



The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

November 2022 Newsletter



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



Chapter Leader Notes from Susan

Dear Friends,

We have the holidays, just around the corner. The Autumn season is with us now and the trees are beautiful. Lots to be done at this time of the year in preparation for the winter months. We need to prepare all the physical things in our lives; our cars, our houses, our gardens, and lawns and all the many chores to preserve their longevity through the winter months, until the season warms once more into spring and summer.

We also need to be gentle with ourselves and family members as we acclimate to the approaching holidays. I wanted to share a few words of wisdom that I have shared before but find helpful for those of us many years in, a few years in and for those who have a very recent loss of a loved one.

Focus on what you can control ~ do what is right for you during the holidays. Plan for family gatherings, have an A plan and a B plan.

Communicate, listen, and pause for understanding and confirmation.

Find a way to honor your memories ~ Embrace your treasure of memories. Continue with your traditions, create a new tradition, or make slight changes.

Express your faith.

Do something kind for others.

Set healthy boundaries. Be with supportive, comforting family and friends.

Allow yourself a range of emotions ~ It's ok to be sad, it's ok to share tears, it's ok to feel joy, it's ok to celebrate.

Thinking of you during the holidays,

Your friend,

Susan ~ Westley's mom



Lake Villa Meeting Northern Illinois Chapter TCF

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

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

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

Holy Family Church

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



Upcoming events for our Chapter.

November 17, 2022 is the deadline date for the Luminary orders. We welcome our families who have recently joined our chapter to submit a photo of your loved one for our photo montage that we will share at the Annual candle Lighting Ceremony on Sunday December 11, 2022.

First Thursday of the month meeting on December 1, 2022, is our Zoom meeting. At this meeting you will be invited to light a candle for your loved one and share a picture with those joining the meeting. This will not be a formal Candle Lighting Ceremony, but we will honor the memories of our loved one with readings, lighting a candle and showing a picture. I will send an email and the Zoom link for the meeting the week of November 28, 2022.

Sunday December 11, 2022, Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony; The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting on the 2nd

Sunday in December unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. Informational flyers will be included in the October and November newsletters.

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



DAYS OF THANKS

*In a year when much was given,
much was taken, too.*

*So we pause and give our thanks for
what now is.*

Think, too, of what once was,

*And we are grateful for the threads
of lives gone by*

*Threads that enrich the fabric of
this, the life we know.*

- Lois Wyse

*~reprinted from Atlanta Chapter
Newsletter Nov/Dec 2001*



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

BIRTHDAYS

Heidi Anne Hermann	November 2	Daughter of Bonnie Brackus
Nick Battis	November 3	Son of Susan Battis
William (Bill) Werchek	November 3	Son of Kathy Werchek
Jeremy M Govekar	November 12	Son of Maggie McGaughey
Lisa Rosemann	November 16	Daughter of Pat & Craig Rosemann
Stephanie Andrea Zamarron	November 16	Daughter of Vicky Zamarron & Juan Mungula Granddaughter of Alejandra Rodriquez & César Rojas
Nathan Clyde	November 17	Son of Valerie Clyde Sister of Michaela Clyde
Douglas Ramsay	November 17	Son of Carlene Ramsay
James McClintock	November 18	Son of Charles "Chip" & Louise Knoll
Marcia Castillo	November 19	Daughter of Sissy & Arthur Castillo
Javier Ramirez	November 21	Son of Julie Ojeda
Amanda Lauren Cecchi	November 22	Daughter of Kim & Steve Cecchi
Mitchell Rodefer	November 24	Son of Dennis & Susan Rodefer
Zachary Taylor	November 30	Son of Mike Taylor & Karen Adams-Taylor
Zachary Maslanich	November 30	Son of Karen Zimmerman
Montana (Monti) Brown	December 1	Son of Donna Brown
Tracie Musich	December 4	Daughter of Trisha Musich
Rafael Villanveva	December 9	Son of Victoria Villanveva
Joey Frase	December 11	Son of Cathy Frase
Anthony Clemente	December 12	Son of Becky Wolf
Ryan James Nichols	December 12	Son of Jackie & Jim Nichols
Alina Booras	December 13	Daughter of Amanda Booras
Rasheed Mariano	December 15	Joan Mariano
Daniel Wang	December 15	Son of Millie Yu
Kerrin Fleming	December 16	Daughter of Barbara Fleming
Jacilynn Wright	December 16	Daughter of Michell Wright Niece of Susan Banks
Zack A Maslanich	December 18	Son of Karen Zimmerman
Delilah Vivian Butler	December 21	Daughter of Aileen & Chris Butler
Barry J Grazier	December 22	Son of Robert & Mary Ann Grazier
Raphael E Vidal	December 24	Son of Raphael & Mirtha Vidal

