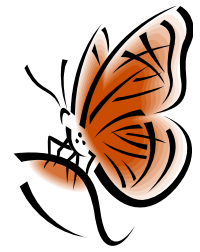


The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

September, 2013 Newsletter



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



Chapter Leader Notes from Toni

The Light and Dark Sides of the Moon

After being told that his teacher would not be in school because her husband died, the oldest son of a young mother asked, "What does it mean when someone dies?" The mother had to think for a few days about an appropriate response and then was comfortable telling her son, "... life and death are like the moon. The moon has a light side, which we can see, and a dark side that is always hidden but that we know to be there. These two parts, the one we can see and the other that we can't, are really part of a whole. One can't have one side of the moon without the other. If you think of it that way, life and death are like that. Life is the light side, death the dark side and both are also part of a whole. And after a long, full life, death is like the dark side of the moon." *

It was years later that the same mother received a phone call that her younger son, now 18 years old, had been murdered, along with his friends, while camping in California. The mother later wrote, that at that moment, she knew that "(my son)... was dead and I too was dying." She remembered her long ago conversation with her older son and knew that she was now on the dark side of the moon, a place that she never expected to be until her own death. She was in despair and felt that she had given her older son a superficial answer to one of life's most devastating, traumatic experiences.

Eventually, the mother came to realize that the light side of the moon still exists for her as it does for each of us. It may be a very long and difficult journey back to the "light side" or the "life side" as she now calls it but it is necessary. The bereaved

mother looked at the moon, thinking of her son and said "I will always mourn your death . . . but to celebrate your life, I must not waste my life. There's been far too much waste already."

Each person makes the grief journey in their own time and on their own path but it can be made easier by celebrating your child's or sibling's or grandchild's life. It can be made easier by reclaiming your own life. Our local chapter of The Compassionate Friends recently held our annual balloon release with messages and love notes written on the colorful balloons. It was a wonderful and heart-warming experience to see small children, parents of all ages and grandparents, holding on to strings and looking to the sky as the balloons floated up in the setting sun. There were tears and hugs and smiles and many thoughts, memories and prayers, filling the outdoor air. I looked at our group, while releasing the balloons, and I thought, these are courageous people, who have been to the dark side of the moon, and are now choosing light and life.

"We all shine on...like the moon and the stars and the sun...we all shine on...come on and on and on..."
-John Lennon

In the night of death, hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing. -
Robert Green Ingersoll

*Excerpts from "The Long Reach of Childhood" by Ditta M. Olikier, Ph.D. published in Psychology Today

Meetings

August 15, 2013 – 7:30 p.m.
Millburn Congregational Church
Grass Lake Road & Rt. 45, Millburn, IL
Open discussion

Waukegan meeting
September 5, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
Holy Family Church
450 Keller Street, Waukegan, IL
Open discussion



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.

"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.

Sometimes We Have To Let Go

Written by Hattie Pridgen, TCF Wilmington, NC (Cape Fear Chapter)

How many times did I tell you that you could not die before I did? Because I could not live if you died. SO MANY TIMES. Did I hold you here too long to suffer more than you should? I could not bear the thought of life without you. Children should not die before their parents.

How many times has my heart cried "I lied, I lied, I didn't mean it," since that last afternoon when I knew it was time to let you go. You told me that you loved me more than anything but you wanted to go home to Heaven. I told you it was Okay, that I wanted you to go and not have to suffer anymore.

I told you that when a child is born the cord that binds a mother and child together is cut, but there is an invisible cord that binds us that can never be broken. That wherever you go I will always be with you, and no matter where I am you would always be with me.

Because I loved you more than life itself I had to let you go. But my heart still cries, "I didn't mean it, it was a lie, I didn't want you to die." But I will always carry you in my heart, and part of my heart and soul went with you that day. I know that you

are waiting for me in Heaven. ONLY THEN WILL I BE WHOLE AGAIN.

