

The Compassionate Friends

Lehigh Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



484-597-0240

www.lehighvalleytcf.org

facebook.com/TCFlehighvalley

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Email: tcflehighvalley@gmail.com

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TCF Online Support Community

www.compassionatefriends.org
To participate, click on "Online Support" under the resource tab

Who We Are

The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is a national nonprofit self-help organization that offers friendship, understanding and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. There are no religious affiliations and no dues.

About Our Meetings...

Meetings are held 2nd Monday each month from 7 to 9 pm at Sacred Heart Hospital (2nd Flr. Conference Center), 4th & Chew Sts, Allentown. Free parking deck passes are available at the meeting.

Meetings are open to all bereaved parents, grandparents and mature siblings. Younger siblings may benefit from the children's bereavement group listed below. Meetings vary, from sharing, to guest speakers, to special presentations. Separate sharing sessions are offered to new members. Participation in group sharing is confidential and voluntary. Our hope is that being among other bereaved parents you may feel free to talk, cry and share, but it is okay to just come and listen too.

We invite you to bring a picture of your child to display at the meeting for their birth or anniversary month or at any time.

To Our New Members

Making the decision to come to your first meeting can be difficult. It can also be difficult to return for a second or third meeting, but we ask that you attend three meetings before deciding whether or not TCF will work for you. We cannot walk your grief journey for you, but we can take your hand and walk beside you if you allow us to. We have no easy answers or quick fixes, but we care, share and understand. Although our members circumstances may be different, we have all "been there"...we are all grieving the loss of a child and therefore we can truly say we understand. You are not alone.

Meeting and Events Calendar

- Oct. 14 **Monthly Meeting: General Sharing**
- Oct 16 **Basket Bingo** - Northampton Community Center
- Oct 31 **Deadline to submit your child's picture for Remembrance Service Slideshow** - see page 2

Other Local TCF Chapters Meetings

<p>Carbon County 1st Wednesday 6:30 - 8:30 pm Palmerton Community Ambulance Assn. 501 Delaware Ave. Palmerton 610-826-2938 Email: pannbiss@aol.com</p>	<p>Easton 2nd Thursday 7 - 9 pm Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2115 Washington Blvd., Easton 610-866-5468 Email: szabojanosl@verizon.net</p>	<p>Quakertown 2nd Tuesday 7:30 - 9 pm St. Lukes Quakertown Hospital 1021 Park Ave, Quakertown 215-536-0173 Email: tcfquakertownchapter@verizon.net</p>
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Local Children's Support Group

Ryan's Tree for Grieving Children (ages 5-18)

Sessions offered at various times throughout the year.
For information or to register contact Krista Malone @ 610-997-7120 or visit www.slnh.org/ryanstree

TCF Telephone Friends

There are times that you need to connect with someone between meetings ...for those times the following bereaved parents are available to listen, care and share

Infant.....	Cathy McDonald... 610 391-1474	Suicide.....	John & Maria Szabo..... 610 866-5468
Multiple Children/ General Loss.....	Betty Thompson... 610 868-0303	Addiction.....	Nancy Howe..... 484-863-4324
Only Child.....	Shelly Garst..... 484 241-5396	Homicide.....	Ginger Renner..... 610-967-5113

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Newsletter Submissions

Submit articles and poetry to the editor by the first of the proceeding month. Include the author's name & your contact information.

Mail to: **The Compassionate Friends**
Attn: Newsletter Editor
PO Box 149
Bath, PA 18014

Email to: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com



Find us on the web at:
www.lehighvalleytcf.org

and on facebook at:
www.facebook.com/TCFlehighvalley

Events and Announcements



TCF Basket Bingo

October 16, 2013

Northampton Community Center
1601 Laubach Ave, Northampton, PA

Doors open at 5pm, Games start at 7 pm

Tickets: \$10.00 In Advance, 20.00 @ the Door

Come join us and try your luck at winning some great Filled Longaberger Baskets, Specials, Chinese Auction & 50/50. Food, beverages & gourmet candy apples available for purchase.



