



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

May-June 2021

Volume 22, No. 3



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 re-creation and beauty.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

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TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA

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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:

May 6, 2021-ZOOM Meeting

June 3, 2021-??? See page 3

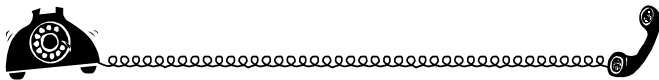
TIME: **7:00 PM**

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.



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)



Thought For The Day

It is not easy returning to the world of normalcy when your world is upside down.

It is not easy to stop being a mother or father to your child that as died.

The thought for the day is a word — **patience**

...**patience** with yourself who suddenly and powerlessly has been thrown into this horrid nightmare;

...**patience** with relatives and friends who wish to help but seem to hurt with hollow advice and logical words;

...and **patience** with time, for it takes time to adjust, and time can move so slowly.

PATIENCE!

~Rose Moen

TCF Carmel-Indianapolis, IN

As surely as day follows night, and Spring follows Winter life does follow grief. The memories that bring tears to your eyes will one day bring healing.

~Unknown



Mother's Day: A Father's View

In our house, as in other bereaved parents' households, Mother's Day comes with mixed emotions.

Setting aside a day to honor motherhood is only right; mothers do tend to be taken for granted. I remember the childhood joy of getting my mother a special gift, even if it was only a crayon drawing. As an adult, buying gifts for your mother and the mother of your children still brings back those happy childhood memories.

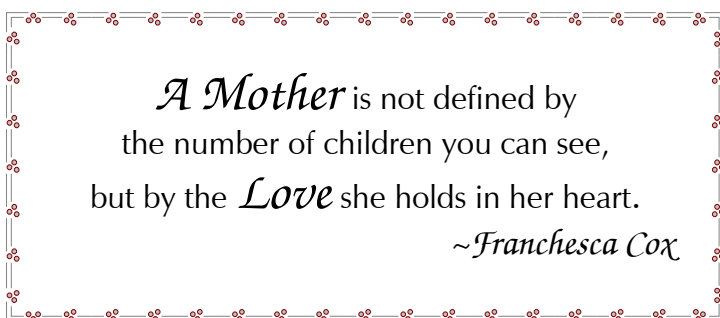
But this changed after Erin died. Looking through all the cards at the gift shop only reminds me of this irony. Cute, humorous, sweetly sentimental cards await the bereaved father shopping for his grieving wife. I can't find the card that will comfort my wife on this day, and even worse, I'm afraid that I'll buy a card that will bring back only painful memories of the child she lost.

I realize this day, perhaps because it is so widely celebrated, can even years later take my wife back to grieving she thought she was "through with." I can never do enough on Mother's Day; maybe I try to do too much. I know, of course, that all the cards, gifts, flowers and messy breakfasts in the world can't make up for the loss of our child. But I still do these things; she deserves them.

The unfairness of our daughter's death will always be there. I know I can't change that with a card. But I can remind her she is a great mother, a loving mother, and, most importantly, she is still the mother of the child we lost.

If she's happy on Mother's Day, I will try to keep her there. If she's depressed, I'll try to cheer her up as best I can, even though I feel I'm not very good at it. This, then, is the wish I have for her and for all bereaved mothers on this day: Please be as happy (and proud) as every other mother today; no one can dispute the fact you brought your child into the world. Although that child is no longer with you, the love you had can never be taken away from you. If you should be depressed, may there be family and friends there to remind you of this and comfort you. To Chris and to you:
Happy Mother's Day.

~Al Botz,
TCF Cleveland, OH



A Mother's Love

A mother's love for her child may begin with the very dream of becoming a mother...

A mother's love for her child may begin with the thought of maybe expecting the news...

A mother's love for her child may begin with the verification of her expectations...

A mother's love for her child may begin With the affirmation that child lives within her...

A mother's love for her child may begin with her first sight of the new life that she has delivered into the world...

A mother's love for her child may begin...

But it may never end...

Not even death can steal away a mother's love for her child

A mother's love for her child knows no end!

~Diana M. Rohrbaugh
TCF Anne Arundel County, MD

On this Memorial Day, we honor all who sacrificed to make our country free. This includes all the children, siblings, and grandchildren who never came home alive, and also their families that would never again be the same.



Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

May 6 – ZOOM Meeting

June 3 – ??????

May Zoom Meeting June Regular Meeting???? Celebrate Their Birthday!

We hope you, all of your family members and friends have been safe and healthy during these trying times. Our heart goes out to anyone who has been touched by this terrible pandemic!

Our May meeting will continue on as a virtual meeting but there is a possibility that we will be able to hold our June meeting at our new facility. All CDC guidelines will be followed. We are looking for feedback as to how many of you would feel comfortable coming back to a in person meeting. Please contact Diane or Alice with your input. We hope that you will decide to join us for the May 6 meeting via Zoom where we will be discussing this as well. Remember you can use a smartphone or tablet if you do not have a computer. Please contact Jeanne Crittenden either by phone or text at 478-2948 or email joriesgirl56@gmail.com if you would like to have the link sent to you for the zoom meeting or would like further information. If you already attended the first meeting, you will be sent the link automatically,

If you are joining us for a Zoom meeting and it is your child or grandchild's birthday that month we would love to celebrate their birthday. Please have a photo or item ready to share!

