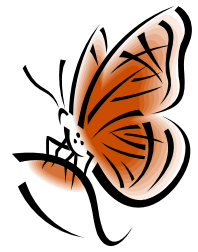




The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

November, 2016 Newsletter



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



Chapter Leader Notes from Toni

BROKEN OBJECTS, FILLED WITH GOLD

Casually, flipping through posts on Facebook, I saw an image that made me stop and really look at it. It was a simple drawing of a green bowl that had 3 cracks in it that had been repaired. The handwritten lettering beneath the drawing said:



“In Japan, broken objects are often repaired with **gold**. The flaw is seen as a **unique** piece of the object’s **history** which adds to its’ **beauty**.”

The wisdom of the thought and the lesson was striking. I couldn’t help but think of all of the bereaved parents and siblings and how this is a metaphor for adjusting to life after a profound loss.

Grieving parents often describe themselves as broken – suffering from fractured hearts, damaged nerves, loss of short-term memory and uncontrollable emotions. So how does this grieving “bowl” of human pain repair itself? Where is the gold to fill the cracks? What is the gold?

When gold is warmed it becomes malleable and can be moved to perfectly fill cracks and chips in a bowl. It hardens and is then a permanent part of the bowl **Memories** can also be warmed by your heart and poured into the cracks to fill your mind and body.

Gold can be polished to shine. **Talking** about your loved one with family, friends, co-workers and a support group helps to calm your nerves and keep your child or sibling alive. It is the cement of the gold that will heal you.

Creating new **traditions or ceremonial moments** (big or small, public or private) is gold to healing emotional furies and bringing some stability to your life. It allows you to set aside time and activity

in honor of your loved one. It is important to model such behavior for others.

Having a child or a sibling who died is now an integral part of who you are. It may take years to truly internalize the fact that your child or brother or sister has died but it is now a part of your **history**, your story.

The gold that will heal is largely within you and will come from the memories and appreciation for the time that you did have with your child. Try to polish the gold and let it shine through your heart, your words, your actions and your new, though unwanted, perspective on life.

Remember you are **beautiful** to the child or sibling that you lost, to your family and to the people that you will meet in the future. You have deep fissures and cracks that others do not, but it makes you very unique and able to provide wisdom to other people. Your child, your brother, your sister is the gold.

Have a gentle Thanksgiving

Our resilience takes my breath away.
It stands intimately entwined
with our terrible translucent fragility.
We are soft and small,
brief and biodegradable.
And yet, we sometimes flare
like a match ignited in darkness
Illuminating the moment, revealing
the truth we know but cannot explain:
How we are sustained
By the scent of another’s sun-salted skin,
the soft brush of lips on the nape of the neck.

By the blazing dawn- a promise searing the sky,
and the loon’s lonely wail at the end of the day.

How we are sustained
By what we love by that
which loves us.

~Oriah "Mountain Dreamer" House (c) 2016



GIFTS OF LOVE

A love gift is a gift of money or of time given to the Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter of the Compassionate Friends. It is usually in memory of a child who has died, but donations can also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanksgiving that their own children are alive and well, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help in the work of your chapters. Love gifts are acknowledged each month in the newsletter.

Thanks to Rebecca Wolf for her donation in loving memory of Anthony Clemente

"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.

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



Worldwide Candle Lighting

December 11, 2016

Please mark your calendars. The 2016 Worldwide Candle Lighting will be held on December 11 at 6:30 p.m. at Millburn Congregational Church. The church is located at the intersection of Rte. 45 and Grass Lake Road, Millburn, Illinois. The Candle Lighting is open to anyone grieving the loss of a child of any age. We welcome all family members and friends to join us. Candles are provided to all. For more information you can go to our website at www.iltcf.org or you can call Toni Nesheim at 847-204-7585

Meetings

**Northern Illinois Chapter TCF
November 17 - 7:30 p.m.**

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

Waukegan meeting

December 1 – 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

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

Enter by church office then down the hall to Room 4 on right.

"Tenemos un cuarto nuevo para las reuniones- Salon 4. Entre por la oficina de la iglesia y sigue en el pasillo al Salon

Photo Presentation At the Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony

The season of holidays is right around the corner. I am reminded by every leaf that falls. The leaves are beautiful but like little pieces of time, floating to the ground, I realize that special occasions will be here soon and I, as we all, have to prepare our hearts and minds for the annual events that mark off the years.