Also the TCF Children's Memorial Garden coordinator will be on hand with information, brick order forms and selling the "Forever in My Heart" wristbands.

Tickets available at meetings or contact Dawn DeLong @ 610-837-7924



TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting

December 8, 2013

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles to honor and remember children who have died. Candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, creating a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. We encourage you to participate by joining us at our local observance or in your own home.

In Our Area: Tom & Eva Siebert are hosting their annual Holiday Social at their home on Dec 8th at 5:30. Everyone welcome! Covered dishes welcome but not necessary, candles provided.

For Directions & to RSVP call Tom and Eva at 610 967-5886



TCF Joint Chapter Candle Light Remembrance Service

December 9, 2013

Sacred Heart Hospital Auditorium 6:45 - 9pm

All members and families, as well as anyone who has lost a child, sibling or grandchild are invited to attend. The service features music, poetry readings, a slideshow of our children and memorial candle lighting, followed by a social.

For Slideshow: Submissions must be received no later than Oct. 31st

To have your child's photo added to the slideshow request submission instructions by Emailing - TCFlehighValley@gmail.com or calling 484-891-0823

Note: all photos will be returned at the service

Note: Volunteers are needed to help with the service. and sibling volunteers for the sibling wreath lighting and readings. To volunteer contact Kathy Collins at 484-891-0823

Our Children Loved and Remembered Always

Special Days can be especially difficult times. Please keep the families of the following children in your heart this month

Birthdays

Matthew Aungst	Son of Christopher & Mary Kelly Aungst; Brother of Alecia & David Aungst Aungst	Oct 15
Donna Lee Benninger	Daughter of Betty Thompson	Oct 24
Michael Brown	Son of John & Cynthia Coyle; Brother of Josey Brown	Oct 12
Christopher Cole	Son of Donald Cole & Theresa Cole; Brother of Lauren Cole	Oct 10
David DeLong	Son of Gene & Dawn DeLong; Brother of Jamie DeLong; Grandson of David Kaufman; Nephew of Jill Lichty	Oct 23
Gregory Dooley	Son of Marc & Shirley Shubert	Oct 13
Bobby Egner	Brother of Melissa Nice	Oct 13
Nicholas Fetchko	Son of George & Fran Fetchko; Brother of Andrew Fetchko & Rebecca Fetchko	Oct 11
Benjamin Fry	Son of John & Cynthia Chryst; Twin Brother of Jeff Fry; Brother of the late Peter & Paul Fry	Oct 6
Jeanne Hurley	Daughter of Stephen & Jeannette Viglione; Sister of Robert Wambold, Jr.; Sister of Michele Yankowy; Mother of Cole J. Hurley	Oct 12
Carol Johnson	Daughter of Lauretta Coyne; Sister of Elaine Muretta, Bob, Jim & Dave Johnson	Oct 18
David Julo	Son of Jack & Margaret Julo	Oct 1
Jonathan Keller	Son of Dennis & Lori Keller; Brother of Amy Keller	Oct 25
Randy Krieg	Brother of Ryan, Aaron, & Alicia Kreig; Grandson of Gloria Perlis	Oct 15
John Luzenski	Son of John & Audrey Luzenski; Brother of Judy & Jeffrey Luzenski	Oct 6
Ken McMahon	Son of Cheryl McMahon; Brother of Lori McMahon	Oct 4
Cathy Mertz	Daughter of Franklin & Lucille Reinhard; Sister of Cheryl Ann McCue; Mother of Melissa Ann Gurdineer	Oct 28
Russell Nicholson	Son of Jim & Lyn Nicholson; Brother of Rachel Nicholson	Oct 18
Haley Opperman	Daughter of Eddie & Michele Opperman	Oct 21
Anthony Parker, Jr	Son of Melissa Pickett & Anthony Parker	Oct 3
Allison Perno	Daughter of Cathy Perno; Sister of Joseph & Anthony Perno	Oct 7
Jeffrey Pettis	Son of John & Gloria Zucal; Brother of Sherry White	Oct 16
Deanna Renner	Daughter of Ginger Renner & The late Merle Renner	Oct 11
Scott Rothrock	Son of Larry & Linda Rothrock	Oct 20
Elwood Rush	Son of Elwood & Shirley Rush	Oct 4
Julie Searfoss	Daughter of Gregory & Sharon Searfoss; Sister of David Searfoss; Granddaughter of Hilda Smoyer	Oct 7
Larry Shunk	Son of Betty Thompson	Oct 12
Darryl Shurow	Son of Lew & Sharon Richards	Oct 12
Lisa Staub	Daughter of Mark & Louise Stahley; Granddaughter of William & Patricia Johnson	Oct 1
Michael Stocker	Son of Calvin & Kay Stocker; Brother of Megan Fibrick	Oct 14
Pete Swartwood, III	Son of Pete Swartwood	Oct 11
Frank Thiel	Son of Gregg & Debi Thiel; Brother of Ryan, Greg & Adam Thiel; Nephew of Barbara Brennan & Don & Kathy Clarke	Oct 28
Darren Whipple	Brother of Jean Marie Yurkovitch	Oct 27
Kenneth Zellner	Son of Kenneth & Barbara Zellner	Oct 11

