



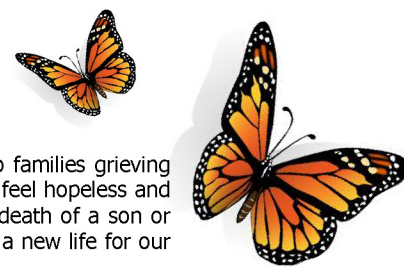
The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

May 2017

Volume XVIII No. 5



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 any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly 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 regeneration and beauty.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
Toll Free (877) 969-0010 *Fax (630) 990-0246
Email: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org
website: www.compassionatefriends.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/TCFUSA
Regional Coordinator: Olivia Garcia 818-212-3506

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

Mailing Address: 27949 Park Meadow Dr.,
Santa Clarita, CA 91387
E-mail TCF.SCV@gmail.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA
website: www.compassionatefriends-scv.org

MEETINGS

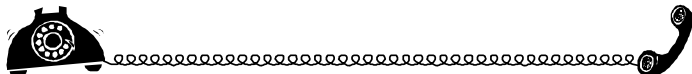
We have one meeting a month. They are usually held on the 1st Thursday of each month.
Our next meeting will be **May 4, 2017.**

TIME: **7:00 P.M.**

MEETING **Fellowship Christian Church**

PLACE: **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
Carol Costin (Treasurer) 661-670-0395
Linda Stout (Remembrance Secretary) 661-202-8638



A Mother's Love

I need no pictures
to remember your warm smile
the lines of your face
are embedded in my memory of you.
I gave you life
in once second of pain,
for which you returned 13 years of yourself--
sometimes quite, sometimes noisy,
Sometimes
I hear a voice that sounds like you,
and I pause.
That page of hurt stems from a tiny, empty
spot you have left in my life.
I carried you in my womb,
then later in my arms.
But I will carry you
in my heart forever.

~Joy Morning, written for friend
Ginny Petczynski, TCF-Phoenix, AZ

*What we have once enjoyed
we can never lose.
All that we love deeply
becomes a part of us.*

~Helen Keller





GRIEF: OUR ACT OF LOVE

"I had a child who died." How simple these words are, yet how painful they are to say. The death of a child is the harshest blow life has to offer; it destroys our trust in the world at the most basic level. Grief is our total response to the death of a child; our body, mind, emotions and spirit all react to the loss. While many of us wish to stop the intense grief work we are doing, we find it impossible for many reasons.

First, grief is an act of love, not a lack of strength or faith. The more we loved our child, the greater will be our grief. The more integrated our lives were with the life of our child, the more we will miss his or her very presence. The intensity of our grief is often representative of our love.

Second, grief is a necessary process that we must go through in order to maintain our wholeness and sanity. If we do not grieve, we will not heal. One of the earliest and hardest lessons we bereaved parents learn is that men and women grieve differently; women, in general, grieve more openly than do men, and women, on the whole, are more comfortable verbally expressing their feelings of loss. While segments of our culture indicate it is more "manly" not to cry, we know this is not true.

Grief work also helps us to complete unfinished business with our child and close the past relationship that we had. We will never "get over" the loss of our child, nor would we ever really want to. We are who we are partly because of our relationship to that child. Our lives will always be influenced by our son or daughter, but most of us will eventually learn to live a meaningful life, despite our tragedy.

Our child will always be with us in spirit and in love, and we often feel a need to hold on to tangible items, such as toys or clothes, to maintain that feeling of closeness. But, intense grief work allows us to let go of the relationship we had and create a new relationship with our child. Our remembrances, love and feelings of oneness with our child can never be destroyed. I cannot see nor touch my Philip, but I vividly remember him. I have completed earthly mothering, but I still have an intense mother-child relationship with my son.

Grief over the death of a child is the hardest work that most of us will ever do. While we all wish for the pain to stop, we need to remember that we grieve intensely because we loved intensely. It is unrealistic to expect that grief to ever totally go away, because the love we have for our child will never go away. Our grief is an act of love and is nothing for which we should be ashamed.

*~Elaine Grier, Philip's Mom
TCF, Atlanta, Georgia*

*"A mother's love is like a circle,
There is no beginning,
There is no ending."*

~unknown



Hands

Little handprints
in a frame,
Flashback of memories
days long gone,
yet still so fresh in my mind
as if only yesterday.

