



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

January-February 2021

Volume 22, No. 1



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS is a self-help, nonprofit organization offering friendship, understanding and hope to families grieving the death of a child of any age, from any cause. When a child dies, at age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides personal comfort, hope, support to every family experiencing the death of a son or daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family. The butterfly signifies a new life for our lost children and a different life for ourselves. It is a symbol of hope, rebirth, and reparation and beauty.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

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THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

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MEETINGS

We have one meeting a month. They are usually held on the 1st Thursday of each month The next two meetings are:

January 7, 2021-ZOOM Meeting
February 4, 2021-ZOOM Meeting

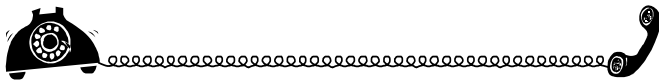
TIME: **7:00 PM**

MEETING **New Life Assembly of God**

PLACE: **27053 Honby Ave.**

Canyon Country, CA 91351

(Please note) This will be our new location for Meetings when we are permitted to have them inside again. More info on page 3.



FOR INFORMATION OR FOR A LOVING LISTENER, PLEASE CALL:

Diane Briones (Leader) 661-252-4654
 Alice Renolds (Co-Leader) 661-252-4374
 Kathy Kelly (Treasurer) 661-724-1450

Linda Stout (Facebook Manager)
 Ellena Cates (Remembrance Secretary)
 Steve Crittenden (Webmaster)
 Jeanne Crittenden (Zoom & Button Manager)



"Sometimes"

Sometimes,
 Memories are like the rain showers
 Sprinkling down upon you
 Catching you unaware.

Sometimes,
 Memories are like thunderstorms
 Beating down upon you
 Relentless in their downpour
 And then they will cease,
 Leaving you tired and bruised.

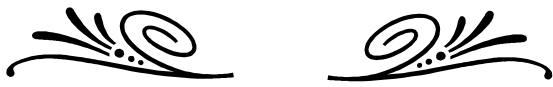
Sometimes,
 Memories are like shadows
 Sneaking up behind you
 Following you around,
 Then they disappear,
 Leaving you sad and confused.

Sometimes,
 Memories are like comforters
 Surrounding you with warmth
 Luxuriously abundant,
 And sometimes they stay,
 Wrapping you in contentment.

~Author unknown

*We can't know why some things happen...
 But we know that love and beautiful memories
 outlast the pain of grief.
 And we can know that there's a place inside the
 heart where love lives always...and where nothing
 beautiful can ever be forgotten.*

~Author Unknown



Shared Thoughts: Resolving To Care For Ourselves

We all approach the New Year very differently. Many cannot wait for the year our child or sibling died to pass, while others feel it separates them further from that person. But, the one thing most newly bereaved agree on, is that they are glad the holidays are over. For some the anticipation was far greater than the holiday itself. When pain and stress control our lives it is very difficult to be optimistic.

We must try to face the New Year with the thought that we will not always be in this much pain. As difficult as it is for us to believe, the pain does soften. One day you will find a tolerable life again. It will not be the same as it was, but in many ways our lives can be richer, for we don't fret over the trivial things we used to. We have learned the real values in life. January is the time of year we struggle to put all our trying events behind us. And begin the year with new expectations. Unfortunately, that does not apply to our grief. We can not "get on with our life: until we have spent sufficient time resolving our grief. All too often, we choose to repress the most painful emotions. They are too difficult to share with others, and we feel too fragile to deal with them. Once unresolved issues become delayed grief, it can be very damaging, and much harder to resolve.

Perhaps, one of our New Year resolutions should be allowing ourselves freedom to grieve. We need to take time to read, attend meetings, phone a friend, cry, walk, eat healthier, and in general remove our name from the bottom of the list of people to care for, we need to place ourselves at the top of the list, making ourselves number one. We cannot always be a reservoir of strength; this may be the time to let others care for us.

We can't expect this to be a good year if our grief is fresh. But, we should expect good things as well as bad. We have survived the impossible ordeal of the death and funeral. We have learned to take one day at a time, and not to set our expectations too high. If a good day comes, cherish it. Many times we have problems with the most important ingredient of recovery, and that is to learn to laugh and be happy again. We feel guilty for that moment of pleasure, and sometimes even feel it disrespectful. This is not a sign of forgetting, or a lack of love, it is a very healthy sign of hope.

~Marie Hofmocker
TCF, Valley Forge PA



A New Year's Resolution

Wow the holidays are over, and once again a new year faces us. For some, the first one without that precious loved one for others, another one of many. The loss is still remembered, no matter how many others we have faced.

What will we do in the coming months? Each hour seems so long and the days seem to stretch ahead forever, as if another year cannot possibly ever come to an end. But friends, it will and we will survive. The road at times is hard and the pain is so hard to bear, but each year we realize that the pain has eased. We never will be totally without this pain of love and shattered dreams, but we will be able to live. This love that is stored in us for our missed child can be spread out to others to help us to ease their pain.

