



# The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

May 2021 Newsletter



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

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## Chapter Leader Notes from Susan

Dear Friends,

It is the month of May and the weather is improving, signs of spring are everywhere. I hope you have an opportunity to go outside and participate in the all the activities you might enjoy.

Sunday May 2<sup>nd</sup> was International Bereaved Mother's Day. Bereaved Mother's Day gives us a moment to share about our children who have died, in a world that often would rather we didn't. Wishing a Gentle Bereaved Mother's Day to all the mothers who can only hold their child in their hearts. On Sunday May 9<sup>th</sup> will be Mother's Day all around the world. My wish to you and from all who love you ~

I want you to know  
that you are a beautiful gift to so many.  
I hope you know  
how much you are appreciated ~  
today and everyday ~  
And that you are being wished  
A beautiful day,  
A year filled with all you hope for,  
And all the happiness you deserve.  
*Jason Blume*

Be gentle with yourself, enjoy the loved ones who gather around you and those away from

home. I know we will be remembering and thinking of the child who has gone too soon. We begin to remember not just that you died, but that you lived ~ And that your life gave us memories too beautiful to forget.

May you find the peace you need to have a Happy Mother's Day. And I wish you a heartwarming and delightful month of May.

Your friend,

*Susan Banks*

There is no right or wrong way to grieve. We can grieve in the arms of others. We can grieve in solitude.

We can grieve through tears, laughter, meditation, movement, or prayer. The only rule is that we hold our hearts with the utmost care and allow ourselves the room to feel and the space to heal with no timelines or expectations.





## 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 Charles & Diana Laufer  
for their donation  
in loving memory of their son  
**Adam Michael Laufer**

"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.



*Happy May Day*

## A Mother's Touch

By Patricia Dyson TCF,  
Beaumont, TX In memory of Blake

My husband Jeff grew up in a family of hugging, kissing, foot-rubbing, back scratchers.

Affectionate folks! In my family, on the other hand, we only scratched mosquito bites, and certainly not each other's. Although we loved one another fiercely, we weren't very demonstrative. A wink, a squeeze, a peck on the cheek, a poke in the ribs – that was mushy stuff for us. Touching another person was not something that came easily to me; that is, until my first child was born.

When the nurse placed that chubby cherub in my arms, the floodgates of my heart opened, and a torrent of overwhelming love poured out. I couldn't keep my hands off the little dumpling! I learned first-hand what it means to "smother with

kisses." Caressing my precious baby came as naturally as breathing.

Other children came along, and I was reborn a certified, card-carrying cuddler. I learned how many of a mother's day-to-day interactions with her children require her touch. Touching became a way of life for me as I fed, bathed, dressed, tamed cowlicks, and kissed ouchies.

It's funny, but one of the things I missed most after my son Blake died was tying his shoes. When he was alive, that chore was the bane of my existence. Blake's shoes were perpetually untied or hopelessly tangled in knots that would have defied Houdini himself. I rejoiced when the shoe designers came up with Velcro closures, seeing an end to my nemesis. But would Blake wear those simple, convenient shoes? No way! Big boys wore shoes with laces, and most of all, he wanted to be like the big boys. So, I armed my teeth, and kept tying and bending every fork in the house de-knotting. After Blake died, how my fingers ached to tie those little shoes one more time!

For most bereaved mothers I know, not being able to touch, to hold, to embrace our child is the most painful reality we have to face. The emptiness of our arms, the indescribable longing to have those arms filled again with our precious child, are almost more than we can bear.

At first, when our grief is fresh, it may be hard, for us to touch anyone. We may close ourselves off emotionally, willing to touch or be touched, or to run the risk of being hurt so badly again. But mothers are touchers. With time, when the pain isn't so intense, we may want to reach out once more.

None of us ever outgrows the need to be touched, no matter how old we are. And what can be so comforting as a mother's touch! Today, if you can, touch someone. Do it in the memory of your beloved child.