ANNIVERSARIES

Lila Ruffolo	November 1	Daughter of Jenny Selle
Andrew C Perkins	November 3	Son of Richard & Thelma Perkin
Rachel Salomonson	November 15	Daughter of Toni Nesheim & Denny Salomonson
Erin Dinklenburg	November 16	Daughter of Kelli Brooks
Kyle Glueck	November 17	Dolores Krason
Aaron Barrera	November 18	Son of Tammie & Ernie Barrera
Megan Candice Grace	November 18	Daughter of Tim & Marilyn Grace
Nicole Parfitt	November 19	Daughter of Robin Parfitt

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26th Annual Worldwide Candle Lighting

This year's Worldwide Candle Lighting will be held on December 11, 2022.

We will be hosting a virtual Worldwide Candle Lighting for those who are not able to attend a local program or those who wish to join us online as well. Visit our [Virtual Worldwide Candle Lighting page](#) to sign up for your time zone.



Butterflies In November

Thanksgiving was Chad's favorite holiday. He loved the food and the football games without the hassle of all the Christmas going ons. I have so many memories of Thanksgivings past. I remember the last Thanksgiving we were together. Chad called me from Alabama and said he and Mandy were on their way to Atlanta and to please save him something to eat. I said, "Of course I will save you something to eat, but I thought you were eating with Mandy's family?" Chad said "Mom, I think they make their stuffing with "GRITS" need I say more? Just save me some."

That really made me feel good. He loved my Southern Cornbread Dressing, Turkey, Ham, and all the fixings. We enjoyed so much just being together and preparing the dinner and enjoying the meal.

Chad died in September of 1996. Thanksgiving came way too fast. For those who have gone through their first Thanksgiving you know the feelings I am describing. Everything seems to go in slow motion with the inability to move forward - the heaviness and the physical and mental fatigue, the pain in your heart, the lump in your throat and the tears in your eyes. No, I did not want Thanksgiving to come this year or ever again. My daughter was away at school and I knew she would be coming home. My mother was struggling with lung cancer and I knew there would not be many more Thanksgivings with her. What do I do? I think we all decided that if we could just go through the motions it would be better than doing nothing and I think we all did it for each other.

I cried the whole time I was preparing the meal. I do not remember anything other than the tears. Several friends wanted to join us for Thanksgiving that year and they volunteered to bring a turkey and dessert. I readily accepted their offer.

We gathered together at noon, my husband said the blessing (which I really had a hard time with) and then I wanted to read a poem in Chad's memory. I asked everyone if they would bear with me as I read this. Several times I could not speak. The words would not come, but I was determined that I was going to read this poem. When I neared the end of the poem I felt the lump in my throat and I knew I was going to start crying out loud. As soon as I finished I got up from the table and left the room.

There was dead silence. No one spoke a word. Then I heard one of our friends say "Look at that butterfly. I can't believe there is a butterfly this time of year. And he looks at though he wants to come in. He is hitting himself against the glass door."

My tears turned from sadness to tears of joy. I knew that was Chad. I knew he had come to get some of my Cornbread Dressing. The only regret that I have is that I did not let him come in. I knew if I went back to the dining room and told my friends that was Chad they really would think I was crazy. If I had to do it over again it wouldn't matter but at that time I had not gotten involved with TCF or did not know another bereaved parent. So to me my "crazy thoughts" were just that and I thought they probably were not normal.

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(Butterflies in November from page4)

We do not have butterflies in Atlanta in late November. I choose to believe it was a sign from my son.