So, in this New Year, let's make a new resolution that our love for our dead child will be brought out of our hearts and given with our best effort to others to help them ease their pain. In so doing, we will find our pain is eased also.

~Thelma Richardson
TCF Mesa County, AZ



Let There Be Light?

The new year comes
when all the world is ready
for changes, resolutions -
great beginnings.

For us, to whom
that stroke of midnight means
a missing child remembered,
for us the new year comes
more like another darkness.

But let us not forget
that this may be the year
when love and hope and courage
find each other somewhere
in the darkness

To lift their voices and speak:
let there be light.

~Sasha Wagner
From: *For You From Sascha*

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

Jan 7 – ZOOM Meeting

Feb 4 – ZOOM Meeting

Welcome New Members



Attending your first meeting takes courage and it is always hard to say “welcome” because we are so very sorry for the reason which made you eligible for our membership in TCF. However, we are glad you found us! We cannot take away your pain but we can offer our friendship and support, Do try and to attend at least 3 meetings so you have a chance to meet others who are bereaved and discover that special acceptance that occurs with new friends who truly understand.

New to our chapter is:
Steve Goodman, parent of Sean

Snowflake

Behold the tiny snowflake
So fleeting, so fragile
Appreciated for its beauty
Though it lasts only a short while

Notice the tiny snowflake
So small when it's alone
Yet it's power is magnified
As they gather and appear as one

The snowflake is like my child
As well it is like my grief
Both singular and personal
Universal and yet unique

You cannot behold my child
For their stay was far too brief
But perhaps you can appreciate their beauty
As it takes form in my grief



*~ Corinne O'Flynn
Lovingly lifted from the
Rowen Tree Foundation's Tree FB page
Lovingly lifted from TCF, Front Range*


New Meeting Location !!

When these crazy pandemic times end and we are able to once again hold our meetings inside we will be at a new location!!!

The church that we were previously meeting at has had to move to a smaller location and there is no room for our chapter to hold our meetings.

We were lucky enough to find a new church that welcomed us with open arms. Our meetings will be held in the Administration building which includes bathrooms, kitchen, and a storage area where we can store our supplies. We will also be fortunate enough to have access to a room next door when we need to separate for two sharing groups. The name of the new church is The New Life Assembly of God located on Honby Avenue in Canyon Country and the Pastor's name is Chris Janiak. Diane and I look forward to seeing everyone at this new location whenever the restrictions are lifted to allow us to have our meetings once again!

We would like to thank Kathy Hilton who graciously stepped up and took in all of our supplies from the old church to store for the time being. The new church is renovating the room where we will be moving into and it is not yet ready for us to move our belongings.

BIG HUGS KATHY!!! 



We're Alike, You and I

We're alike, you and I. We've never met. Our faces would be those of strangers if we met. We would barely perceive the others presence if we passed on our walk through the mists. We're unknown to each other until the terrible words have been spoken:

“MY CHILD DIED.”

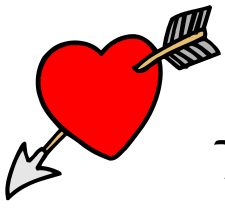
We're alike, you and I. We measure time in seconds and eternities. We try to go forward to yesterday. Tomorrows are for whole people, and we are incomplete now. The tears after a time turn inward to become invisible to all, to save you and me. Our souls have unanswerable prayers:

“GIVE ME BACK MY CHILD.”

We're alike, you and I. The tears that run down your face are my tears, and the wound in your soul is my pain too. We need time, but time is our enemy for it carries us farther and farther from our lost child. And we cry out: **“HELP ME.”**

We're alike, you and I. And we need each other. Don't turn away, but give me your hand and for a time we can cease to be strangers and become what we truly are, a family closer than blood, united by a bond that was forced upon us-but a bond that can make us stronger, still wounded to be sure, but stronger for our sorrows are shared.

*~Judy Dickey
TCF Greenwood, IN*



February: An Arrow Through the Heart

Where has the time gone? How did I live these past five years? I look back to where I was in February 1987, and see that I have indeed come a long way. But what amazes me is that I did it, that somehow I moved along. Perhaps...it's because I realize that if five years of my life have passed since my son died and when I reflect on all of the things our family has not been able to share with him, I am so startled. Or possibly...it's because the winter season has been so mild, like it was the year he died. Maybe, in looking at what his death—in his memory, for ourselves, for him—my emotions are vacillating. Whatever may be prompting me to explore my five-year journey, I am thankful.

I am thankful for my wonderful and not-so-wonderful memories, for the ability still to cry, for the longing within my heart that has become a welcomed companion as I journey forward in life. I am thankful for my dear friends (both old and new), for the direction and purpose my son has given me for my journey, the support my family gives while I pursue my studies. For the compassion and empathy I can feel for others, and the opportunity to reach out to people. Yes, I have many things to be thankful for, and yet, I would give all these away to have my son once again.

But I know that this is impossible; so I will go forward, progress, not waste precious moments in time. Time is both a friend and a foe to bereaved people, but all moments in time are precious—they are what make up our memories.

As I see the decorations for Valentines Day and Cupid's arrow piercing my heart, my loss becomes more vivid because my heart has been broken. Yes, I have "an arrow through my heart", and yes, the connotation of love is also attached to my arrow and heart-only, my heart aches for what is lost. But the pain I feel is because of the great life I had. The experience of that love will never die, the memory of that love, of my beloved son, will live on forever in my heart.

I have decided that it's okay to keep the arrow in my heart; it's always near and a gentle nudge brings back such wonderful memories. As Kahil Gibran so eloquently stated, "When you are sorrowful, look again in your heart, and you will see that, in truth, you are weeping for that which has been your delight."

*~Elaine Sullivan,
Survivors of Suicide*

*Time does not really heal a broken
heart- - -
It only teaches a person how to live
with it.*



Valentine Message

I send this message to my child
Who no longer walks this plane,
A message filled with love
Yet also filled with pain.
My heart continues to skip a beat
When I ponder your early death
As I think of times we'll never share
I must stop to catch my breath.
Valentine's Day is for those who love
And for those who receive love, too
For a parent the perfect love in life
Is the love I've given you.
I'm thinking of you this day, my child,
With a sadness that is unspoken
As I mark another Valentine's Day
With a heart that is forever broken.

*~Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd
TCF Katy, TX*

In February

In February we celebrate the birthday of George Washington & Abe Lincoln, and Lent begins. We wonder if the groundhog will see his shadow, and we have Valentine's Day in the middle of the month. Most people think of Valentine's Day as Sweetheart Day. Candy, flowers, and cards are often exchanged. Many times cards are given and received between parents and children as a way of showing love for one another. Valentine's Day is another holiday on which bereaved parents remember the drawings, cards, and gifts received from their deceased child.

Take time out to be good to yourself. Take time out to remember the child who has died. Perhaps you could remember that child with a special flower, a rose or carnation; or perhaps you could do a kindness for someone in need in his or her memory; or send a card to someone in need of help and understanding. Most of all, take time out to tell your living children and your spouse or that someone special how fortunate you are to have them and how much they mean to you.

*~Lorraine Bauman,
TCF Fairmount, MN*



Love Gifts



Were Received From:

Tom & Alice Renolds
In Loving Memory of their sons:

Tim Renolds
3/17 - 2/17



Danny Renolds
6/22 - 2/17

Loving memories of our sons so dear,
Treasured still with a love so sincere.
In our hearts they are living yet,
We loved them too dearly to forget.

Forever in our hearts,
miss you every minute of every day.
Love You Always Mom & Dad

Bobbie Mathers & Dan Spencer
In Loving Memory of their son:

Peter Spencer
2/5 - 9/4



Gary & Kathy Hilton
In Loving Memory of their son:

Greg Hilton
7/11 - 10/2



Jeff, Tracey, Sandy & Gary
In Loving Memory of their daughter
& granddaughter:

Emily Mogg
4/16 - 1/30



Michele Smith-Davis
In Loving Memory of her son:

Miles Davis
9/1 - 7/28



"Forever In Our Hearts"

Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings

Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays



January

February

Name	Date	Member	Name	Date	Member
Nigel Peddie	1/19	Bruce Peddie	Sammy Thomas	2/1	Dave & Kay Thomas
			William Lemke, Jr.	2/12	Marilyn Lemke
			Edward Evans	2/28	Barbara Evans
			Peter Spencer	2/5	Bobbie Mathers
			Sage Gallegos	2/22	Alex Gallegos
			Lloyd Sreden	2/13	Maxine Sreden



Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates

January

February

Name	Date	Member	Name	Date	Member
Oliva Kares	1/12	Mike Kares	Daniel Renolds	2/17	Tom & Alice Renolds
Sarah Carter	1/26	Shelly Carter	Timothy Renolds	2/17	Tom & Alice Renolds
Edward Evans	1/2	Barbara Evans	Jeanene Sykes	2/5	Ted Sykes
Travis Marton	1/1	Andrew & Ricki Marton	Nigel Peddie	2/1	Bruce Peddie
Eric Rodriguez	1/20	Carlos & Ana Rodriguez	Reese Stout	2/10	Linda Stout
Mindy Siefert	1/25	Debbie Gardner			
Emily Mogg	1/30	Jeff & Tracey Mogg			
Emily Mogg Grandchild	1/30	Gary & Sandy Johnson			

A Winter Day

*The yard covered in winter's white,
Clear blue sky above
Trees cast long shadows
Prairie grasses stand above the snow.*

*The afternoon sun shines brightly,
Reflecting off the snow
A blue-eyed black dog sits in the sun,
Basking in the warm rays.*

*The dried grasses sway to and fro,
In a gentle winter breeze
Small birds sing on a nearby branch,
On a sunny winter day.*

*Phantom footprints in the snow
Children's laughter in the yard
Sounds fading to a whisper,
Ghostly memories of long ago.*



*~Gary Johnson
TCF Winnipeg, MB, Canada*