Borrowed from Newsletter of the Atlanta Chapter April, May, June 2012



## **OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED MAY & JUNE**

*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**

<b>Erin Dinklenburg</b>	<b>May 1</b>	Daughter of Kelli Brooks
<b>Rachel Salomonson</b>	<b>May 2</b>	Daughter of Toni Nesheim & Denny Salomonson
<b>Amy Fry-Pitzen</b>	<b>May 3</b>	Daughter of Alana Anderson
<b>John Francis Thumel</b>	<b>May 6</b>	Son of Laura & Mike Thumel
<b>Rachel Elizabeth Szech</b>	<b>May 9</b>	Daughter of Vicki Szech
		Brother of Andrew Szech
<b>Rachel Elaine Robertson</b>	<b>May 21</b>	Daughter of Regan Robertson
<b>Sven Christian Reinhard</b>	<b>May 28</b>	Son of Astrid Reinhard
<b>Tony Trevithick</b>	<b>May 28</b>	Son of Tony Trevithick Jr.
<b>Adam Michael Laufer</b>	<b>May 30</b>	Son of Charles & Diana Laufer
<b>Edgar O Villareal</b>	<b>June 2</b>	Son of Guadalupe Villareal
<b>Sage Cue</b>	<b>June 3</b>	Daughter of Ben Cue & Jennifer Peterson-Cue
<b>Brian Langevin</b>	<b>June 4</b>	Son of Claudia Smith
<b>Westley Banks</b>	<b>June 6</b>	Son of Susan Banks
<b>Robert William Corbett</b>	<b>June 6</b>	Son of Mary Ann & Robert Corbett
<b>Edward G Davis III</b>	<b>June 8</b>	Son of Edward G Davis Jr.
<b>James (Jim) Grazier</b>	<b>June 9</b>	Son of Robert & Mary Ann Grazier
<b>Brandon Reif</b>	<b>June 10</b>	Son of Marcy Reif
<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>David Nesheim</b>	<b>June 22</b>	Brother of Toni Nesheim
<b>Heather Donnelly</b>	<b>June 26</b>	Daughter of Daniel Donnelly

### **ANNIVERSARIES**

<b>Donette Klawonn</b>	<b>May 1</b>	Daughter of Raymond & Dorothy Klawonn
<b>Josh Summers</b>	<b>May 3</b>	Son of Tina Carlson
		Grandson of Larry & Cheryl Armstrong
<b>Colin Henderson</b>	<b>May 6</b>	Son of Lisa Henderson
<b>Jeff Wagner</b>	<b>May 9</b>	Son of Mary Wagner
<b>Amanda Lauren Cecchi</b>	<b>May 10</b>	Daughter of Kim & Steve Cecchi
<b>Alina Mejdouli</b>	<b>May 12</b>	Daughter of Amada Booras
<b>Timmothy James Pitzen</b>	<b>May 13</b>	Missing grandson of Alana Anderson
<b>Amy Fry-Pitzen</b>	<b>May 14</b>	Daughter of Alana Anderson
<b>Anthony (Tony) Clemente</b>	<b>May 16</b>	Son of Becky Wolf
<b>Adam Michael Laufer</b>	<b>May 19</b>	Son of Charles & Diana Laufer
<b>Roman Gabriel Cano</b>	<b>May 21</b>	Son of Simona & Daniel Rhodes
<b>Rusty Anderson</b>	<b>May 30</b>	Son of Forest & Christine Anderson
<b>Brian Langevin</b>	<b>June 3</b>	Son of Claudia Smith
<b>Marcia Castillo</b>	<b>June 8</b>	Daughter of Sissy & Arthur Castillo
<b>Robert Corbett</b>	<b>June 30</b>	Son of Mary Ellen & Robert Corbett

*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) or 847-573-1055*



## CRY ROOM

By PJ Moon

Do you have one? A cry room – a place and space deliberately carved out for you to freely mourn and express the grief inside you – do you have one of these?

As a church-goer, I've commonly seen cry rooms in worship buildings. (For 'modern' flair, such rooms may now go by different names; a shame, really, as cry room is picturesque and direct in meaning.) It tends to be a room very close, or attached, to the sanctuary yet separated (by glass wall, etc.) for sound-proofing. It's an enclosed area for parents/adults to make use of during worship services when their child becomes upset, talkative or fidgety to a distracting degree. The purpose of a cry room is to enable folks to be with and tend to their crying, wailing infants or restless tykes without the looks and gazes from others in the sanctuary. Fundamentally, it is designed as a shelter where the sounds of cries are tolerated and expected. Would you like this kind of room for yourself, dear griever?