Anniversaries

Ryan Balliet	Son of Bruce & Pat Balliet	Oct 10
Kevin Blosky	Son of Jack & Janet Blosky; Grandson of Jack & Nancy Blosky	Oct 4
Michael Brown	Son of John & Cynthia Coyle; Brother of Josey Brown	Oct 15
Brian Burke	Son of Rich & Mary Burke; Brother of Melissa Burke	Oct 9
Nicholas "Nick" Caldarelli	Son of George & Cheryl Caldarelli	Oct 11
Anthony Coccia	Nephew of Jane Coggins	Oct 3
Jessica Coe	Daughter of Randy & Diane Coe; Sister of Allison Coe	Oct 7
Gregory Dooley	Son of Marc & Shirley Shubert	Oct 31
Bobby Egner	Brother of Melissa Nice	Oct 29
Dean George, Sr	Son of Delphin & Sylvia George; Father of Dean A. George, Jr & Lisa George	Oct 9
Jonathan Hoffstetter	Son of Richard & Suzanne Hoffstetter; Brother of Diane & Kenneth Hoffstetter	Oct 1
David Julo	Son of Jack & Margaret Julo	Oct 16
Richard Kulik	Son of Dolores Kulik; Brother of Christina Schantzenbach & Michael Kulik	Oct 27
Paul Levine	Son of Louisa Levine; Brother of Gregory, Mary & Philip Levine	Oct 31
Andrea Luecke	Daughter of Louise Luecke; Sister of Jennae Luecke	Oct 23
John Luzenski	Son of John & Audrey Luzenski; Brother of Judy & Jeffrey Luzenski	Oct 28
Haley Opperman	Daughter of Eddie & Michele Opperman	Oct 21
Anthony Parker, Jr	Son of Melissa Pickett & Anthony Parker	Oct 3
Wayne Petzold	Son of David & Joan Petzold, Sr.; Brother of Amy, Dave & Father of Katie Petzold, Husband of Joan Kay	Oct 8
Caleb Putro	Son of David & Susan Pultro; Brother of David Pultro, Jr	Oct 13
Amanda Rehrig	Daughter of Gary & Roseanne Rehrig; Sister of Ernie Rehrig	Oct 17
Deanna Renner	Daughter of Ginger & The late Merle Renner	Oct 22
Lydia Rice Cobb	Daughter of Virginia Rice	Oct 10
Ryan Ritzer	Son of Sandy Sherrer; Brother of Richard Ritzer, Jr	Oct 22
Justin Schmidt	Son of Kim Boyer & Chris Schmidt; Brother of Amber Schmidt	Oct 16
Thomas Sensinger	Son of Ann Sensinger; Brother of Susan Brown	Oct 9
Phillip Smith	Son of Morgan Smith	Oct 29
Troy Southgate	Son of Donald & Susann Southgate; Brother of Martin Southgate	Oct 30
David Uecker	Son of Susan Uecker-Bittner & The Late Phillip C. Uecker; Brother of Amanda Uecker-Miernicki	Oct 3
Adam Wolk	Son of Michael & Sheila Wolk; Brother of Laura & Sarah Wolk	Oct 22