Borrowed with loved from

Linked Together - Atlanta Area Chapters July - August
2001 Newsletter of the Atlanta Area Chapters

Stretching My Wings

by Margie Casteel
Littleton, Colorado

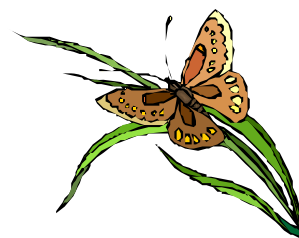


*Tightly wrapped in a small cocoon,
Unmoving,
The world going on around me,
Seemingly without me.*

*No one aware that inside this shell
I am changing,
Becoming something new,
Getting ready to fly.*

*Soon, I begin to work,
To struggle against my tiny confines.
My head pokes through first,
The rest of me soon follows.*

*At last free, I stretch my wings,
Look upward,
And, for the first time,
I fly!*





OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

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

<i>J Danial (Danny) O'Connor</i>	Sept 2	Son of Kay O'Connor
<i>Shannon McCarty</i>	Sept 5	Daughter of Kevin McCarty & Pat Hayes
<i>Mary Margaret (Maggie) Miles</i>	Sept 5	Daughter of Jim & Mary Lou Miles
<i>Donette Klawonn</i>	Sept 30	Daughter of Raymond & Dorothy Klawonn
<i>Mike Cantafio</i>	October 8	Son of Jerry Cantafio
<i>Maria Guadalupe</i>	October 10	Daughter of Linda Lara & Fernando Manrique
<i>Michael Klopp</i>	October 12	Son of Barbara & Rick Engelhard
<i>Marleea Gerfen</i>	October 12	Daughter of Marsha & Lee Bell
<i>Ryder Corrigan</i>	October 14	Son of Jenny Erickson Grandson of Pam & Mike Corrigan
<i>Alexandria (Alex) Scarbro</i>	October 15	Daughter of David Scarbro
<i>Brian Keough</i>	October 20	Son of Kathleen Keough
<i>Noah-Dean Saunders</i>	October 21	Son of Paula Jaimez
<i>Kelly Klawonn</i>	October 23	Son of Raymond & Dorothy Klawonn
<i>Aaron R Moore</i>	October 24	Son of Rob & Sherry Moore

ANNIVERSARIES

<i>Brian Scott Ludlow</i>	Sept 1	Son of Ronald & Karen Zaylik
<i>Charles E Clark</i>	Sept 6	Son of Deloris Clark
<i>Marleea Gerfen</i>	Sept 13	Daughter of Marsha & Lee Bell
<i>Brian Scott Engle</i>	Sept 13	Son of Louise Engle
<i>Eric Pederson</i>	Sept 15	Son of Debbie & John Pederson
<i>Aaron R Moore</i>	Sept 19	Son of Adam & Sherry Moore
<i>Michael Klopp</i>	Sept 30	Son of Barbara & Rick Engelhard
<i>Alexander Rettinger</i>	September	Son of Kathleen Rettinger
<i>Carrie Seger</i>	Sept 30	Daughter of Sandy Seger
<i>Michael Klopp</i>	Sept 30	Son of Barbara & Rick Engelhard
<i>Marissa Pederson</i>	October 5	Daughter of Debbie & John Pederson
<i>Liam Budill</i>	October 7	Son of Joe & Amanda Budill
<i>Maria Guadalupe</i>	October 10	Daughter of Linda Lara & Fernando Manrique
<i>Daniel Garza</i>	October 25	Son of Gloria Garza

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

The Death of the Young ~from Spiritual Life Cannot be Measured by Tolstoy

People ask: "Why do children or young people die, when they have lived so little?" How do you know that they have lived so little? This crude measure of yours is time, but life is not measured in time. This is just the same as to say, "Why is this saying, this poem, this picture, this piece of music so short, who was it broken off and not drawn out to the size of the longest speech or piece of music, the largest picture?" As the measure of length is inapplicable to the meaning (or greatness) of productions of wisdom or poetry, so - even more evidently - it is inapplicable to life. How do you know what inner growth this soul accomplished in its short span, and what influence it had on others?



