing Byron crying uncontrollably most of the night. In a drug-induced and shocked state, I tried to comfort Byron and tell him it was going to be okay.

Two days later my shock and painkillers wore off a little and I found that the role of comforting was reversed. Byron rarely left my side for the next several days but seldom did we grieve together. It seemed as if when one of us was having a hard time, the other would be the emotionally strong one.

Before long, we were home and attempting to get our lives back together. It seemed to me that Byron was having an easier time adjusting to the loss of Jonathan than I was. At times, I found myself enraged that he could get back to normal so quickly and continue his day-to-day activities when I was at home grieving over our precious baby.

What I didn't know was that he was burying his grief. Although his heart was torn in two when we lost our little boy, he was afraid that we were also going to lose the blissful family we once were. He wondered if we would ever truly be happy again and if our marriage would ever be the same. Because of these anxieties he subconsciously convinced himself that he had to get our family back on track before he would mourn the death of his son. It wasn't until two years after Jonathan's death that we realized this.

I am so thankful for my wonderful husband who has been my lifeline since the stillbirth of our baby. Except by the grace of God, I know I wouldn't have survived without Byron's love, compassion, and sensitivity. If you feel your husband is not grieving "right" or "enough," I hope you will find this article helpful. Encourage your spouse to read this also, and hopefully, he will realize that it's okay to have fears, express his emotions, and outwardly grieve the loss of his child.







The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Dallas, Texas, will be the site of the 38th TCF National Conference on July 10-12, 2015. "Hope Shines Bright ... Deep in the Heart" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of last year's great national Conference experience. The 2015 Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas. Please access the national website

[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

as well as on the TCF/USA Facebook Page for updated information regarding the conference as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

The Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas, 300 Reunion Blvd., Dallas, TX 75207, is now accepting reservations for TCF's National Conference. To make your reservation, please access the hotel's link located on the TCF website which will take you directly to TCF's reservation portal on the Hyatt's website. Conference attendees are receiving a discounted room rate of \$129. We anticipate a large attendance for the conference, so we encourage you to make your reservation as soon as it is convenient for you.



## Graduation Day

It was Mother's Day weekend, my daughter's birthday and her graduation day. She had completed her college courses within four years, which would have been an accomplishment under normal circumstances. In this case, the last five months of her studies were handicapped by the chemotherapy she had to endure to treat the leukemia. She didn't want it to keep her from her continuing attendance at NC State. She wanted to be treated like a "normal kid"

so at first she did not tell her friends. The eventually looked through her belongings and found her medicine.

When it came time to receive her diploma, the advisor mispronounced her name. She picked up her diploma and began to walk away from the podium when suddenly she stopped. She turned around and said, "Natalie! My name is Natalie Sparks!" She then turned around and went back to her seat. It was the proudest of her Mom and Dad's life.

This time of year as her birthday approaches, we think of how she loved her school and her friends. Eight months later as she passed in her hospital bed, I couldn't help but think that "state" never knew that such a gallant, courageous and determined young woman had passed through their doors.

In Memory of our daughter, Natalie, from her loving parents, Terry & Evelyn Sparks, Lawrenceville, GA  
Natalie Sparks 5/11/75 - 1/22/98

(Many thanks to Terry, who is a facilitator for TCF Gwinnett)



## HURTING ON FATHER'S DAY

**As the day approaches, I wander how  
I will react.**

**Am I still a father?**

**I will sit quietly, never allowing friends and family  
to see how I feel.**

**I miss my son, but I can't allow myself to "break."  
I must remain strong, and always be the "rock."**

**I wish I could just let someone**

**Know how much I miss my little angel,  
how much I cry and how much I miss hearing  
"Dad, I love you."**

**Remember me, for I hurt , too,  
on this "special day."**

**TCF – Tampa, FL**

(Dear Mr. Hallmark continued from page 2)