Fond memories bring the light of other days around me

Thomas Moore

Love Gifts

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends. Our largest monthly expense is the printing and mailing of newsletters to our 400 readers. Your tax deductible Love Gift donations enables the chapter to continue our mission of reaching out to the newly bereaved and providing ongoing support to all our members. Love Gifts are most often given in memory of a child who has died. They may also be given in memory of or in honor of a friend, relative or special person. To make a love gift donation please use form on page 11

We thank the following for their generous donations this month

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| ♥ Michael and Sheila Wolk | Adam D. Wolk
<i>In loving memory of our beloved son</i> |
| ♥ Jack and Nancy Blosky | Kevin Thomas Blosky
<i>You will never leave our hearts, even after 13 years without you</i> |
| ♥ David Bremmer | Hunter Bremmer
<i>In Loving Memory</i> |
| ♥ Jeanette Beilfuss | Rachael Brosky
<i>We miss you like it was yesterday -, Anniversary 9/2000</i> |
| ♥ Don and Sue Southgate | Troy G. Southgate
<i>We love and miss you so very much. All our love Mom, Dad, Marty and Grandparents</i> |
| ♥ Bruce & Debra Keller | Mary S. Poandl
<i>In Loving Memory</i> |
| ♥ Dennis & Lori Keller | Mary S. Poandl
<i>In Loving Memory</i> |
| ♥ Gene & Dawn DeLong | David DeLong
<i>Happy 36th Brithday, David. Miss you and love you everyday. Mom, Dad and Jamie</i> |
| ♥ Stephen & Jeanette Viglione | Jeanne C Hurley
<i>Daughter of Stephen and Jeanette Viglione, Mother of Cole Hurley</i> |

Donations and Contributions

TCF Lehigh Valley Contributors

- ★ *Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown for meeting room and drinks*
- ★ *Mary Ann Donuts, Allentown for meeting snacks*
- ★ *Giant Food Store Employees, Village West, Allentown For United Way Contributions*

- ★ *Aetna Payroll Contributors*

- ★ *United Way Payroll Contributors*

TCF Carbon County Contributors

- ★ *Palmerton Community Ambulance Assn. for meeting room*
- ★ *The Country Harvest, Palmerton for meeting snacks*

Someone has said that children who have died are with us in a constant way that living children can never be. We also know the pain of the reverse of that statement,

that the child who is dead cannot be with us in ways we yearn for, to put our arms around and hold close. But in our hearts, after a while, we come to know the truth of the child's presence, close as our own skin., integral to our life as the beating of our heart.

It is not what we would have wished, but it is a gift, a gracious presence, as are the memories we have, the reflections of the child's personality we may discover in ourselves now, and in others who are close.

Martha Whitmore Hickman, from I will Not Leave You Desolate ~ The Upper Room, Nashville, TN

Halloween - The Start of the Holiday Season

By Erin Silva
TCF, San Diego, CA

We seem to spend so much of our energy as bereaved parents measuring everything by the death of our children. October is no different. Halloween is one of a child's favorite holidays. It is a time of dressing up, going onto the neighborhood for treats and having fun with tricks at the school or in the neighborhood. This Halloween, those of us who have lost children are left with reminders that our children are gone, of old costumes photographs, and memories of Halloweens past, of ghosts, goblins, witches, dragons and famous personalities. Many of us who are in the first year or two of our grief will keep our porch light off and not answer the door to happy trick-or-treaters. We will perhaps sit quietly, watch TV, read a book, or go out for the evening away from the house because those knocks at the door will only remind us that our children are gone and will never dress up again.