We know that a Zoom meeting is not for everyone, but TCF wants you to know that you can reach out to us for support with a phone call or Facetime. Please reach out to the names below for some personal comfort and support. Diane 661-252-4654, Alice 661-252-4374, Kathy Kelly 661-724-1450.

"Listening can turn grief into growth. We do not take grief away from people; we simply help them walk through it—by talking it out. They need to talk to be a good listener. A good listener is a walking, touching personal intensive care unit."

*~Comforting Those Who Grieve:
A Guide for Helping Others by Doug Manning,
From a chapter entitled "Listen"*

Bereaved Parents



Different ages
Different stages
Different issues

Same pain
Daily strain
Occasional tissues

Our children have died
Often is all we know
A fact we fear to hide

Despite our ever-present woe
We live with pride
Though broken-hearted
To love, remember, and grow

*~Victor Montemurro
TCF Medford, NY*

News From National TCF



**Save The Date!
TCF's National
Virtual Conference
July 16-18, 2021**

Although we would all love to be together in person, you can still connect, get support and gather as a community through TCF's National virtual event. More details about this three-day conference are coming soon, including number of sessions, registration prices, and early bird prices and dates. Please check their website for updated details at www.compassionatefriends.org

Rising Together In Grief & Hope Video

Recently, The National Compassionate Friends offered a virtual event Rising Together in Grief and Hope, featuring David Kessler, Shari O'Loughlin, and David Wood. All three of our inspirational speakers suffered tragic losses of children and siblings and were able to transform their experiences into helping others. In addition to their presentations, there is a Question & Answer panel at the end of the video where our speakers answer questions from attendees. This event was recorded so that all would have the opportunity to view it. If you are interested in viewing this video, please go TCF National's website at www.compassionatefriends.org



A Grieving Dad's Father's Day Thoughts

It has been five Father's Days since my wife and I lost our beautiful daughter Andrea (Andi) to the war in Iraq. We didn't make a big deal of Father's Day when Andi was alive, but now this holiday is very special to me—a time when I reflect upon my obligations and blessings as a husband and a father.

For almost a year after Andi died, when my family needed me the most, I was emotionally paralyzed. I was so tangled in the "web of grief" that I blamed myself for Andi's death. *Why hadn't I done everything in my power to keep her from going to Iraq?*

I could not cope with Andi's death until I began realizing how brave commitment to peace inspired her mother, me and people around the world. We created a foundation in Andi's name that provides scholarships to young women who want to use their talent and skills like Andi did—to make this a better world.

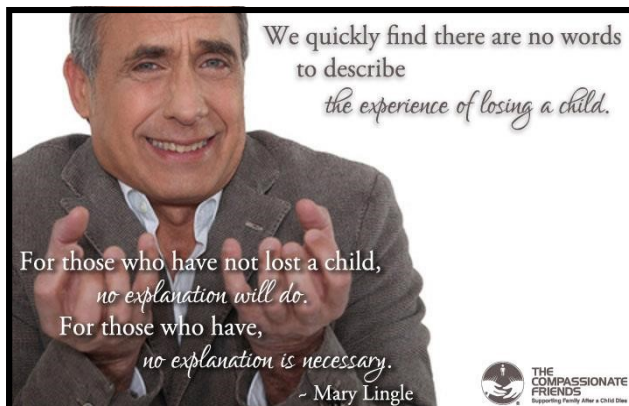
I like to think that I have an emotional heart. Like my physical heart, it has four chambers. Each chamber represents one of my four children, with the whole heart embodying me and my wife and the unity of our family. Andi's spirit will live on in the Andi chamber of my heart.

Losing a child is terrible. The pain is always there. Some days are better than others. But I think I've learned a few lessons that may be helpful to others in their grief:

- * In order to live with your grief you must learn to forgive yourself. You must release yourself from the remorse you feel for not having said "I love you" more, for not giving your loved one more hugs.
- * Each person grieves differently—you must respect that in yourself and others.
- * Do not be afraid to cry. Crying helps to "rinse" the sadness from your soul.
- * Saturate your mind with positive thoughts. Try to remember that your loved one would want you to live a happy and productive life.

I get solace from reading the accounts of other people who have suffered losses. It helps me to know that I am not alone in my grief. And that also helps me to remember that it is possible to lead a productive life that is full of love even when you are sad.

*~Andre Parhamovich
The Compassionate Friends,
We Need Not Walk Alone
Summer 2012*



Sometimes



"Sometimes, I still don't believe it."
 My husband said to me.
 We had gone to bed, said our goodnights
 And were resting comfortably.
 My reply was short and to the point.
 I simply said, "I know".
 Though it's been eight years since you have died
 Chip, we miss you so.
 The memories of our life with you
 Are treasures that we share.
 For nineteen years we loved you well
 While you were in our care.
 So once again we said goodnight.
 But before this we did pray.
 This was a very poignant night.
 This night was Father's Day.

*~Nancy McKeaneey
In loving memory of my son, Chip
TCF North Penn Chapter, PA*



Father's Day

Father's Day not a big holiday like Christmas or Thanksgiving, but one that holds a lot of meaning for those to whom it applies. For first-time fathers, that Sunday in June brings a feeling of joy and pride. For a long-time dad, it's a reminder of the fulfillment which children may have brought to his life. For those men who have lost a child, it can be a painful time. For those who must endure their pain in secret and in silence, either through their own desire for that approach or through society's expectations that they must be strong and controlled, it can become a horror. But we in TCF wish to acknowledge the day because the death of a child does not negate the parenthood of the dad who loved him or her.

Love for ones offspring does not die when the body dies and death does not succeed in robbing us of our parental identity. We wish all bereaved fathers a day of peace. In the midst of the grief and loss, may you experience a taste of good memories and remembered love for your child.

*~Betty Roehm
TCF Mesa County, CO*

Love Gifts

Were Received From:

Elaine McAlpine
In Loving Memory of her son:

Daniel McAlpine
6/27 - 8/29



*Your presence we miss,
your memory we treasure.*

*Loving you always,
forgetting you never.*

~Unknown

Memory

There is a place called memory,
Where we sometimes like to roam.
Through hills of love and laughter
A place we know as home.

A place that's free from all this pain
Where our hearts are light once more.
A place that lives forever,
Where life is, as it was before.

Our children live in memory.
They laugh and dance and sing.
Their lives are filled with a magic
That only Heaven can bring.
They feel no hurt or anger.
Their spirits are free as air.
And God's love will always protect them
In times when we aren't there

Cherish this place called memory.
Feel the love that lives there.
Remember the joys, the warmth of the sun,
And the bond you will always share.

Smile at happy moments,
Laugh at times gone by.
Let the tears you cry be happy ones,
Know love will never die.

Have no fear of visiting, the joy will outweigh the pain.
Learn to treasure memory for there is much that you will gain.
And though life is not as it was before,
And never will be again.
Our memories are much richer,
Than if love had never been.

*~Lovingly lifted from:
TCF Brazosport, TX Chapter Web-Site*

Jeanne & Steve Crittenden
In Loving Memory of their daughter:

Sarah Crittenden
5/30 - 10/20



Shades of Grief

Grief
Doesn't have to be
All tears
Of stark bereavement.
Grief, in sorrow, can walk aside - beside - along.
Touching my hand.
A gentle break in my thoughts.
Just always though.
Grief is Just Always.

*~Kate Bounds
We Need Not Walk Alone, Winter 2021*

"Forever In Our Hearts"

Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings

Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays



May

June

Name	Date	Member	Name	Date	Member
Jeffrey Costin	5/17	Richard & Carol Costin	Daniel Renolds	6/22	Tom & Alice Renolds
Michael Arvizu	5/6	Robert & Juanita Arvizu	Darren Bullock	6/15	Carol Lock
Monique Gutierrez (Grandchild)	5/29	Irene Frenes	Cyrena Becerra	6/11	Mona Gonzalez
Sarah Crittenden	5/30	Jeanne Crittenden	Daniel McAlpine	6/27	Elaine McAlpine
Selena Cates	5/30	Eric & Elena Cates	Nicki Kent	6/15	Beth Kent
Selena Cates (Grandchild)	5/30	John & Joanne Campos	Mindy Siefert	6/7	Debbie Gardner
			Michael Uriarte	6/21	Liza Uriarte



Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates

May

June

Name	Date	Member	Name	Date	Member
			Erik Fleischer	6/28	Rita Fleischer
			Brian Berry	6/30	Steve Berry
			Christopher Rodriguez	6/13	Barbara Rawson
			Steven Sprague	6/18	Marie Sprague
			Michael Kelly	6/10	Kathy Kelly
			Michael Uriarte	6/3	Liza Uriarte
			Selena Cates	6/17	Eric & Elena Cates
			Selena Cates (Grandchild)	6/17	John & Joanne Campos

Missing You

No words I write can ever say,
 How much I miss you every day.
 As time goes by the loneliness grows,
 How I miss you, nobody knows!
 I think of you in silence, I often speak your name
 But all I have are memories and photos in a frame.
 No one knows my sorrow. No one sees me weep.
 But the love I have for you,
 Is in my heart to keep.

Deep inside my heart, you are with me still.
 Heartaches in this world are many.
 But mine is worse than any.
 My heart still aches as I whisper low,
 "I love you and I miss you so."
 The things we feel so deeply, are often the hardest things to say.
 But I just can't keep quiet any more, so I'll tell you anyway.
 There is a place in my heart, that no one else can fill.
 I love you so, my precious!
 And I always will.



~Author Unknown