Please consider having your loved ones photo featured in the power point/slide show presentation that we do at the annual candle lighting. We did this presentation for the first time last year and the feedback was that it was touching and heartwarming and wonderful to see the faces of our compassionate friends' children and siblings.

The annual "We Remember Them" candle lighting ceremony is Sunday, December 11, 2016 at the Millburn Congregational Church in Lake Villa at 6:30 p.m.

If you would like to have your child or grandchild or sibling included in the photo presentation, please send a brief email with your loved one's name and significant dates as well as your phone number with 1-2 photos attached. **My email address** tneheim@sbcglobal.net

If you are not able to send the photos electronically, you can mail them to me and I will get them scanned and then mail the originals back to you.

Mail the photos to: Toni Nesheim, 374 Clarewood Circle, Grayslake IL 60030



OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

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

<i>Christopher Jackson</i>	November 6	Son of Pamela Burt & Jeff Jackson
<i>Jeremy M Govekar</i>	November 12	Son of Maggie McGaughey
<i>Lisa Rosemann</i>	November 16	Daughter of Pat & Craig Rosemann
<i>Stephanie Andrea Zamarron</i>	November 16	Daughter of Vicky Zamarron & Juan Mungula Granddaughter of Alejandra Rodriguez & César Rojas
<i>Douglas Ramsay</i>	November 17	Son of Carlene Ramsay
<i>Amy Jo Baldwin</i>	November 21	Daughter of Mike & Sheila Baldwin
<i>Amanda Lauren Cecchi</i>	November 22	Daughter of Kim & Steve Cecchi
<i>Mitchell Rodefer</i>	November 24	Son of Dennis & Susan Rodefer
<i>Zachary Taylor</i>	November 30	Son of Mike Taylor & Karen Adams-Taylor
<i>Joey Frase</i>	December 11	Son of Cathy Frase
<i>Anthony Clemente</i>	December 12	Son of Becky Wolf
<i>Ryan James Nichols</i>	December 12	Son of Jackie & Jim Nichols
<i>Daniel Wang</i>	December 15	Son of Millie Yu
<i>Kerrin Fleming</i>	December 16	Son of Barbara Fleming
<i>Zack A Maslanich</i>	December 18	Son of Karen Zimmerman
<i>Mark Yates</i>	December 20	Son of Linda Hegg
<i>Barry J Grazier</i>	December 22	Son of Robert & Mary Ann Grazier
<i>Raphael E Vidal</i>	December 24	Son of Raphael & Mirtha Vidal

ANNIVERSARIES

<i>Lila Ruffolo</i>	November 1	Daughter of Jenny & Rick Selle
<i>Tony Malic</i>	November 1	Son of Julia Markich Brother of Mary Lund
<i>Andrew C Perkins</i>	November 3	Son of Richard & Thelma Perkin
<i>Christopher Jackson</i>	November 5	Son of Pamela Burt & Jeff Jackson
<i>Rachel Salomonson</i>	November 15	Daughter of Toni Nesheim & Denny Salomonson
<i>Erin Dinklenburg</i>	November 16	Daughter of Kelli Brooks
<i>Kyle Glueck</i>	November 17	Dolores Krason
<i>Aaron Barrera</i>	November 18	Son of Tammie & Ernie Barrera
<i>Megan Candice Grace</i>	November 18	Daughter of Tim & Marilyn Grace
<i>Nicole Parfill</i>	November 19	Daughter of Robin Parfitt
<i>Mike Reardon</i>	December 6	Son of Sonia & Jim Reardon
<i>Alyssa Burnstine</i>	December 6	Granddaughter of Judi & Stan Veoukas
<i>Mitchell Rodefer</i>	December 6	Son of Dennis & Susan Rodefer
<i>Andrew Muno</i>	December 15	Son of Darlene Muno
<i>Scott Ewing</i>	December 16	Son of Alan & Renee Ewing

Happy Holidays or Not

By Alan Pedersen



As I am writing this on Halloween, it is fitting that the subject matter is one that confronts every bereaved parent each year at this time. We know it is coming, we brace for how we might handle it “this year” as the holiday season waltzes into our lives as the “gift that just keeps on giving” us challenges. Not only must we contemplate our own strategy for handling the season, we must also prepare ourselves for offering the additional support needed by those we serve.

As I have written many times, working with those in grief is very challenging, but even more so when you are grieving yourself. Because many of you are new in leadership, let me offer just a few suggestions that may help you navigate the season while also offering helpful information to your Chapter members who may be very new to this not so joyful, merry-go-round of lights, sound and festivities we refer to as the holiday season.