~the following article is from Kansas City (Mo-Kan Newsletter) September 2004

September Memories

Many of our members have lost children of school age. Even for those whose children died before they could go to school or after they were finished with school, September often brings painful memories. Seeing children with brand new clothes and the latest craze in lunch boxes and book bags, lined up for the bus, brings back memories for all of us. For some, we see children our child's age, progress to the next grade when he or she will never have that experience. For some, we remember putting our child on that bus, the last minute rush to replace outgrown clothes and buy school supplies.

For some, the pain is from the dreams we had of seeing our child go to school, dreams that our child never lived long enough to bring to fruition. Some of us have younger children who are now "passing" the age of our dead child, who should have been the older brother or sister.

In my case I have one daughter left, and I remember shopping for back-to-school clothes for two. I can't help but wonder what size Colleen would be wearing now. She'd be 12. Colleen rode in one of those little buses because she was handicapped. My mom used to hold her at the front door of her house, swaying back and forth, saying, "Tick tock, here comes the bus." I often think of that when I see one of those little buses. Even after five years, I still look for #77, her bus.

I guess I'm trying to say two things. First, we're all in this together; we experience different variations of the same pain. Second, we all have to expect that moments of nostalgia and longing will be with us. ALWAYS. The pain does dull somewhat with the years, but tears will always spring to our eyes at certain moments. The special days will always tug at our heart-strings in a way that non-bereaved parents will never fully understand.

At least we have each other, people who know what

we're feeling and do understand our pain. I'm glad we can be here for each other.

--Kathy Hahn, TCF/Lower Bucks.org.

What a great analogy this is.....

**GRIEF IS LIKE A
BUCKET OF WATER....**



You can start out with a full bucket, but when you find it too heavy to carry, you can bump it a little, so that some spills, and carry it a little farther. As you continue, you bump it again so that it becomes lighter to carry for the longer distance. You must do the same with grief. To keep the burden from becoming intolerable, you must "bump the bucket" a little and let a little of your grief spill out from time to time, so that you can continue.

author unknown.....

lovingly lifted

From TCF Cape Fear Chapter
Wilmington, NC

Grief is a solitary journey...

Grief is a solitary journey. No one but you knows how great the hurt is. No one but you can know the gaping hole left in your life when someone you know has died. And no one but you can mourn the silence that was once filled with laughter and song. It is the nature of love and of death to touch every person in a totally unique way. Comfort comes from knowing that people have made the same journey. And solace comes from understanding how others have learned to sing again.

Helen Steiner Rice

WHAT IS LEFT?

Betty Stevens
BP/USA Baltimore, MD

When a child dies, you ask, among other questions, what is left? A beautiful, sensitive, intelligent child has died. What can be left after such a crushing blow? Others will point out that you have a spouse, other children or grandchildren, perhaps relatives or friends; they are all left.

Perhaps you have a career that is left. And yet, how meaningless all of those are to a bereaved parent, to one who is suffering the most devastating loss of all. So you continue to search for what it is that is left.

You read books on bereavement, scarcely remembering what you have read; you attend meetings, talk with others who have suffered a loss like yours. If you are fortunate, you have one or two good friends who, while they cannot fully understand, are there to love and listen. Perhaps there is a therapist who guides you in your search for an answer. But, for a long while everything you read or hear has little meaning and certainly cannot provide the answer to your question. Or can it? Does all that you have read and heard and experienced finally come together and answer the question of what is left?

For me it does, the answer was thirteen months in coming, but how clear it comes now. I am left. That's it! I am left and I have been left with the love of my child. It is a new love, it is different, more intense; it is understanding, it need not be reciprocated, there are no strings attached. I love this love of my child. It warms and comforts me. It is a wonderful love, but I cannot keep it. It is too precious to keep to myself. I am left with love to spare and love to share.

It will never run out. My child will always be with me to replenish it. I have found my answer. I am left to share my child's love with you.