So he thinks he failed some way.  
 Although I had to leave this world,  
 While still considered young,  
 There is no way he ever failed –  
 There no more he could have done.  
 My dad he tends to question  
 Those things he cannot see.  
 I always send him little signs  
 To say, “Hey, Dad, it’s me!”  
 I hear him crying in the car,  
 There shower hides his tears.  
 He feels he has to be strong  
 For those he holds so dear.  
 My dad he often gets so mad  
 At what became of me.  
 He wants so much to understand,  
 He says, “How could this be?”  
 I somehow need to let him know,  
 Though impossible it seems –  
 For him to live and laugh again  
 Will fulfill so many dreams.  
 The card I need to send right now  
 To a dad as great as mine,  
 Will thank him for the love he gave  
 Throughout my brief lifetime.  
 He’s still the one that I call Dad,  
 Our bond’s forever strong,  
 ‘Cuz even though he can’t see me,  
 Our love lives on and on,  
 Please help me find a way  
 To tell my dad that when  
 It comes his time to leave the earth  
 I’ll be waiting there for him.  
 And also, Mr. Hallmark man,

Please help him to believe,  
 That nothing will ever change the fact  
 That my dad he’ll always be.

## ***I AM YOUR SISTER AND ALWAYS WILL BE***

“I am your sister and always will be.” That’s how Susie signed her cards to me. After a while, she shortened it to, “I” am...” And of course I knew the rest of it. Susie was two and one-half years younger than I. She was alive one evening talking on the phone to Mom about the Oscars and to Dad about moving. The next day she was found. Whatever it was --it ended her life and changed mine forever.

There was a wonderful side of my sister that I didn’t pay enough attention to. She was a kind and loving person, always ready to shelter lost animals and lost souls. When she was in a good mood, her smile warmed my heart. Yet I spent most of my life wishing that things were different: wishing that she thought more of herself; wishing that she would take my advice, wishing that she was happier; wishing that we could accept each other.

Now, for two years, I’ve done nothing but wish she was here so we could have another chance to work at our relationship. Now, I wish that I had been able to give her my unconditional love and support. (She needed it and deserved it.) Now, I wish that I could have been with her that night so she would not have been so alone. Now, I wish that I would have held her in my arms and told her how very much I loved her. Because, Susie, I am your sister and always will be.

By Michele Walters, TCF Baltimore, Maryland

## **NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS – RENEWALS**

The newsletter is sent without charge to any person interested in receiving it. This year I have renewed everyone’s subscription to the newsletter. If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter please contact **Vicki Szech, 31023 Prairie Ridge Road, Green Oaks, IL 60048, call 847-573-1055, or send an email to [vszech@comcast.net](mailto:vszech@comcast.net).**



## A Mother's Hope

By Betty Lineberger

When my son died, I hoped it was a mistake. It was not.

I hoped it was a dream. It was not.

Before my son died, I hoped for enough time in that day to clean my house, provide my family with clean laundry, taxi service and healthy meals. I loved dinnertime with my family. After my son died, I did not know what day it was, cleaning our home or doing laundry were things I no longer thought of. I did not cook. I did not shop for food. I did not eat.

I hoped he would come back. He did not.

I hoped I would gain understanding. I did not.

I could not understand how I could wake up on a perfectly normal morning and my son was gone from his room, gone from our home and gone from our lives.

I hoped for acceptance. I found none.

I hoped those around me would understand me. They did not.

How could my beautiful, vibrant, healthy son be gone?

I hoped for peace. I had none.

I hoped for sleep. I had none.

I hoped for courage to resume my daily life. My life was out of control. The only thing I was sure of in the early days of my grief was that I knew my life would never be the same again.

I hoped this empty feeling would go away. It did not.

I hoped that some day my family would be normal again. We were not.

I hoped I could stop looking for our son in every young man I saw that was tall, slim and had sandy colored curly hair. I could not.

I hoped I could become the parent to my surviving children that I knew they deserved. I could not.