Halloween is a reminder to us that the holiday season is now upon us, as harvest time turns toward Thanksgiving and the holiday season of Chanukah, Christmas and New Years. To make matters worse, many will have these difficult times compounded with birthdays or even death anniversaries. No matter how much time has passed since our child's death, no matter how remotely connected the holidays may or may not have been in our children's death, this, the holiday season, is our most difficult time of the year.

So what do we do? Will these holidays always be a tortuous reminder of how much we have lost? Will we always want to escape to another time or place to avoid the pain of separation? How will the holiday season ever be the same without our children? Perhaps those who are much further along in their grieving process may have some answers — perhaps not the answers we want — but they will be able to share their experience as they understand it for themselves. More than likely they will have much insight of great value for us who are still closely connected with our children's death date. For me, I will seek them out and ask questions, probe for feelings, seek for encouragement and advice, perhaps read about those who have developed coping skills to get through these times.

Whatever I do though, I will pay attention to the feelings I have inside as I think about the holidays, refer back to holiday seasons past without my Jacob, and find the best way

to get through in a way that will help me to heal, help me remember some of those wonderful holiday memories while he was still alive, and well and with us. I will pay attention to those things that help me heal, the celebrations that will not hurt but will help, those friends with whom I can feel comfortable, those parties I will attend or politely decline. Above all, I will do what is best for me and for my personal journey of grief. I will try to be strong and have courage to tell people what I want or need or expect this holiday season to help me get through, help me cope, help me heal.

Yes, of course, Halloween will never be the same — it was Jacob's favorite time of the year and I miss him with every fiber of my being, miss his smile, his laugh, his enjoyment of bags of candy and dressing, up and having fun. But the only way for me, for all of us, is through - Halloween, Thanksgiving, Chanukah, Christmas, and New Years - not around or above or under, but through. I know it is difficult. I share my loss and tears and heartache with you, my compassionate friends.

May you find your way through this holiday season in such a way that you will be able to look back and say, I made it through, I will make it through again. I know how much I have lost, but memories instruct my soul with how much I have gained in my life with my child and I will be less afraid of tomorrow. God Bless us all with healing that brings peace, encouragement, and the will to live the rest of our lives in a way that will be tribute to our lost child.



A Season of Many Feelings

By Cinda Schake Butler, PA TCF

Fall is a season of many feelings,
Autumn is here once again as it comes every year.
And with the leaves, my falling tears.
This time of year is the hardest of all.
My heart is still breaking, once again it is fall.
Memories once so vivid are seeming to fade.
My time spent with you seems some other age.
This season reminds me of grief and of pain.
But yet teaches hope and joy once again.
For the trees are still living beneath their gray bark,
And you, my sweet child, are alive in my heart!

Another Choice

By LeAnn Olson - TCF, Coquille, OR

"I don't know how you do it,
I couldn't have done the same."
These sometimes are the words I hear
As I say my daughter's name.
"I had no other choices,"
Is often my reply;
I must learn to live without her,
Or shrivel up and die.

It's way down on the inside
Where one can never see,
Way deep within ...
Is the missing part of me.
It's when you do not see me
That I cry my silent tear,
Or feel the empty hurt inside,
Because she is not here.

I would choose it to be different,
I would choose to feel no pain;
I would choose to only smile,
As I say my daughter's name.
So if you wonder how I do it,
I will quietly raise my voice,
"I wouldn't have done it this way
If I had another choice."

**You never know
how strong
you are until
being strong
is the only choice
you have.**

Masques



By Karen Nelson TCF, Box Elder County, UT

In idle conversation
you ask me about my children.
You are an acquaintance.
I do not know you well
and so I don a masque.
I speak happily of joys,
lightheartedly of mischief,
but I do not speak
of death.

I do not want to see
the shadow of uncertainty
pass your face.
And feel the
awkward silence that falls
like a curtain between us.
I do not want to say,
"It's okay, that was
a long time ago."
I will never be quite "okay"
and sometimes it
seems like yesterday.