### Grievers' Cry Room

Knowing there is a specified physical space in this world where your cries and grief can be liberally let out can be a psychological salve in itself. This type of resource (cry room) can complement the help from a confidant, or serve as a substitute in the absence of a confidant, or be a private chamber where the collection of others' feedback may be more prudently weighed in our minds. In that many of us reside in communities where mourning (grief expressions) can be stifled by cultural norms, subtle (and not so subtle) judgmental remarks, and unsolicited advice, a personal cry room may serve as a refuge and an oasis, as it were, in a consolation-parched social wilderness.

Upon entering a cry room there is immediate acceptance and credibility: no explanations or self-justification is needed. There is immediate acceptance of the entering griever as a cry room is meant for such. Grievers belong there and demonstrations of pining and desperate longings are natu-

ral furnishings in a cry room. Moreover, there is instantaneous acceptance of grievers in a cry room as those behaviors and sentiments typically categorized as socially-awkward are well-absorbed in this grief-friendly setting. Tears, pregnant silences, groaning, ground-pounding, screaming into pillows or cushions, lying flat face-down (or in fetal position), and blabbering and mumbling are all suitable in a cry room.

As for immediate credibility, grievers entering a cry room (for voluntary solitary confinement or commiserating with fellow grievers) are granted automatic benefit of the doubt. One's grief is one's own, and so one's own story of privation is not questioned or compared to others' journeys. In a sense, the notion of competition is moot in a genuine cry room. Although temptations to one-upmanship (top another's grief story) may hover periodically, the general process dynamics may squash it soon enough.

So, how does a cry room sound to you so far? Where would you locate one for yourself?



### Rooming Self-Care

A cry room is room to self-care. It is undoubtedly a healthy thing to tend to one's grief reactions along the arduous path of making meaningful adjustments after an important death-loss. To self-care in grieving, environmental factors (rooming) may be often or easily neglected. But our physical surroundings matter, no? For example, some grievers who desire to attend grief support groups can hesitate, or decline altogether, to go because the local program is held in a nursing home, which is the very kind of venue where their person died. Even beyond grief circles the impact of immediate environment is hard to deny. Lighting, for instance, can sway people's moods, performance, and course of conversation or actions.

(Continued on page 5)

***(Cry Room continued from page 4)***

A dimly versus brightly lit room will have distinctly different ambience. In this way, a cry room can be an appointed physical space (whether an entire room or corner of a room) intentionally situated and accommodated in ways to facilitate grief manifestation and self-care. It is up to you on how to 'room' self-care in your cry room.

Now, how might you set up your cry room to explicitly foster self-care? Might you have photos of the person who died, or not? Would you want something soft to hold while there, or is that not vital to you? Do you want to drape the room with music, or might you want a window to look out of and/or have sunlight? Further, might you have reminder notes with things like – Have you eaten at least one healthy meal today? Have you had enough water today? Are you being patient with yourself and with others this week? What is your self-score on self-care this week? What are special days coming up you need to prepare for? Are you saying more meaningful goodbyes yet? What other self-care prompters might you want or need in your cry room?

To be sure, there is no magic or mystery about a cry room environment and how self-care is done in it. By a cry room, I am not advocating a shrine or ritualistic space. But what I am encouraging you to consider is identifying a real place in this world (that's easily accessible) where you can be pretty sure it will be free of unsolicited and judgmental feedback from others as well as provide a semblance of stability (typically with it being quiet and low key) that is particularly reserved for you to be with your grief pain, memories of what was, struggles of what is, and preparatory planning of what is yet to be. And, of course, a place where you can cry (in your own way) unhindered. This is good self-care in grief.

**Rest stop only**

As comforting and soothing as a cry room can be, there is one thing I observed 100% of the time: its occupants do not make it their home but use it only temporarily. You see, a cry room is for visits (whether 5 minutes or 5 hours) and not a permanent settlement. Moreover, a cry room is not a one-stop shop: it does not replace more vibrant and social ways of self-care and reorienting to life post loss. Once you enter a cry room, and use it for what it is, you must then exit that room to venture again onto the highways and byways of days

remaining. But how a cry room can help is as a 'trustworthy tool in the shed' that is accessed and employed when necessary but then returned to its place, to be kept in place, until a future time when it can be useful again.

Much courage to us all in locating, entering and exiting that cry room.