- **Define your own strategy first** – Just as the airlines tell you in the event of an emergency to put your own oxygen mask on first before trying to help others, you will be more effective at supporting others when you have made your own plan for how you will handle the season. This may mean that you ask veteran members of your Chapter or steering committee to take on additional tasks to help you. Having a discussion with your leadership team about the potential need for additional support for new members this time of year will help your Chapter be more prepared and will lessen the load for any one individual.
- **Practice What You Preach** – There are some basic rules of thumb for handling the holidays which have proven to be of great benefit. In addition to suggesting them to your members, make sure you apply them to your own journey.
- **No rules on rituals and traditions** – Give yourself the freedom to try completely new rituals, alter your rituals or follow all the traditional things you have done in the past. No two people grieve alike; some find comfort in what they have always done and others find what they have done in the past to be excruciating. Give yourself permission to tinker with tradition in whatever manner necessary to help you survive the season.
- **Insist on flexibility** – Don’t let others dictate how you celebrate or don’t celebrate the season. Only participate in what you feel you can handle and leave open the option of canceling events you may have committed to. If those inviting you need an RSVP, let them know you need flexibility, as you may not know in advance how you will feel on any particular day.
- **Always have an exit plan** – If you do attend holiday events, if possible drive yourself or have a ready exit plan. Most seasoned grievers have learned this lesson the hard way, where we were stuck at somebody’s event when we were hit with a massive grief wave in the middle of the party and had no way out. Oftentimes you can tell the host that you may be overcome with emotion and, if so, to please allow you to step outside, into another room or to leave. You do not want to ruin the party but you also need the space to roll with whatever you are feeling.
- **Ask others for help** – Especially for those early in grief, going to the mall or other stores can be overwhelming. Tell those around you what you need. Maybe they can shop for you, wrap gifts for you, or escort your children or others in your family who may need to shop or attend holiday events. People do want to help; they just sometimes need us to let them know how best to support us.
- **Help others** – One of the most suggested tips I hear about the holidays is from those who reached out to others even in their earliest years of grief; that there is something healing about a parent who has no child giving a gift to a child who may have no parent to receive a gift from. Helping others can give us a purpose and make us feel needed and this can be especially helpful during the holidays.

(Continued on page 5)

(Happy Holidays or Not continued from page 4)

- **Always offer hope** – As difficult as the holiday season is, it is especially critical that we offer hope to all we serve. Most of us look back at our first couple of years and wonder how on earth we survived; however, the fact is we did survive. Many of us have found our footing and discovered what works for us. It is so important that those new in grief share in our hope; that we convey to them that as difficult as it seems there can still be good moments. There is also the hope that we can even find joy in the memories of the past and the experiences of the future, if we continue to share their life and honor the love that still remains planted firmly in our hearts.

Thanks for all you do in honor of your children, grandchildren and siblings,

Alan

Borrowed from The Chapter Leadership Newsletter from The Compassionate Friends 11/1/2016

I'm Not Moving On *From*. I'm Moving On *With*.

By Sarah Kravits, BPUSA Sibling Coordinator

Bereaved people should “move on” from grieving the loss of a loved one, right? Scholarly publications call this idea misguided, a myth. However, many people must still believe it - and say it in private conversations - because I have read countless articles and blogs expressing anger and pain around it. In a raw and eloquent Facebook post, Kay Warren addresses the suggestion that she and her husband should be moving on from the loss of their son Matthew, who died of suicide. “The truest friends...[are] willing to accept that things are different,” she writes. “They’re ok with messy and slow and few answers....and they never say ‘Move on.’”

To me, this “moving on” concept makes no sense at all. In fact, my brother - who died just over two years ago - is the person I least want to move on from, because he is the most gone.

Where did it come from, the idea that one should completely separate from a loved one who has died? How is it still in our collective consciousness, given that it works for absolutely no bereaved person I know? Why do I not see it written down in advice articles? Perhaps

something instinctively feels wrong about advising people to move on - wrong enough that we don't offer it as written advice, but entrenched enough that we still find ourselves saying it. I think it feels wrong because it is impossible.