And so I take my masque
along with me through life
like a perpetual Halloween night,
to hide just a bit from people
and to preserve my strength.
For mourning is tiring
and each time I recount
that day of death,
I am a little wearied.
I would rather speak
of the joys in his life
than the sorrows of his death,
to strangers
who absently ask of children.

Yet tragedy is more universal
than I had ever known
before it touched my life.
And so at times I wonder
who else looks out from behind
a masque.

In Search of Lost Joy

By DARCIE D. SIMS Ph.D., CGC, CHT

I can't think of anything else I'd rather be doing right now than living.

That wasn't always true. After my son's death there were days when all I could think about was dying, to join my son or just to relieve my pain. Now there is freshness about each day that I never understood before. I got to where I am today because of time and a commitment to rediscovering the joy of life.

Time does help fade the fabric of our grief. As time stretches away from the moment of our child's death, we may begin to grow away from our child. And we cling to that which we know, even though it tears our heart again & again. Is it not possible that one day some-time in the future, we will begin to understand that joy can return as we remember our child's life, not his death?

We once feared we would never be happy again, that only helplessness and darkness would prevail in our lives. But now ten years later, I can share with you the wonderful discovery that we can do more than survive. Survival is not enough, I want to live. We cannot find words to soothe the hurt; there simply aren't any.

We can, however build supports and safety nets. Recovery from death of a child is a matter of choice. Time does help heal over open wounds. Scars form and serve as reminders. Gradually, however we must learn to live with those scars and slowly, let them sink in place. Recovery begins to occur when we can learn to invest our energies, emotions and love rather than seek to replace it. When we completely understand we did not lose our child, recovery is possible. Our child died, but the love we shared between us can never be destroyed.

I cannot reach out alone. I need the love and strength of my new-found family to be a cheering section and a safety network of caring individuals who will support me if I fall, and who believe strongly enough in me to put me back on track to go on again.

The human spirit has an infinite capacity to survive, endure, and grow. It requires both love and faith, strength and support as well. Hurt and pain have

their lessons too, and we cannot rob ourselves of the richness of the tapestry that hurt & love weave together. To eliminate one from the loom is to break the thread & steal away the fabric.

For those of you who are hurting too deeply, whose pain is too fresh, whose child's death is still too close to hear me, I want to give you the message, "HOLD ON, HOLD ON TIGHT." Right now for you, there seems to be little sunshine, little hope and no energy to choose life. So hang on tight.

And if you know parents, who are struggling just to hang on, reach out to them right now. Loan them some of your strength, knowing they will loan you some of theirs when you need it. That's what support groups are all about: helping each other through the valley of the shadow helping each other through the hurt,, helping each other through the anger, the pain, the emptiness, the silence, helping each other rediscover life.

We have to learn to dream new dreams and hope new hopes, and it is here with the love and support of our new family of friends, that our new journey begins. We come here because our children died because we hurt and grieve and ache with a loneliness that at times seems endless. I hope each of you will want to do more than survive the death of our children, and that is to want to live.

Yesterday / Today

Tracy Gadbolds, Ft. Lauderdale, TCF

Yesterday I was angry
 At you, at God, at me, at everyone
 Yesterday my heart was filled with grief,
 sadness, emptiness, confusion, denial
 Yesterday I broke down, gave up on life, me.
 Today I have a new understanding
 A stronger faith,
 A stronger heart,
 A stronger soul,
 Today I miss you,
 Need you, love you,
 Today I smiled, laughed and loved.



Daybreak

By Peggy Kociscin, TCF Albuquerque, NM

The sun creeps o'er the mountain
Through shades of gold and gray,
It bids farewell to nighttime's peace
And greets the dawning day.

An array of gorgeous colors soon
Adorns the morning sky;
From pink to peach to coral-red,
A blessing to my eyes.

Will there ever be a morning, though
Will there ever be a day
When my waking thoughts are not of him
And delightful yesterday?