Tiny hand of my baby girl,
Fingers curled around my own,
Only a reflex to some,
But not in my mind,
For me only the purest
of loving connections.

Outstretched toddler hand
reaching out for mine.
trusting mother's protective grasp,
maneuvering the busy streets,
we skipped together,
hand-in-hand.

Slender-fingered teenage beauty,
polished nails, smooth scented hands.
Seeking independence,
Hands pushing me away,
Sensing somehow her reluctance,
Not really ready, not quite yet...

Hands of her adult years,
I thought would have held mine
as I navigated through the ageing years.
Hands to comfort and hold, but never to be,
I am left only with my memories,
and tiny handprints,
in a frame...

*Cathy Seehuetter
TCF St. Paul, MN
In Memory of my daughter, Nina*

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

May 4 - "What To Do For Mother's Day??"

May 21 - Balloon Release/Family Picnic

June 1 - "Still Their Fathers"

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:

Nancy Rickhoff, mother of Kevin



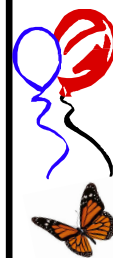
Submit a Child's Name for TCF's National Walk to Remember

If you are unable to take part in the National Conference Walk in Orlando, FL on July 30, we invite you to submit a child's/grandchild's/sibling's name so that it can be lovingly carried by volunteers who will carry hundreds of pages of names of children loved, missed, and remembered during the Walk to Remember.

When a child dies in a family, life as that family knows it is never the same. They learn to cherish the ways in which they can have their child remembered. You can be a part of this heartfelt event by sending them the names of the children whose memory you wish to honor. There is no charge to have a child's name carried during the Walk, but donations are appreciated which support national outreach.

Also, new for the first time National is offering the opportunity to sponsor a personalized walk sign that would include your child's/grandchild's/sibling's photo and name. The walk signs will be featured along the walk route.

To submit a name or order a sign, please go to the National website: www.compassionatefriends.org and click on News & Events; Walk to Remember, then Submit a Name.



Don't Forget

Balloon Release Family Picnic

Sunday, May 21 @ 1:00
Bouquet Canyon Park
28127 Wellston Dr.,
Saugus

Invite your family, and friends to join you for this fun family picnic, a small program and balloon release. Our chapter will provide the main course, paper goods, dessert and balloons. All you need to **bring** is a **side dish** to share, your **own drinks** and chairs or blanket for sitting.

Please make sure to **RSVP** by **May 12** to Carol 661-670-0395, Alice 661-252-4374 or email our chapter at TCF.SCV@gmail.com

Surviving grief isn't an *event*.

It's a *process*.

Take it *day-by-day*
and welcome *comfort*
wherever you find it.



THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

~ author unknown



Mother's Day Brings Joy and Pain

Mother's Day used to mean special times, great moments, sweet gifts and acknowledgement of the deep bond that Mothers share with their children. I have many happy memories of Mother's Days past. Their value is incalculable.

But that was before...everything now is measured in "before" and "after." When I lost my only child, Mother's Day changed. Now Mother's Day has a different meaning...one that is not as happy as it once was, but one that still reinforces the many years I shared with my son on this earth.

I was considering this strange paradigm, this shift in my thinking over the past six plus years, and I have come to the conclusion that eventually bereaved parents begin to accept the death of their children on a subconscious level. But before that happens, our subconscious minds wage war on our conscious minds and we experience such terrible emotional lows. It's an internal fight for each of us. Along with the fight to survive, to acquire the will to continue living, we are battling internal forces that must resolve themselves. Once that eternal war ends, our healing begins. We will always love and miss our children. We will always shed copious tears for no reason. But something inside of us has shifted, shaping our perspective from this point forward.

So this Mother's Day I will acknowledge my beautiful son, the wonderful life that he lived, the joy I received in raising him and the wisdom I acquired through the gift of my child. We learn unconditional love when we become mothers. We learn foresight, gentleness, joys in the simple elements of life. I will remember past Mother's Days and think of the wonder that is my only child. I will remember him with much love, more than a few tears and a special sense of thankfulness that his life graced mine for over 35 years.

I will honor the fact that I am a mother. Although my son does not share this earthly plane with me, he is forever my child and I am forever his mother. This is a bond that time, space and death do not alter. Quietly, with serenity and peace in my heart, I will mark this Mother's Day doing what I want to do. I will know that when I get there. Live in the moment, that's another element of life that I learned from my son.