I knew how much they were hurting but I could not help myself and I could not help my children. My younger son needed my comfort. My daughter, expecting her own child, needed my comfort. I was their mother but there was no comfort in me to give.

I hoped I could be a wife to my husband. I could not.

I never hoped for laughter. How could I laugh when my son was dead? I hoped the feeling that consumed my every waking moment would somehow change so I did not feel as though I could never again be in a public place without crying.

At 6 months after my son died, I hoped for a reprieve. I no longer could stand the pain and I saw my doctor. I knew he must have an answer to my question, "how long will I feel like this?" He did not.

I had begun attending Bereaved Parents meetings and hardly spoke a word at the first meeting. I

could not stop talking at the second meeting. I had found the glimmer of hope that I had been searching for. I hoped this all consuming grief would never again happen to my family. But it did! When my daughter-in-law was 6 months pregnant, my son told me their baby had died. How I grieved for my son. I knew what he was feeling. I hoped to be able to help him and his wife. I could not.

I then realized that all of the things I had hoped for had begun to come about but had taken a lot of time. I hoped my son and his wife could hold on long enough for time to help and heal. They have.

When my son died, I never hoped for joy. I could not imagine joy as part of our lives ever again, but there is joy.

When my son was a baby, a toddler, a young child, a teenager and a young man, I watched over him. I thought I would watch over him for my entire life. I was wrong. I hope with all my heart that he is watching over me.

I now have the understanding I hoped for. I have peace. I finally sleep. I find joy every time I see a tall, slim young man with sandy colored curly hair. I do not cry as often.

So there is hope. We all have a future; we have memories. No matter how long our children were part of our lives, we have memories. The first time I realized that joy would one day be part of my life was the day I remembered a trick my son played on his little brother. He gave him a glass of buttermilk instead of regular milk and pretended it was a mistake. We have laughed so many times about this little story. I can still see the twinkle in his eye. I can hear my son and daughter as he made up names for her to tease her. Ho, how he loved to laugh. I remember the look on his face when I discovered the snake he put in my garden terrarium.

I know the joy I feel every time I think of my son, share a memory with someone or look at pictures of him that will never change.

My hope as a Mother is that we all find peace and cherish the joy our children have brought to our lives.

From the Bereaved Parents USA Newsletter,  
[www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org)

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](mailto: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

Regional Coordinator, Mary Seibert PH: 815-468-6443 [nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)

The Compassionate Friends home page can be found at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://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](mailto:tnesheim@sbcglobal.net) *Rachel Salomonson* Age 19 – Auto accident

**TREASURER** Forest Anderson 847-838-0567 [forest.anderson@att.net](mailto:forest.anderson@att.net) *Rusty Anderson* Age 15 – Osteosarcoma

**SECRETARY** Jenny & Rick Selle 847-249-4776 [jennyselle@yahoo.com](mailto:jennyselle@yahoo.com) *Lila Ruffolo* Age 24 – Auto Accident

**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](mailto: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

**OUTREACH/INFORMATION** Tammie Barrera 847-872-9684 [julyson2@gmail.com](mailto:julyson2@gmail.com) Aaron Barrera, age 29 - insulin reaction subsequent auto accident

**STEERING COMMITTEE** Marilyn Grace 847-395-8597 [grace.marilyn@gmail.com](mailto:grace.marilyn@gmail.com) *Megan Grace* Age 15 – Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy

Mary Ann Grazier 847-336-0539 *Barry Grazier* Age 27 – Auto Accident

Maggie McGaughey 224-406-6644 [maggieg00@hotmail.com](mailto:maggieg00@hotmail.com) *Jeremy Govekar* Age 22 – Hit by train

Charon Sloop 847-623-2264 [charronsloop@AOL.com](mailto:charronsloop@AOL.com) *David Sloop* Age 33 – Motor Cycles accident

## 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](mailto:vszech@comcast.net).