Borrowed from A JOURNEY TOGETHER
NEWSLETTER OF THE BEREAVED PARENTS OF
THE USA
VOLUME VII NO. 3, SUMMER 2002
(July, August and September)

For Brothers and Sisters



OK To Have Fun

When you're right in the middle of summer and sports, camps, hobbies, trips ... do you wonder if you should be having fun? After your brother or sister dies, it sometimes feels strange to laugh or enjoy a fun time. Maybe you worry that someone will think you don't remember the death, or that you shouldn't be happy at all right now, or it'd be "disrespectful." But really, fun is OK. It is very good for you. If you let yourself have some laughs, you will relax and that is good for you. If you say yes to a good time and enjoy yourself, that is taking a very needed break from your hard work of grieving. It might help to remember something funny that your loved one said or did. Maybe you will realize that you would like to do something they used to do. Then look for things that make you happy... and do them... even if just a little bit at first. Some kids say they felt a happy presence when they were having fun! We hope that whatever you do, that you will enjoy yourself, you deserve it.

Barb Coe, Fernside TCF

For the Both of Us

As long as I can
I will look at this world for both of us.

As long as I can
I will laugh with the birds,
I will sing with the flowers,
I will pray to the stars,
for the both of us.

As long as I can
I will remember how many things
on this earth were your joy.

And I will live as well
as you would want me to live
As long as I can.

Sascha - from Wintersun

A GRANDPARENT'S POINT OF VIEW

The death of a child is the most tragic thing that can happen to anyone. It affects so many lives - family, friends, and even strangers.



I lost my grandchild through death, and only a grandparent can understand the love a grandparent has for a grandchild and the loss that is felt when the child dies. For a grandparent, it is a double loss. Not only is your grandchild gone, but you also watch you child die each day. The smile that was always on her face is not longer there. the hurt is so deep and the questions so many. You feel helpless as a parent. You can't kiss the hurt away as you did when she was a child. You have no answers for her questions for you don't understand the many feelings that you are experiencing yourself. Each day you hope and pray for a little ray of sunshine to show on her face. You search for a little something to say or do that will comfort her. It seems that there is no end to the suffering.

As time slowly goes by, the healing process begins. In time, a ray of hope will show on her face and a smile will make her eyes light up again. She will turn to you for what little comfort you can give her.

There will always be a part of you that is gone, but in time you can learn to live with the part that is still there.

By Ruth Eaton, Savannah, Ga., BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA, Fall, 1996

Grief, an Unpaid Bill

by Anita Kirschner
Woodbury, New York

I have become more familiar with death, now. I know what it is to grieve, to feel loss, to remember my dead child with flesh and bones. In the beginning, I was numb. Nature is kind; we can't feel more pain than we can endure, but the pain waits. Like an unpaid bill, it remains until it is opened. We may bury our feelings, but they are buried alive, and the time of payment always comes.

I find myself crying at unexpected times. In my car on the way to work, I see a young man riding a bicycle near the side of the road. Suddenly, I remember that Ken bought one just a few years ago when he was already ill. "It makes me feel young again," he told me. As we looked at each other then, we both understood

the wish to go back to an easier time, when the future still seemed certain.

My tears come, and I make another small payment on this outstanding bill of pain. Today is July eleventh, the birthday of my friend's dead son. "Steven would have been forty, today," she tells me on the telephone.

"Don't add to your anguish," I warn, not being afraid to enter the fray. We are both part of this community of bereaved parents, and we know how to speak the forbidden words about death; something the rest of the world avoids.

"I can't help it," my friend says. "The thoughts just come."

Time passes and I continue to learn the lessons that death and life teach. They are patient teachers, so if I don't learn, they will teach me again. I have learned that death is as much a part of life as the air that I breathe. It will not stay away because I avoid speaking it's name.

The grief that I feel, I must feel. I have loved; now I must grieve. It is the homage the heart pays.

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grief@bereavementmag.com

A Prayer For Angels

I prayed for Angels to guard you night and day.

I prayed they would hover and keep harm away.

If you hear the swish of wings or feel a gentle touch.
I know God heard my prayer today and loves you very much.

In Memory of My Daughter Tiffani Lea-Nicole

Stacie Lawson, Lawrenceville, GA

What Timetables?