We are each unique on our grief journey, and we will each mark this Mother's Day in a different way.

Whatever your choice might be, make it your day...your day to celebrate the eternal bond between mother and child. There is nothing more beautiful.

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



Happy Mother's Day

Happy Mother's Day to those of you who have only dreamed of a child you could never conceive.

Happy Mother's Day to those of you who never got to feel your child flutter in your womb for he was gone too soon.

Happy Mother's Day to those of you who went through labor to hold a still, silent yet perfect angel baby in your arms.

Happy Mother's Day to those of you who looked day by day at your healthy baby only to find her silent, cold and gone one day.

Happy Mother's Day to those of you who fought hard and whose child fought harder for a life too short.

Happy Mother's Day to those of you who knew the day was coming when you would no longer hold your child yet you gave him a full life.

Happy Mother's Day to those whose child was 4 or 5 and brought you crushed wildflowers last year but who have gone on since then.

Happy Mother's Day to those of you who could no longer pick up your baby because she was too big, but in the end you rocked back and forth invaded by grief.

Happy Mother's Day to those of you who raised your children well but had to bury them all too young, all too soon.

Happy Mother's Day to all who are mothers whether they cherish their children all on earth or they spend Mother's Day enthralled by their grief for a brief moment in time.

Were we more mothers then, than now? **NO!**
Be clear and let no one take away our right of motherhood!!

*~Jean Stewart
Mother to Rebecca "Becca" Stewart 10/16-1/1
& Christopher Stewart 1/18-1/18
Lovingly Lifted from TCF South Suburban Evergreen, IL
Vol. XI #5 Newsletter*



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 your child die each day. The smile that was always on her face is no 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 goes slowly 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 to 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 here.

*~Ruth Eaton
TCF Savannah, GA*

*We can't know why some things happen . . .
But we can 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



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
<http://www.bereavedparetsusa.org>*

Love Gifts



A Love Gift is a wonderful way to remember your child, grandchild, or sibling's birthday or angel dates or just to say I love you. What better way than to have their photo included in our newsletter along with a special memory, thought or message, article or poem from you.

If anyone would like to make a donation in memory of their child, grandchild, or sibling you may give it to Alice or Diane at our meeting or mail it to Alice at 27949 Park Meadow Dr., Canyon Country, 91387. You can also email the info to TCF.SCV@gmail.com Love gifts should be received by the 10th of the month to be placed in the following month's newsletter. What a special way to share and remember your loved one!

Our chapter exists solely on voluntary, tax deductible donations. We thank you in advance for any donations you may be able to give or send. Your donations help to pay the expenses of our newsletter, purchase books & brochures, coffee & refreshments, new member's packets, our rental space and other miscellaneous supplies. They also fund our annual Balloon Release and Candle Lighting programs. We sincerely appreciate your support!



"Forever In Our Hearts"

Our Children/Siblings/Grandchildren Remembered

May 2017



Name

Birth

Angel

Relationship

Date

Date

<i>Daniel Lee Lieberman</i>	<i>5/4</i>	<i>12/31</i>	<i>Son of Dot Lieberman Brother of Dayna & Jason</i>
<i>Elona Lynn Widman "Loni"</i>	<i>5/3</i>	<i>5/2</i>	<i>Daughter of Shirley Shields Sister of Robby, Danielle, Jacob</i>
<i>Dwaine Michael Laub</i>	<i>10/6</i>	<i>5/29</i>	<i>Son of Stephen & Mary Trimmell Brother of Hallie</i>
<i>Jeffrey Todd Costin</i>	<i>5/17</i>	<i>9/3</i>	<i>Son of Richard & Carol Costin Brother of Kim Carone</i>
<i>Michael Eddie Arvizu</i>	<i>5/6</i>	<i>4/22</i>	<i>Son of Robert & Juanita Arvizu Brother of Angela</i>
<i>Santos Arturo Aguilar, Jr.</i>	<i>5/12</i>	<i>2/13</i>	<i>Son of Santos & Carol Aguilar Brother of Alan, Alaina, Salina</i>

If, in remembering our children, there are any errors or omissions, we are truly sorry! Please let us know of any corrections or additions as soon as possible so they may be incorporated into the database.