Borrowed from A JOURNEY TOGETHER, National Newsletter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA, Spring 2018, Volume XXIV, No.2

## **Your Attention Please – News and Updates for our Northern Lake County Chapter of Compassionate Friends**

~ Our first return to In-Person Compassionate Friends Meeting will be Thursday June 17, 2021. The meeting is at the Millburn Congregational Church 19073 W. Grass Lake Road Lake Villa, IL 60046. We will provide a ZOOM link to this meeting for those who wish to join remotely. This is the third Thursday of the month meeting. The meeting starting time has changed from 7:30 pm to our new meeting start time at 7:00 pm. Our meetings will begin at 7:00 pm and end at 8:30pm. We will have time before the meeting to set up and casually visit with each other. The doors will be open at 6:30pm. At 8:30 we will end our meeting and say our goodbyes. The First Thursday of the month meeting will remain as a ZOOM meeting only. Susan Banks will continue to send a link for the meetings.



### The Compassionate Friends 2021 Virtual National Conference July 16 – 18, 2021

Dear Compassionate Friends,

The Compassionate Friends' 2021 National Conference was scheduled to be held in Detroit, Michigan this July. We have been actively watching national developments and considering the many issues that are involved for determining how to proceed. As the Coronavirus pandemic continues to have strict restrictions for large gatherings, we have made the difficult decision to cancel the in-person conference in Detroit. We recognize how disappointing this may be to many people in our TCF family as it is to all of us on our staff and board of directors. A lot of thought and consideration was given to this decision, and a number of factors were evaluated before making a final determination.

For those who look to our national conference each year for the important community and connection it provides, a gathering in person this year could not resemble what we have known and hold dear. Though we cannot gather in person for the conference this year, please mark your calendars for July 16 – 18, 2021, for The Compassionate Friends Virtual National Conference. More details will be announced soon about plans for the virtual conference. We will continue to walk this path together, so that We Need Not Walk Alone.

Warm regards, Roy Davies - **Board President**  
on behalf of the **Board of Directors** Roy and Taylor's Dad

Shari O'Loughlin, MBA, CPC. **CEO - The Compassionate Friends** Connor's Mom and Patti's Sister



## *IT'S NOT TIME THAT HEALS OUR WOUNDS*

Written by  
Annah Elizabeth

*Time heals all wounds.*

The message has been passed down for centuries, used in memes, mimes, and has come out of many mouths from those who wish to offer another person encouragement and support.

For some of us, this expression is a beacon of hope that keeps us clinging to life, maybe even getting out of bed or putting one proverbial foot in front of the other, day in and day out. For others, it is a razor-sharp knife that taunts our every, excruciatingly eternal, waking moment. Time... Minutes. Hours. Days. Months. Years... How can something as abstract as Time possibly cure anything?

Your pain lingers. Your tears flow. Your heart aches for what was, fears what is, and cannot begin to imagine what might be.

Time. PUH! you say. The ticking hands on a clock cannot repair my broken relationships; they cannot bring back the dead, fill the financial void since losing my job, cure the physical or mental conditions from which I suffer, or replace everything I lost to disaster. True, Neighbor. It is all true.

That said, I'd like to share something I have learned about Time in the three decades since my son died from unexpected delivery complications. It is not Time that heals our wounds, but We -- You and Me and Them, all of us who grieve a loss -- it is We who heal our own wounds with Time.

How much time? How long will I feel this way?  
When will the pain stop?

(Continued on page 7)

***(IT'S NOT TIME THAT HEALS OUR WOUNDS)***

Continued from page 6)

These are but a few of the pleas we shout to the rooftops; we beg of our counselors, family, and of the living again...in our new skin. To explore friends; and questions that rattle endlessly within our heads and our hearts.

Your time, Neighbor. In your own time.

Time is what affords you experiences, conversations, and AHA! moments that will help you find resolution in each of the conflicts that comprise your grief...questions and uncertainties that may encompass every part of your being, impacting the facets that are your academic, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual Self.

I can honestly stand before you and say that I no longer mourn my son's death; I celebrate his life. Time, itself did not do that. I did. I was relentless in my pursuit of obtaining answers to my countless questions and I ultimately found a way to accept what I learned, even when the answer was, "Sometimes there are no known reasons." I sought out counselors who were a good fit for me and friends who were not afraid to listen to me talk about my pain.

There were times when I nourished my body by eating and bathing and there were hours on end where I stayed in bed, and many more where I made myself sick on buckets of peanut butter cup ice cream.