There are no timetables in grief. Unfortunately, the general public doesn't see it that way. That is why it is so important that all of us educate the public. They need to know that we will always hurt and we will always grieve. The hurt will ease, but the pain of the loss will forever be there. We loved our child so much. Having rituals, such as your arranging flowers at the accident site and going to the cemetery to talk to your daughter, is an important part of our grieving process. It has been 5 1/2 years since my sweet Nina died. Though I don't go to the cemetery every day as I did in the beginning, I go once a week to change the seven-day candle in the Eternal Light. And I find times that I need to go there more often than that.

Please do not listen to the advice of others who haven't been where we are; who haven't lost a child. Though the majority of them mean well and they don't want to see you hurt anymore, they just can't know. The fact that it has been a year means nothing as far as your grief. The second year is a very difficult one, as most of us who have been there can attest to. We don't miraculously wake up the morning after the one-year anniversary of our child's death and "get better!" I actually had someone say to me on that anniversary, "Boy, I bet that you will be so glad when tomorrow comes. Then you can finally get on with your life! "EEEEKKK!!!!

You need to do whatever it takes to help you through the day. You really still are a novice at this grief experience, being only a little over a year. I luckily had the long-timers of TCF reassure me of that, because I thought maybe something was wrong with me...that maybe I should be "over it" because everyone (of course, not anyone who had ever lost a child) told me I should be.

I know it is hard to be patient with those who tell you otherwise. But you need to take care of yourself. Be good to yourself, go to the cemetery when you need to, arrange the flowers at the accident site, whatever it takes (as long as it isn't injurious to you or anyone else) then you need to do it... for YOU! It's a long road and those of us in TCF, Atlanta Sharing Line, and all the other grief organizations are there to help you and tell you that what you are feeling is normal; or what we call the "new normal" for those of us who have loved and lost a child. God Bless

Cathy, Nina's mom forever, St. Paul, MN

Borrowed with loved from Linked Together - Atlanta Area Chapters July - August 2001 Newsletter of the Atlanta Area Chapters

The Things I Didn't Say

If I could sit and talk to you
For just a little while,
To say the things I wish I'd said,
Like -

how I loved your smile,
how much I loved the sight of
you
your voice, your eyes, your
face,
to watch you playing
basketball
and see you win a race.

You were so much a part of me,
The part that's gone away.
These memories you left become
More precious every day.

I pray that you can hear this
And God will let you see
The pride, the joy, the happiness
That your life gave to me.

Pat Fennell
TCF. Delmar/Albany, NY

Have You Ever Been Angry At God?

A nun in a Catholic hospital, standing beside me as my little 2 yr 9 mo old daughter lay gasping for breath from the ravages of leukemia, stated in a questioning voice, "But why are you crying? She is ALREADY AN ANGEL!"

That hurt. But nuns don't lose their children, it is all theoretical to them.

After my son's suicide, I told my minister I didn't know if I could believe in God again, and he said, "That's all right, we can hold down the fort for you."

He understood how hard it is.

Norma Grove, Tucson, AZ

We welcome your comments and/or items submitted for use in the newsletter. Short articles, poems, or book reviews are always welcome. 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

Regional Coordinator, Mary Seibert PH: 773-721-7810 nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

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

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

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP Toni Nesheim 847-223-7353 tonin@sbcglobal.net Rachel Salomonson Age 18 – Auto accident

TREASURER Forest Anderson 847-838-0567 forest.anderson@att.net Rusty Anderson Age 15 – Osteosarcoma

SECRETARY Jenny & Rick Selle 847-249-4776 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 Rachel Szech Age 16 – Horseback-riding Accident

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

PUBLICITY Kari McHugh 262-862-6880 ksmchugh@hotmail.com Pressley McHugh Age 46 days Hypoplastic left heart syndrome

STEERING COMMITTEE Marilyn Grace 847-395-8597 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 Jeremy Govekar Age 22 – Hit by train

Charon Sloop 847-623-2264 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 _____

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.