Each sunrise fills my Spirit with
Its understated grace;
And tries to ease the longing there
To see his charming face.

The poignant and the pleasant.
The bitter and the sweet,
To hold my own throughout each day
is no unobstructed feat.

Within my life - for good or ill -
Another days begun;
Another day without the smile
And laughter of my son.

Do It Your Way

By Mary Cleckley, Atlanta, GA

I think it's only fair to tell you--there is no bereaved parent of the month award, nor an award for the one with the stiffest upper lip! In fact, what you will find--if you try to be the most stoic, brave and strong, the one doing too well--is instead of a reward, you suffer the consequences.

It is not possible to lose someone as vital as one's child and not have the pain of deep grief. You will find a great many non-bereaved people will encourage you to play the old game of "If you pretend you're okay and it's not so bad, we'll let you come and play with us. But if you're going to cry and talk about your dead child, then you can't play."

This is one time in your life you don't have to meet anybody else's standards. There is nothing more unique about you than the way you express your grief and you have that right, however it is manifested. A great deal of how you go about it is determined by how you have handled previous losses.

So, if someone tries to influence you to play the old game by rewarding you with attention because "You're doing so well," tell them you're not doing well. Tell them your child has died and you're hurting. Let them know it doesn't help you for them to pretend everything is okay. Do whatever it is you need to do to survive this trauma, and don't worry about whether it pleases or displeases other people ...DO IT YOUR WAY!

Grief is Like a Bucket of Water

Author Unknown

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.

Sibling Page

Day

By Keefe Vallaro
TCF Siblings of Staten Island

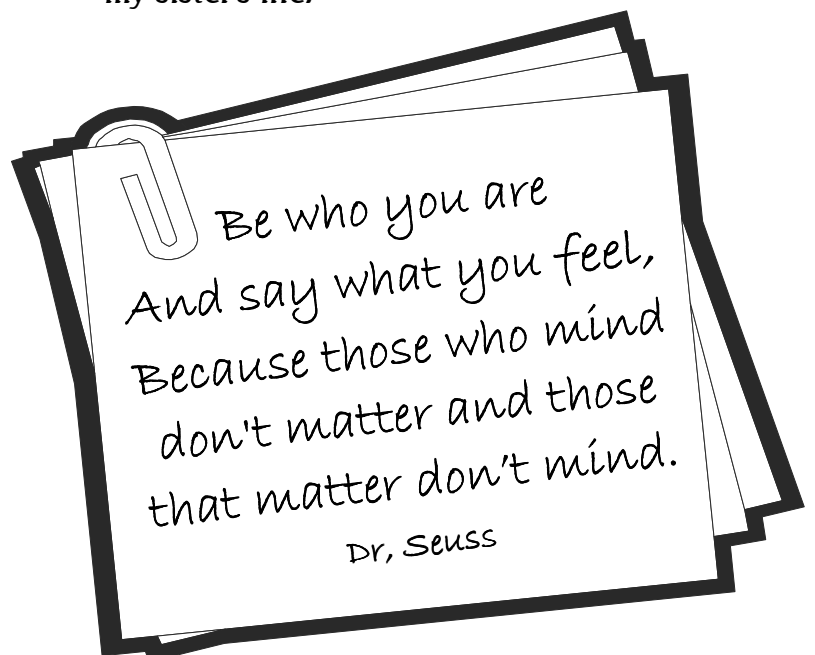
As I wake up every day in the same place;
I turn around to your picture
And see your smiling face.
I think of all the good times we had together,
And I know you will be
Watching over me forever.
When I have a decision
Or choice to make,
I think of the choice you would take.
I wish I could tell you I love you
Just one more time,
As you watch over me
I can feel some of your love
You left behind
As I sit home and cry
I wish you didn't die.
I know that you are happier now,
But I sit home and wonder why and how.
Sometimes the days are difficult to deal with
and I wonder when will it end
Then I take a minute and remember
You are still my best friend.
As the night comes near
I approach my biggest fear
I come home and expect to see you here,
But I feel your presence
And know you're near.
As I go to bed I look at
Your picture once again,
Knowing that when I wake up
In the morning
You will be watching over me
And still be my friend.
Love, your brother, Keefe

Reflections

By Cathy Schanberger, from *This Healing Journey - An Anthology for Bereaved Siblings*
©The Compassionate Friends

With the death of my sister came some painful realizations: that life isn't always fair or predictable; that sometimes even my best still isn't good enough; and that from the day of her death, the happy events in my life would always be tinged with sadness.

