



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

March-April 2022

Volume 23, 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.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

48660 Pontiac Trail #930808

Wixom, MI 48393

Toll Free (877) 969-0010

Email: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

Website: www.compassionatefriends.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TCFUSA

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

Mailing Address: 27949 Park Meadow Dr.
Santa Clarita, CA 91387

Email: tcf.santaclarita@gmail.com

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA)

TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA

Website: www.compasionatefriends-scv.org

MEETINGS

We have one meeting a month. They are usually held on the
1st Thursday of each month

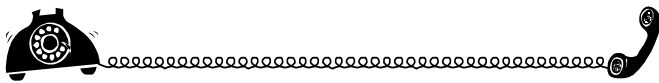
**PLEASE NOTE: MARCH 3 MEETING CANCELED
DUE TO NO MEETING ROOM**

**April 7—Look for update of location
in email or postcard**

TIME: **7:00 PM**

MEETING

PLACE:



FOR INFORMATION OR FOR A LOVING LISTENER, PLEASE CALL:

Diane Briones (Leader) 661-373-5070

Alice Reynolds (Co-Leader) 661-252-4374

Kathy Kelly (Treasurer) 661-724-1450

Linda Stout (Facebook Manager)

Ellena Cates (Remembrance Secretary)

Steve Crittenden (Webmaster)

Jeanne Crittenden (Button & Angel Board Manager)



Getting Better

My tears feel warm on my cheeks now...not
burning hot.

Is this a sign I'm "Getting Better?"

When I cry now I am most often alone—in the
car, or in the shower, or sometimes taking a walk.

I do not cry in public or feel as much panic...

Is this a sign I'm "Getting Better?"

I sleep the night through sometimes...and awaken
without tears... for awhile...

They come now while I'm brushing my teeth...

Or making coffee...

And always gone before I say "Good Morning"

Is this a sign I'm Getting Better?

I am able to hug again...

And laugh and read and eat...

Is this a sign I'm "Getting Better?"

Yes, I think so... but when does the pain end?

Perhaps when I no longer ask

Is this a sign I'm "Getting Better?"

~Shirley Blakely Curle
TCF Little Rock, AR

*With each story, each tear,
and each tender memory...
a life long or short, such as your child's
will always fill a place
in your heart.*

~unknown



In March

The year moves on.
 Between the weeks and days
 are spaces filled
 with more than only time:
 those minutes, moments,
 when you life stands still
 and aches in memory...

And part of you
 needs to endure the dark,
 because it means
 to have that love again.
 And part of you
 prays for forgetfulness,
 because your mind
 may break, remembering.

Between the weeks and days
 are spaces filled
 with more than only time.

~Sascha Wagner



Hidden Emotion

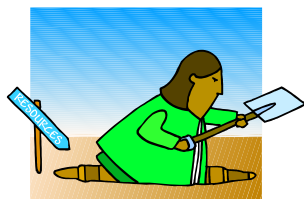
Hidden deep inside my breast is a longing that has been suppressed. The feeling is always there... longing...longing to see you, to hug you, to know who you are at this time in your existence. It stays hidden for a period of time and then...when I least expect it...rises to the surface and must be tended to.

At times I feel as if I cannot breathe, as if I will suffocate trying to suppress the pain. At other times a tear comes from nowhere and trickles down my cheek. Occasionally, something inside of me explodes causing me to weep uncontrollably.

I can only guess what causes these unbidden emotions. Is it the song that's playing on the radio? Can it be the changing of the seasons? Do the budding trees beginning new life cause me to let down my guard? The longing never goes away.

I feel the passing of years, I have learned that if I can hang on for just a little longer, these emotions...strong as they are...will pass and I can live again with the longing deep inside my breast.

*~Shirley Muller
 TCF Lafayette, IN*



Filling In Holes

Today, my husband and I went to the nursery and bought some flowers and bedding plants to go in our gardens. Spring is here, and the weather is beautiful. Not cold all...but also not so hot that the thought of puttering in the garden brings a groan of dismay.

I remember my first Spring in this house. We were so excited. Our family was nearly complete. Our third son was on his way, and we had just had a house built. We were at the plant nursery at least once a week. Our life was busy, bright, untainted by grief.

I remember our second Spring in this house. How winter hung on, tenacious, unyielding, both outside, and in our hearts. I remember the first warm Spring day. I came home from work early, determined to make SOMETHING grow in my life. Maybe I couldn't get my son to live, but I was going to make something live.

Grief was a raw, open wound then, and my anger was deep. I was angry at the world, at God...at everything. And so I approached my yard, shovel in hand. I decided I had to have a garden in the middle of my yard. I began furiously digging out the grass, making an oval in the center. It took me hours digging out that oval. But I wasn't through. I then decided I wanted a garden right by my doorway, so I dug out that area too. And then I made big holes, and tore out all the roots and stones and other junk.