In recent years, research has revealed information about how our relatives and close friends, our life experiences, and our traumas change us physically and psychologically. Mothers and children exchange cells during pregnancy and at birth, cells that may remain in the other person's body and play a role in health down the road. Stress and trauma can permanently change DNA in the cells of the traumatized person, in such a way that the altered DNA is heritable, often resulting in children who are more likely to experience stress-related psychiatric disorders. In education, carefully designed short-term interventions can lead to radical shifts in attitude and behavior that change how students think and work.

Our lives change us, often permanently. People and experiences become part of us at a cellular level. How, then, are we to be expected to “move on” from a child, a life partner, a sibling, a close friend, a parent who has died? How could I set aside the parts of myself linked to my brother? You might as well ask me to cut my own heart out with a knife, leave it by the curb, and then continue walking down the road. It is impossible.

What, then, is possible? For me, it's noticing the thoughts and emotions that come up from moment to moment and sitting with them however I can. What that looks like changes all the time. I talk about him, or I stop talking. I cry in my car, or I go running. I pore through old photo albums, or I put all the albums away. I notice when his favorite songs come up on my shuffle, I write about memories, I text his friends, I take walks alone, I escape in work, I wallow in old e-mails. I show up, day after day, and I try to understand.

Caregivers who study the process of grieving refer to integrated grief - an enduring state of grief

(Continued on page 6)

**(I'm Not Moving On From, I'm Moving on With
continued from page 5)**

in which the loss, your understanding of it, and your emotions around it become incorporated into your life over time. Integrated grief doesn't mean forgetting the person or setting aside the pain. On the contrary, it sustains the bond by including both the agony of loss and the positive memories. I believe this is what I am instinctually doing - trying to integrate my grief. As I slowly realize I cannot be connected to my brother how I once was, I am creating a whole new web of connection between us - a web that needs all the threads, good, bad, and ugly, to stay strong.

I have family and friends whom I love and care for, multiple work responsibilities, and personal and professional aspirations for the future. I want and need to be able to continue. So, yes, I move on - not from, but with my brother. Moving on with him gives me a chance to live.

Borrowed from A JOURNEY TOGETHER
NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BEREAVED
PARENTS OF THE USA, Fall 2016



BOOK REVIEW

Permission To Mourn:

**A New Way To Do
Grief**

By Tom Zuba - available in paperback and as an eBook at Amazon.

The death of someone we love cracks us open inviting us to become the person we were born to be. This is the book Tom Zuba wishes he had read after his daughter Erin died. And after his wife Trici died. It's the book he wishes he'd been handed following his son Rory's death. But Tom had to live it. First. Before he could write it. For you. In the beginning, Tom did grief the old way. Repressing, denying, pretending, numbing and stuffing every feeling and every emotion that arose. He created pain on top of pain until he began searching for a new way. A new way to do grief. Once he gave himself permission to mourn, healing began. Along the way, Tom discovered that: * Grief is not the enemy. Grief can be one of our greatest teachers. * It's the stories we tell that determine whether or not we will heal. * We will always have a relationship with the people we love that have died. * We were not born to suffer. We were born to be radiant. There is a new way to do grief. Let Tom Zuba teach you how.

Borrowed from A JOURNEY TOGETHER
NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BEREAVED
PARENTS OF THE USA, Fall 2016

LET IT GO

Let go of the ways you thought life would unfold: the holding of plans or dreams or expectations – Let it all go. Save your strength to swim with the tide. The choice to fight what is here before you now will only result in struggle, fear, and desperate attempts to flee from the very energy you long for. Let go.

Let it all go and flow with the grace that washes through your days whether you received it gently or with all your quills raised to defend against invaders. Take this on faith; the mind may never find the explanations that it seeks, but you will move forward nonetheless.

Let go, and the wave's crest will carry you to unknown shores, beyond your wildest dreams or destinations. Let it all go and find the place of rest and peace, and certain transformation.

Danna Faulds



Borrowed from A JOURNEY TOGETHER
NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BEREAVED
PARENTS OF THE USA, Fall 2016

THE RIVER OF GRIEF AND HOW TO KEEP BEING

By Jini Maxwell

When I think about grief, words don't really come to mind. What I do get is the visceral feeling of being too deep underwater. When I think of grief, I imagine the sudden stab of fear that accompanies a realization that you've dived deeper than you first thought: your trapped breath like a weight in your chest, the glimmer of oxygen perpetually too many arm lengths away.