This will be our fifth Thanksgiving with out him. The pain has softened. My tears do not come as often. The memories are sweeter. My heart is a little lighter. My love for my son is as strong as ever. I feel his presence in everything I do. I do not fear I will forget anymore. I know he is with me.

This Thanksgiving my plan is to make a LARGE pan of my southern cornbread dressing along with Chad's favorite Ham recipe and take these to the hospital to share with my daughter, who is an RN, and all the staff in the PICU at Children,s Hospital ^ Egleston Campus and the parents who are spending Thanksgiving with their children in the Intensive Care Unit. For some, this will be their last Thanksgiving with their own children.

The staff at the Children,s Hospital work very long and stressful hours. They are away from their own families on this holiday to take care of the children who are in the hospital. I feel this is a way I can help others and also include some precious memories of my Thanksgivings past with my own son and daughter. I am looking forward to this very much and I am thankful I can be with my daughter.

I wish for those of you who are facing your First Thanksgiving that you can read this and know that it will get better. You will find joy again. There is hope. The love will always remain and your child will always be with you. Of course, it is not like we hoped it would be but it can be good. Our children will always be a "present" part of our lives. They will not be forgotten.

I pray you find peace this holiday season. I pray your sorrows will soften and your memories bring smiles. I pray you will be able to enjoy your other family members. I pray you know you are not alone.

In Memory of All Our Children
Jayne Newton , TCF Atlanta, Ga
In Memory of Chad Gordon 5/21/72 - 9/3/96

~reprinted from Atlanta Chapter Newsletter Nov/Dec 2000

<http://www.tcfatlanta.org/NovDec2000.htm>

HELPING YOURSELF HEAL DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Author: *Alan Wolfelt*

Holidays are often difficult for anyone who has experienced the death of someone loved. Rather than being times of family togetherness, sharing, and thanksgiving, holidays can bring feelings of sadness, loss, and emptiness.



Love Does Not End With Death

Since love does not end with death, holidays may result in a renewed sense of personal grief—a feeling of loss unlike that experienced in the routine of daily living. Society encourages you to join in the holiday spirit, but all around you the sounds, sights, and smells trigger memories of the one you love who has died.

No simple guidelines exist that will take away the hurt you are feeling. We hope, however, the following suggestions will help you better cope with your grief during this joyful, yet painful, time of the year. As you read through this article, remember that by being tolerant and compassionate with yourself, you will continue to heal.

Talk about Your Grief

During the holiday season, don't be afraid to express your feelings of grief. Ignoring your grief won't make the pain go away and talking

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HELPING YOURSELF HEAL DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

about it openly often makes you feel better. Find caring friends and relatives who will listen—without judging you. They will help make you feel understood.

Be Tolerant of Your Physical and Psychological Limits

Feelings of loss will probably leave you fatigued. Your low energy level may naturally slow you down. Respect what your body and mind are telling you. And lower your own expectations about being at your peak during the holiday season.

Eliminate Unnecessary Stress

You may already feel stressed, so don't overextend yourself. Avoid isolating yourself but be sure to recognize the need to have special time for yourself. Realize, also, that merely "keeping busy" won't distract you from your grief but may actually increase stress and postpone the need to talk out thoughts and feelings related to your grief.

Be With Supportive, Comforting People

Identify those friends and relatives who understand that the holiday season can increase your sense of loss and who will allow you to talk openly about your feelings. Find those persons who encourage you to be yourself and accept your feelings—both happy and sad.

Talk about the Person Who Has Died

Include the person's name in your holiday conversation. If you are able to talk candidly, other people are more likely to recognize your need to remember that special person who was an important part of your life.

Do What Is Right for You during the Holidays

Well-meaning friends and family often try to prescribe what is good for you during the holidays. Instead of going along with their plans, focus on what you want to do. Discuss your wishes with a caring, trusted friend. Talking about these wishes will help you clarify what it is you want to do during the holi-

days. As you become aware of your needs, share them with your friends and family.

Plan Ahead for Family Gatherings

Decide which family traditions you want to continue and which new ones you would like to begin. Structure your holiday time. This will help you anticipate activities, rather than just reacting to whatever happens. Getting caught off guard can create feelings of panic, fear, and anxiety during the time of the year when your feelings of grief are already heightened. As you make your plans, however, leave room to change them if you feel it is appropriate.

Embrace Your Treasure of Memories

Memories are one of the best legacies that exist after the death of someone loved. And holidays always make you think about times past. Instead of ignoring these memories, share them with your family and friends. Keep in mind that memories are tinged with both happiness and sadness. If your memories bring laughter, smile. If your memories bring sadness, then it's alright to cry. Memories that were made in love—no one can ever take them away from you.

Renew Your Resources for Living

Spend time thinking about the meaning and purpose of your life. The death of someone loved created opportunities for taking inventory of your life—past, present, and future. The combination of a holiday and a loss naturally results in looking inward and assessing your individual situation. Make the best use of this time to define the positive things in life that surround you.

Express Your Faith

During the holidays, you may find a renewed sense of faith or discover a new set of beliefs. Associate with people who understand and respect your need to talk about these beliefs. If your faith is important, you may want to attend a holiday service or special religious ceremony.

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(OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED NOVEMBER & DECEMBER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

Keegan Cray
November 22
Son of Kristin & Ken Willis

Sven Christian Reinhard
November 22
Son of Astrid Reinhard

Kevin Lopez
November 22
Son of Diahnn Estes Lopez

Camden Frisby
November 23
Son of Kris Frisby

Shane Betar
December 1
Son of Leia Betar

Nathan Enright
December 5
Son of Martin Boyle

Mike Reardon
December 6
Son of Sonia & Jim Reardon

Alyssa Burnstine
December 6
Granddaughter of Judi & Stan Veoukas

Sean Jones
December 6
Son of Octavine Jones

Mitchell Rodefer
December 6
Son of Dennis & Susan Rodefer

Felicity Patrick
December 6
Daughter of Nicole Patrick

Jose Barrera
December 14
Son of Lorena Alcalá & Orsy Barrera

Adrien Gonzales
December 15
Son of Lauren Gonzales

Andrew Muno
December 15
Son of Darlene Muno

Scott Ewing
December 16
Son of Alan & Renee Ewing

Kal-Ei O. Sexton
December 21
Derry Sexton

Nick Battis
December 24
Son of Susan Battis

Helping Yourself Heal During the Holiday Season continued from page 6)

As you approach the holidays, remember: grief is both a necessity and a privilege. It comes as a result of giving and receiving love. Don't let anyone take your grief away. Love yourself. Be patient with yourself. And allow yourself to be surrounded by loving, caring people.

Borrowed from TAPS 12/21/2010
<https://www.taps.org/articles/16-4/helpingyourselfheal>

Maria Housden

Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside, you must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.

- **Naomi Shihab Nye**

When my daughter Hannah died of cancer, one month before her fourth birthday, I felt as though I had passed through an invisible fold in the universe and landed in some altered state of reality. Nothing was the same, and yet everything

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GIFTS OF LOVE

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

**Thanks to the Reyes Garcia Family
For their gift of love
In honor of their son & brother Angel**

"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.

(Maria Housden continued from page 7)

was painfully unchanged. Hannah's death woke me to an inherent loneliness in me. Although many people in our family, church, and community had stepped forward to help, nothing could erase the sense of separation I felt from the life I had lived for many years and the life I was now living. It was as if there was a huge chasm between me and everyone else, and no one could understand the depth of my sadness and grief.

Our Western cultural traditions and beliefs do little to prepare us for the grief we experience after the death of a child. Grief has no rules, no timeline, and no expiration date. And while each parent, sibling, and family has its own unique way of grieving, our pain is compounded by an uncertainty about what we're supposed to feel, how

long we're supposed to feel it, and what we're supposed to do. Death is something no one wants to acknowledge or talk about. Even the most well-meaning friends and family experience an increasing sense of impotence as time passes and our grief remains.

For months after Hannah's death, despite the intensity of my pain, I resisted the idea of going to a Compassionate Friends meeting. The thought of sitting in a room full of other bereaved parents overwhelmed me. I was certain that it would leave me feeling more hopeless and depressed than I was already feeling. Eventually, though, my sense of isolation and my need to talk to other people about Hannah forced me to reconsider. I will forever be grateful that I did.

While The Compassionate Friends was not the answer to my grief, it was a door to what else was possible in it. The Compassionate Friends became, for me, a lifeline, a place to go whenever I needed to share and remember Hannah in the company of others who were not afraid of my tears, who did not need me to feel better, who understood that years pass but the loss remains. It was a place where bereaved parents shared a sense of hope and possibility with each other and laughed about things no one else dared to. It made a difference in my life, not because it told me what to do or how to feel, but because it encouraged me to be exactly where I was. It gave me permission that I couldn't give myself, to remember, to cry, to be silent, to feel.

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The Compassionate Friends is different things to different people, but for me, it's ultimately about kindness, a willingness to simply show up for each other, in the midst of whatever is happening. We show up because of what we know and because of what we are still struggling to know. We show up to feel less alone or because someone else, who is hurting more than we are, needs us to be there. I feel honored to be attending my first national conference, the 2003 National Conference in Atlanta, and to be invited as the opening ceremony speaker. I look forward to being in a room with so many other parents who know something I am both sad and blessed to know; to feel the sense of comfort that is possible only when bereaved parents stand silently together, in their singular and shared suffering. Because in that place there is no need for words, there is only kindness.

~reprinted from *We Need Not Walk Alone* Spring 2003

AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE



By Martha Honn, Chapter Leader, So. IL BP/USA Chapter Written 11/06

(Martha and her husband Gene and their chapter were co-chairs of the 2008 Gathering in St. Louis.)

As Thanksgiving approaches, I find myself thinking of people, events, feelings and things I am grateful for. However, the first Thanksgiving after my son died I cannot say I possessed an attitude of gratitude. My 16-year-old son, Cameron, died in an automobile accident on June 4, 1999. That first Thanksgiving after he died, all I could think of was the things he didn't get to experience, the places

he never got to go, items I never got to buy for him, subjects we never got to discuss, arguments I wished we hadn't had, finding out how his life would have unfolded, what he would have become, who he would have married, how many children he would have had, where he would have lived, etc., etc., etc.

If you are newly bereaved, I know you can relate to those thoughts. My head was so full of the thoughts of what death cheated Cameron out of. I felt singled out and alone. Life wasn't fair and I felt cheated. I was hurt, angry and in pain. But, along the way, I was blessed to find fellow travelers on the journey through grief. I found out that it was normal to have these thoughts. I feared that I would forget some of Cameron's ways and mannerisms that made him so unique. I have gained strength, insight and hope from other bereaved parents. I encourage you to go to support groups for bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents and just talk. Tell your story as many times as you need to. Listen as others share their experience, strength and hope. I promise you that, if you do the grief work, and, yes, it's probably the hardest work you'll ever do, you will reach a point in time when you too can have an attitude of gratitude.



LOVE GIFTS

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

In loving memory of _____

In honor of _____

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

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

Check here to keep receiving the newsletter _____

It is important for our children to be remembered. Please understand that in order for your child to be included in the "special days" list each month in the newsletter, you must fill out this form that gives us permission to list this information. If you are making a donation, please make the check payable to **The Compassionate Friends**.

Return to Tammie Barrera, 821 Roberts Road, Winthrop Harbor, IL. 60096

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

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

TCF National Office - 48660 Pontiac Trail, #930808, Wixom, MI - 48393 PH 877-969-0010 - Fax: 630-990-0246. The Compassionate Friends home page can be found at www.compassionatefriends.org

Steering Committee 2021 – 2022

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

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

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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

SECRETARY / LIBRARIAN

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

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

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

FACILITATORS AT HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH WAUKEGAN, IL. SPANISH AND ENGLISH. Mirtha Vidal 847-293-1658 mirthavidal1213@yahoo.com & Raphael Vidal rvidal1027@yahoo.com, son Raphael Vidal age 17 of suicide. Mirtha is available by phone call or email.

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

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

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

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

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