I made big holes in my yard that day. And in the weeks to come I DID fill them. Funny thing, as I dug those holes and pulled on the grass, my anger drained away. My salty tears mixed with the sweat of exertion and the dirt, and ran off my arms undetected to the outside world. Digging those holes provided an outlet for my anger and my hurt.

Today I dug some more holes. But this time, my holes were smaller. And I filled them with small, delicate flowers, purple and white. I put bulbs in the ground too, filling other small holes. And I reflected back on another hole. The hole in my heart. No, I can't ever fill it with what "should" be there...my son. He "should" be almost seven now, full of energy, and wanting to plant flowers with Mom. But I have filled that hole with other things. With love and healing and memories. And with the lessons and the gifts my son gave me. I never saw those gifts that Spring, as I was digging out holes in my yard. And though I would rather have that hole filled with my son's presence, I am grateful for the gifts he gave. And so I will go on, filling holes.

*~Lisa Sculley
 TCF Jacksonville, FL*

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

March 3 - CANCELED - NO MEETING ROOM
Please see below.

April 7 - "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.

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:
Teresa & RC



Why We Still Go To TCF

"Are you still involved with that group? Aren't you over it yet? Why do you go?"

These are questions I often hear now that it has been more than seven years since Mark died. I suspect you hear them too. There are easy answers. But not everyone understands, unless you have been there. Here are ten I can think of:

1. Because we never want the world to forget our child, so what we do we do in his or her name.
2. Because when we reach out to help someone else, we also help ourselves.
3. Because someone was there for us when we needed it most; now the best way to say "thank you" is to pas it on by being there for others.
4. Because it is the one thing we do that can bring something positive out of tragedy.
5. Because we have found in TCF better friends and closer bonds than we ever thought possible. Here we can cry and hug people even if we don't know their last name or what they do for a living. And it doesn't matter.
6. Because few people are qualified to walk up to a newly bereaved family and say, "I know how you feel," And because we can, we must.
7. Because sometimes we need to talk, too, and to remember and share. We are further along than many around us, but we never forget.
8. Because many of us believe that one day we will meet our child or brother or sister again, and he or she will ask, "So what did you do with your life after I left?" And we will have an answer.
9. Because our presence might help newly bereaved families understand that they will survive and even laugh again.
10. Because we love cold coffee, cookies, and hard metal chairs.

~Richard Edler

TCF South Bay/LA, CA
In Memory of my son Mark Edler

Important News!

The March 3 meeting has been canceled because we have no meeting room. We hope to start back up with our April 3rd meeting at a new location.

The previous church has been taken over by a new identity and is going through renovations. Therefore, we wouldn't be able to hold our meetings there until September.

We are looking into a new meeting space and are waiting approval. Please look for an update with a email or postcard with our new location for the April meeting sometime in the middle of March. Thank you for your understanding in this matter!



Book Review

After the Death of a Child:
Living with Loss through the Years (Paperback)

By Ann K. Finkbeiner

"Like mourning itself, this powerful book, much of it in the words of bereaved parents, evokes a series of reactions....It illustrates the hard fact (of human suffering) but also our resilience." -New York Times

"The first book to examine the long-term nature of parental grief through the tales of those who suffer it. Although the book includes most current grief research, its authorities are parents" -Baltimore Sun

This is Not the End of Joy

Grieving is bits of many things - memories, regrets, reminders - each of which bears its own special weight in our burden of sorrow. Each bit has to be gone through patiently, silently, painfully, as one goes through old papers in a long-forgotten trunk, considering each one separately, remembering, assigning it to some new box within our hearts.

Healing, too, is bits of many things - smiles which multiply as the days pass; chilling remembrances turned warm by the returning sun. A day will come when there will be more healing than of grieving, and reasons for joy will begin to pile up in the freshly - swept rooms of our lives.

*~Molly Fumia
From Safe Passages*

April Reflections Spring - Easter - Passover



Spring means new growth, flowers, green grass, butterflies, budding trees and with this comes hope for the future.

Easter reminds us of a life hereafter and the children's laughter fills our hope as they engage in Easter egg hunts and Easter bunnies.

Passover remembers the ones no longer with us - and as we mourn their loss we understand that the life of the dead is now in the memory of the living.

Lent often brings up talk about "giving up things" - I would prefer to hear people say what they are doing for others, for Lent. Forgiveness could be a start, followed by Love. Add also patience, understanding and friendship. It's better to be less critical of others and more loving instead.

Priorities can change. One of our bereaved parents observed how her priorities have changed since the death of her child. She used to find it important to shop for material things. She told us about a recent day; as she was about to leave the house her grandson wanted to show her something, but she said she didn't have the time right then. After a moment, she reconsidered and said, sure she had time....

How many of us forget it only takes a few minutes or a smile, to make someone else's day. Bereaved parents know more than anyone we might not get a second chance. So tonight, when we turn out the light and reflect on the day, I hope we all can say "this was a good day not only for me but for the kindness I showed to others"

*~Othell Heaney
TCF, