



The Compassionate Friends
Santa Clarita Valley Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

March-April 2020

Volume 22, No. 2



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.

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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.

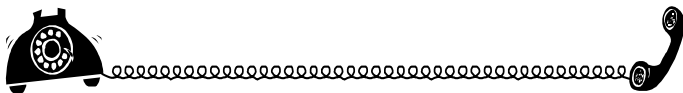
Our next 2 meetings will be on

**March 5, 2020
 & April 2, 2020**

TIME: **7:00 PM**

MEETING PLACE: **Fellowship Christian Church
 26889 Bouquet Canyon Rd., Ste. C.
 Saugus, Ca 91350**

(Take the side street next to the Goodwill store and make a left behind the store, the church is located in that building. Entry to the church is the double glass doors.)



**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 (Remembrance Secretary) 661-202-8638



**A Prayer
 for Spring**

Like springtime, let me unfold and grow fresh and anew from this cocoon of grief that has been spun around me.

Help me face the harsh reality of sunshine and renewed life as my bones still creak from the winter of my grief.

Life has dared to go on around me and, as I recover from the insult of life's continuance, I readjust my focus to include healing and growth as possibility in my future.

Give me strength to break out of the cocoon of my grief, but may I never forget it is the place where I grew my wings, becoming a new person because of my loss.

*~Janis Heel
 A Journey Together
 National Newsletter of BP/USA*

*"We cannot prevent the birds of sorrow
 from flying around our heads,
 but we must keep them from
 building nests in our hair."*

~Chinese Proverb



Grief Work Is Hard Work

When I first began my journey of grief following the death of my only child, Todd, I didn't comprehend that I would have to take an active role in what would come to be defined as "grief work." All I knew was the pain, the shock, the sorrow, the desire to go to sleep and never awaken. My child was dead, and I had no desire to live.

As the months and then the years passed, I began to realize that I was, albeit unconsciously, doing grief work. Once I realized I could not walk this road alone, I became involved in our Compassionate Friends Chapter. That was the beginning of my "grief work." A few months later I enrolled in a six week program for bereaved mothers. More grief work. I have since attended seminars, retreats and workshops. From each effort I gained something new, something insightful, something that eased my burden just a bit, something that helped me to cope with this, the worst, of all losses

I consumed books. Some were about grief; others were about life. I watched movies, some about grief; others were about life. I talked with friends...sometimes about grief and sometimes about life.

Along the way I found that I reached out to others, I was once again, doing grief work. You see, I discovered that grief work is healing work. It doesn't dry my tears, nor does it mend my broken heart. Instead, it allows me to accept that I am in this place and living in this moment. That doesn't sound like much...unless one has lost a child to death. Lost a child to death. What a horrifying thought. Yet now I can say it to others, talk with others who are raw and new in their grief and know that I have come to accept that my son is gone from this plane. My grief work will continue until I die.

When we attend workshops, seminars, special presentations, Compassionate Friends meetings and privately contemplate the death of our loss and changes in our lives, we are doing grief work. Each of us travels this road differently, but we owe it to ourselves to do our grief work. Not easy work, not fun work, not immediately rewarding work, but this is work, just the same.

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

*Like a bird singing in the rain,
let grateful memories survive
in time of sorrow.*



~Robert Lewis Stevenson

Before You Know It



Before you know it,
here's another March
with daffodils and crocus -
any hyacinths?

Before you know it,
here's another sorrow -
the grieving over things
she used to sing about.

Before you know it,
here's another greening
with quiet hope
and modest promise -
listen, when you can.

~Sascha Wagner



A Fork in the Road

Losing a child is like coming to a fork in the road of your life. You never expect nor plan on finding this fork yet there it is right in front of you. Unlike most forks though, there is an obstacle blocking one... of the paths, the path which was life as you knew it. You can't turn around and go back, there is no way around it, and you will most definitely never get over it. Now your choice is to stay at this intersection or to continue down the only path available. Staying put most certainly gets you nowhere, but continuing down the other path seems impossible as well.

I choose to continue down the path knowing that I can still see that other path and the life that could have been. I know that my son would want me to continue down this path as well and that if at any time I stumble down this path, I can look over and see him encouraging me to get back up and to keep going.

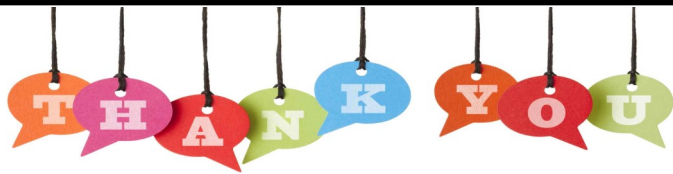
~Samantha Hess

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

March 5 - "Things I've Learned Since The Loss of My Child/Grandchild"

April 2 - "Healing Flowers, Planting & Sharing Our Love"- Our grief process helped by nature, butterflies and gardening.
Please bring a 4" potted flower to be used in a plant exchange at the end of our meeting.



Thank you to those who donate anonymously to our donation basket at our monthly meetings. Your donations and generosity are greatly appreciated and truly don't go unnoticed!

Strangers & Friends

Bereaved parents gather monthly and tell their stories again and again. The pain is evident on their faces yet strength comes deep from within. To simply attend these meetings is courageous. We enter as strangers, and we depart as friends. I've attended our group meetings for over four years. I never had the honor of meeting these children in life, yet I know them intimately-how each lived, and how each died.

Some of us were blessed to have our children several years, and others only a few. Some children lived just a few months, days or minutes-and never took a breath. Still, our pain and emptiness is universal.

Our grief is universally unique. As individuals our journeys lead us in many directions, yet once a month we come together, to tell our stories again and again. These "strangers", these people, I now call friends.

*~Kathy A.
TCF Fort Collins, CO*



We just received a large donation of books to our library. Please take some time to browse through the library shelves at our next meeting, you just might find a good book to help you or your loved ones in their your journey of grief.

Thank you Bobbie Mathers for your loving donation!

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 are:

Trisha Douglas, Mother of Jocelyn

Liza Uriarte, Mother of Michael

Sunday, May 31, 2020

Our Annual
Family Picnic/
Balloon Release

*Mark
Your
Calendar*

For Information in our next newsletter

Dear Compassionate Friends,

It is with sadness and a heavy heart that after 19 years of assisting the Santa Clarita Chapter of The Compassionate Friends that I must give up most of my responsibilities. My father has taken very ill and is taking up most of my time these days. It is my hope that some of you will take over these jobs so that our chapter and our members will still benefit from these services.

Please consider taking on one of the four jobs listed below:

- **Webmaster**-List meeting date & topic each month, add new newsletter every other month, add article regarding candle lighting & balloon release, keep information up to date.
- **Picture Board**-Maintain and make new pictures for board. Must scan photos & print pictures, make frame borders and cut background paper, make cloud names and mount on board.
- **Photo Buttons**-Need to acquire digital copy from parent. Go online with software company and design button, download the design then print. Cut with chapter's circle cutter and then make button with chapter's button machine.
- **Name Badges**-Go to website, input new names, print on card stock and then cut.

If any of these jobs sound like it is something that you might be able to take over, please let me know. I will certainly be able to train you and be there every step of the way!

*~Thank You,
Alice Reynolds, Co-Leader*



A New Season A New Way of Coping

Spring is the season of shifting, sorting and cleaning house. Spring brings with it a sense of renewal, a sense of wanting to lighten the load, clear the air and simplify living. It's a time to clear away the baggage of winter's grief and to shed the overcoat that seemed to shelter us from the pain.

Spring is the time when we get a new sense about the cycles of life. When tulips bloom, trees bud and the garden begins to awaken, there comes a change in perspective. We may be able to see things in a new light, with new vision, with a clarity that can only be borne in the fires of loss. We will never go back to being who we were, but we can establish a new sense of self as we work through our grief. We can create a "new normal" as we learn to adapt to the changing demands of grief. We can get through this time of sorrow, but we will not get over it.

We simply learn to look at things differently in the early light of spring. The death of a loved one teaches us to embrace the moments of our life rather than waste them in search of tomorrow. Grief is a thief, stealing away energy and time, and I no longer want to be a victim of anything. There is so little time in life, when you really think about it. I no longer want to waste any of it. Sometimes I forget and I get caught up in all the "little stuff," like schedules, and chore lists and meetings and appointments.

Then I need to step back, take a breath and slow myself down. Then, and only then, can I begin to hear the new rhythms of whoever I am becoming. I am forever changed because someone touched my life. I want to remember that - always!

The lessons of our losses cannot be ignored nor negated. They simply are too expensive. I no longer want to count what I have lost. I want to acknowledge the blessings of the springs that I did spend with my loved one. I do not want to cloud the joy of our life together with a long list of things that I didn't say, things I didn't do, things I didn't mean.

The line between the living and the dead is so thin that it is not visible, but it separates those who are moving forward and those who are standing still in grief and regret. I will no longer live my life so that I am building up a bank of regrets that will have to be paid at the end of a loved one's life.

The time to say I love you is now. The time to settle the argument is now. The time to give a hug, a kiss, a handshake, an encouragement is now. The time is now, and

now I want to take the time. Funny how that works. When you have too little time, it seems an impossible task to grab more. When you have too much, it seems an impossible task to spend it. The time to live is now.

Live your life in celebration and gratitude of those who have so lovingly shared their life with you. Cherish those moments you spent together and live your new life now with a renewed commitment to living as fully as possible. It is acknowledging and living the pain that brings forth the energy and strength to allow hope and healing to return. No matter where you are, no matter what memories you carry with you, may love be what you remember the most.


~Darcie Sims

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Lovingly Lifted from TCF Atlanta Newsletter

Spring 2004



Easter Thoughts

One more winter overcome,
one more darkness
turned to light and promise.

Winter is the price for spring.
struggle is the price for life.

Even in sorrow, remember
to prepare your heart
for celebration —
next spring perhaps.
Or the spring after that....

*~Sascha Wagner
From Wintersun*

*It may take years before green shoots of hope begin
to appear in your life.*

Be patient and keep looking for them.

They will reappear after your long winter of grief.

~Dennis L. Apple



Love Gifts



Were Received From:

Linda Stout

In Loving Memory of her daughter:

**Reese Marleen
Stout
4/30 - 2/10**



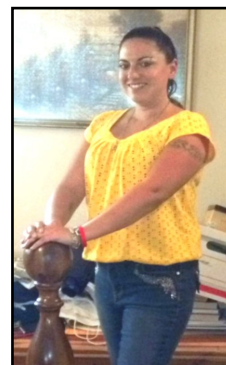
To my child in heaven,
I love you and I miss you.
If I could hold you again,
I would never to let you go.

~Narin Grewal

David & Laurie Millard

In Loving Memory of their daughter:

**Brianna Brandy
Millard Smith
10/6 - 3/30**



Eternal
Mama I wish you were here
I shed many a tear
I feel there's no hope
Without you I did not think I could cope
I miss you mama
Like "Humpty Dumpty" my heart "had a great fall"
My heart will never be "back together again"
"You will never know dear how much I love you"
"My sunshine" was taken "away"
You have God's eternal light
You are in my heart
I will love you forever
I will see you and love you for who you are
My mama

*~by Daniel Smith
Brianna's Son*

Kirk & Dianne Mueller

In Loving Memory of their daughter:

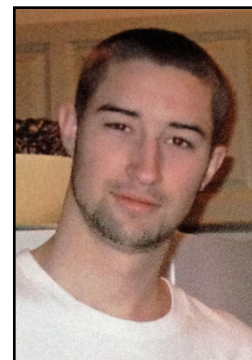
**Melissa
Mueller-Matters
3/26 - 11/3**



Bruce Peddie

In Loving Memory of his son:

**Nigel Peddie
1/19 - 2/1**



"Forever In Our Hearts"

Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings

Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays



March

Name	Date	Member
Timothy Renolds	3/17	Tom & Alice Renolds
Michael Rodriguez	3/7	Debbie DiCorrado
Jeanene Sykes	3/2	Ted Sykes
Melissa Matters	3/26	Kirk & Dianne Mueller
Colleen Brown	3/17	Keith & Lin Brown
Bailey Haney	3/28	Myra Kulick
Melissa Duhe	3/31	Cindy Tiekenski
Alan Bartfai	3/8	John & Susan
Taylor Brand	3/23	Bret & Teresa
Myles Lind	3/6	Cathy Pullum
Jeremy Silverstein	3/31	Mel & Jeniffer
Dallin Tuttle	3/9	Rose Mary Dobbins
Amin Moinzadeh	3/21	Azita Azarpira

April

Name	Date	Member
Erik Fleischer	4/26	Rita Fleischer
Bradley McBurney	4/22	Tammy Gauld
Walter Rodriguez	4/25	Carole Rodriguez
Anthony Amodio	4/28	Lynn Olds
Adam Bouziane	4/15	Laura Erdmann
Melissa Lind	4/23	Marcy Torrey
Reese Stout	4/30	Linda Stout
Nadia Esmaeel	4/20	Deanna Esmaeel
Kevin Rickhoff	4/30	Nancy Rickhoff
Jacob Kaplan	4/1	Michael & Robyn
Emily Mogg	4/16	Jeffrey & Tracey
Emily Mogg Grandchild	4/16	Gary & Sandy



Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates

March

Name	Date	Member
Sean McPhie	3/9	Fran McPhie
Anthony Tumasone	3/18	Brenda Tumasone
Brianna Smith	3/30	David & Laurie Millard
Nicholas Colley	3/28	Scott & Jade Colley
Casey Ray	3/14	Tracey Ray
Aiden Lopez	3/26	Cesar & Jessica Lopez
Aiden Lopez Grandchild	3/26	Carmen Smith
Margaret Smith	3/20	Sally Smith
Monique Gutierrez	3/24	Irene Frenes
Myles Lind	3/18	Cathy Pullum
Jake Vachon	3/25	Michelle Vachon
Tommy Sziklay	3/10	Keith & Lise Parcels

April

Name	Date	Member
Sammy Thomas Grandchild	4/10	Kay & Dave Thomas
Wallace Potter	4/24	Shirley Potter
Michael Arvizu	4/22	Robert & Juanita
Amber Brown	4/15	Mary Ann Mogan
Justin Hakola	4/11	Cheryl Landreth
Aurora Boehlert-Rubinfeld	4/10	Aron & April

Find a Little Time For Spring

Find a little time for Spring,
Even if your days are troubled.
Let a little sunshine in -
Let your memories be doubled.

Take a little time to see
All the things your child was seeing,
And your tears will help your heart
Find a better time for being.



~Sascha Wagner