Grief is more than a feeling. It's really an environment, a new condition to your life that you have to meet with your whole self. No amount of swimming against the current, or scrambling up the banks, will make it easier to navigate. Most importantly, it is not a puzzle you can think your way out of. It's something more bodily than that, like the mammalian diving instinct. At first contact with water, an infant's heart rate slows, oxygen moves more slowly, and the glottis spontaneously blocks access to the lungs, all before the conscious mind can react at all. Living with grief is an animal experience, and surviving it requires the action of a body that knows how to keep being when the mind couldn't possibly go on. Your body knows how to keep you safe, not just before your conscious mind, but instead of it. You just have to be in it, and it has to be processed as a part of you.

The bad news is, no amount of time in rivers of grief will prepare you for a new one. The good news is, you didn't drown then and you're not drowning now. Your body is carrying you through the experience on instinct. Take a deep breath and listen to yourself from the toes up. Feelings are hard, inconvenient and unpredictable, but the less time you spend fighting your body's messages, the more you can learn from them.

Survival is, in the end, a game of trust, and not of thought. You have to trust that you can survive your own emotions. You have to feel, even if it's overwhelming. The most important thing to remember about the river of grief is you're not surviving it wrong. It's not taking too long. You're not moving too quickly. The river you are in is just the river you are in, without moral resonance. Trust that you can cope with doing what you need.

It's easier to think of grief as something of a redemption arc, starting with pain and ending with the well-being you knew before. But mourning exists without narrative; it's not something you can itemize in a eulogy. The river's current will stick with you for longer than you expect, and you'll emerge and re-emerge from the worst parts of it feeling as shocked by the ways you've stayed the same as you are by the way you've changed. Like a newborn in a swimming pool, trying to analyze your progress is only going to make the water feel heavier around you. Your body knows what it's doing.

In the moments that you feel yourself entirely submerged, trust that your heart rate may slow, your throat may close and the pressure may build, but your body knows how to navigate this space, even if your mind does not. Every fiber of you is already working slowly and carefully to navigate this new emotional landscape, if you let it. That's how survival happens—by gentle instinct, not by achievement or analysis. Take the time to be in your body, listen to every soft and hurting part of yourself whenever you feel the urge: beat to beat, without scrutiny, until you can resurface.

However you're going, you're going okay

Borrowed from A JOURNEY TOGETHER NATIONAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA, Fall 2016



Our sympathy to long time Compassionate Friends Member, Mary Ann Grazier, on the loss of her husband, Robert "Bob" Grazier, who died at home on October 21 with his family at his side.

LOVE GIFTS

Enclosed in a check in the amount of _____ to be used as follows (check all that apply):

In loving memory of _____

In honor of _____

Sponsor the newsletter for _____ (month) (\$25 pays ½ monthly cost)

Pay for a book for the chapter's Lending Library _____

Check here to keep receiving the newsletter _____

It is important for our children to be remembered. Please understand that in order for your child to be included in the "special days" list each month in the newsletter, you must fill out this form that gives us permission to list this information. If you are making a donation please make the check payable to **The Compassionate Friends**. Return to Vicki Szech, 31023 Prairie Ridge Road, Green Oaks, IL 60048 or call 847-573-1055 or send an email to vszech@comcast.net.

We welcome your comments and/or items submitted for use in the newsletter. Short articles, poems, or book reviews are always appreciated. Please include author of any written works. Send your items for the newsletter to Vicki Szech at vszech@comcast.net or 31023 Prairie Ridge Road, Libertyville, IL 60048.

The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit, self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved families. Its' mission is to assist them in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information and education to help others to be supportive

TCF National Office, P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522 3696 - PH 877-969-0010 - Fax: 630-990-0246

The Compassionate Friends home page can be found at www.compassionatefriends.org

There are seven TCF Internet chat sessions weekly. To participate, visit the TCF home page and select the "Chat" button.

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

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

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

REMEMBRANCE SECRETARY Thelma Perkins 262-279-6178 Andrew C Perkins Age 17 – Auto Accident

LIBRARIAN Kathleen Rettinger 847-922-7456 Alexander Rettinger Age 18 – Of suicide

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

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

WOODLAND WALK COORDINATOR Christine Pado 847-455-6642 chpado@gmail.com Lindsay Wilcynski Age 29 - PULMONARY EMBOLISM

OUTREACH/INFORMATION Tammie Barrera 847-872-9684 julyson2@gmail.com Aaron Barrera, age 29 - insulin reaction subsequent auto accident

STEERING COMMITTEE Marilyn Grace 847-395-8597 grace.marilyn@gmail.com Megan Grace Age 15 – Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy

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