In one epiphany I realized that I am truly not alone in my grief, for commonalities exist no matter the type of loss. In another moment that Time afforded me, I unraveled conflict surrounding religion and my spiritual beliefs, and on several more occasions I expanded upon that healing. One day I came to accept that we change every minute of every day, and on another day, I acknowledged that as we evolve, not everyone in our circle will continue to align with our needs and desires. In a glorious instant, as I sat slumped on the floor next to the toilet, I realized that my bulimia was not only hurting my body, it was one maladaptive and dysfunctional way I was trying to control the life around me that seemed completely out of control.

And in yet another beautiful moment, I came to know this little nugget about Time: It is not Time that heals our wounds, Neighbor, it is You and Me who heal ourselves through the gifts that come in Time. Your Time. My Time.

Borrowed from A JOURNEY TOGETHER, National Newsletter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA, Winter 2018 Volume XXIV, No.2



**Adopt a Highway Clean-up is scheduled for Saturday June 5, 2021 at 9:00 am, rain date Saturday June 12, 2021 at 9:00.**

Our third Adopt a Highway event for our Northern Lake County IL chapter of The Compassionate Friends is **SATURDAY JUNE 5, 2021**. Meet at **8:45 am** to review rules and safety guidelines. (Walmart parking lot on the garden side). According to the rules we will need to begin on one side of the road, cleaning as we

walk, cross the road at the end and walk back, cleaning as we walk to where we started. We can organize with more detail at the site on the June 5<sup>th</sup>. The section of road we have adopted begins at the corner of Deep Lake Road and IL Route 173 going north on Deep Lake Road to the County Line. It is approximately 2.02 miles. There is a sign with our group name identifying the location.

A few things to know for the cleanup: Wear a mask or social distance at 6 feet apart. No children under 10 are allowed. Wear long sleeves, long pants, a hat and gloves that are water-proof. Bring water, bug spray and sunscreen. Bring a "grabber" if you have one or we have grabbers to share.

Please review the video for your information before joining us at our event.

<https://lakecountyil.new.swagit.com/videos/16309?ts=446>

**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](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 - 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](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) There are seven TCF Internet chat sessions weekly. To participate, visit the TCF home page and select the "Chat" button.

**Steering Committee 2020 – 2021**

**CHAPTER LEADERSHIP** Susan Banks 847-366-9375 [lanwesmar@comcast.net](mailto:lanwesmar@comcast.net) – son, Westley Banks Age 21 of suicide  
**TREASURER** Tammie Barrera 847-872-9684 [julyson2@gmail.com](mailto:julyson2@gmail.com) son, Aaron Barrera Age 29 – Auto accident due to Diabetes

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH** Sue Battis 847-445-7004 [suebattis@yahoo.com](mailto:suebattis@yahoo.com) son, Nick Battis Age 24 of suicide.

**HOSPITALITY** Kris Frisby 847-366-3170 [Kefrisby88@comcast.net](mailto:Kefrisby88@comcast.net) son, Camden Frisby Age 15 of suicide.

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**REMEMBRANCE SECRETARY** Shannon Seay 224-456-2891 [Seayseven1@comcast.net](mailto:Seayseven1@comcast.net) daughter, Ashley Seay Age 17 - auto accident.

**LIBRARIAN**

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**WOODLAND WALK COORDINATORS** Christine Pado 847-455-6642 [chpado@gmail.com](mailto:chpado@gmail.com) & daughter Lindsay Wilcynski Age 29 – Pulmonary Embolism

**FACILITATORS at our Holy Family Catholic Church location** Mirtha Vidal 847-293-

1658 [mirthavidal1213@yahoo.com](mailto:mirthavidal1213@yahoo.com), & Raphael Vidal [rvidal1027@yahoo.com](mailto:rvidal1027@yahoo.com), son Raphael Vidal age 17 of suicide.

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

**STEERING COMMITTEE** Marilyn Grace 847-395-8597 [grace.marilyn@gmail.com](mailto:grace.marilyn@gmail.com) Megan Grace Age 15 – Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy, Charon Sloop 847-623-2264 [charronsloop@AOL.com](mailto:charronsloop@AOL.com), David Sloop Age 33 – Motor Cycles accident, Mirtha Vidal 847-293-1658 [mirthavidal1213@yahoo.com](mailto:mirthavidal1213@yahoo.com), & Raphael Vidal [rvidal1027@yahoo.com](mailto:rvidal1027@yahoo.com), Raphael, age 17, suicide

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