Despite the pain and loss, death has also left me with some valuable lessons and precious gifts. As a result of my sister's death, I have a greater appreciation of life and a greater compassion for those who hurt. I have learned to be a survivor and to have a successful career and productive life in the face of tremendous grief and loss. I have been gifted with good friends and special people to help me through the rough times. But most of all, I have been given the gift of time — time to heal and time to replace those painful memories of death with priceless memories of my sister's life.



Love Gift Form

*Please consider making a Love Gift to support the Compassionate Friends today.
Your gift will help defray the cost of chapter expenses such as the newsletter mailings, meetings and our outreach to the newly bereaved.
The Compassionate Friends is a 501c(3) non-profit organization and your donations are fully tax deductible.*

MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE 1ST OF THE MONTH PRIOR TO THE MONTH YOU WISH YOUR GIFT PUBLISHED

Contributor Name _____

Mail to:

Address _____

**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER
P.O. BOX 149
BATH, PA 18014**

Phone _____

Email Address _____

I would like to make a donation In Memory of In Honor of A Chapter Gift (without memorial or honorarium)

Name of person gift given for _____

Edition Month _____ desired publication month . Deadline by the 1st of the prior month

Special Text - Brief Messages Please. Poems & story submissions are always welcome and should be sent directly to the Newsletter Editor for inclusion in the newsletter.

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____ Lehigh Valley Carbon County Easton

Note: Please mail Carbon County & Easton gifts to the addresses below

If your gift is for Lehigh Valley please designate which of the following your gift is for (you may circle more than one)

Newsletter Expenses Postage Office Expenses Outreach Program Special Events

Mailing Addresses for Carbon County and Easton Chapters

The Compassionate Friends, Carbon County
C/O Patti Bissell
365 Drift Rd
Palmerton, Pa 18071

The Compassionate Friends, Easton
C/O John Szabo
1514 Sculac Dr
Bethlehem, Pa 18020

Member Update Form

Please use this form to change or update information or permit publication of child's Birth and Anniversary dates in "Our Children Remembered" (OCR) newsletter section.

Mail this update form to: Kathleen Collins, 2971 Pheasant Dr., Northampton, PA 18067 **or email updates to:** TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com

The following is Change or Update of information Change of Address or Phone Number Permission (check this box to grant OCR publication permission)

Your Name _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Mailing Address (where your newsletter is to be sent to) _____

Child's Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Date of Death _____

Parent's Names _____

Child's Sibling's Names _____

If this is a information change ... please indicate what changes need to be made (i.e. name change, correction, sibling name addition etc...)

TCF Credo

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races and creeds and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that we feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source for strength; while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in a deep depression; while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts and help each other grieve as well as to grow.

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends

Siblings Walking Together

(Formerly Sibling Credo)

We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.
We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters.
Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us.
Sometimes we will need the support of our friends.

At other times we need our families to be there.

Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be.

We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us.

When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed.

We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak.

Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life.

Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

About This Newsletter

This newsletter comes to you courtesy of The Compassionate Friends, Lehigh Valley Chapter with the hope that it will be a helpful resource for you on your grief journey.

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter please contact the newsletter editor by phone at 484-891-0823; by email: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com or by mail sent to TCF Lehigh Valley, ATTN: Newsletter Editor, PO Box 149, Bath, PA 18014

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If you are moving or having your mail held please remember to inform the Newsletter Editor (see information above). If your newsletter is returned to us and we are not notified your name will be removed from the mailing list.

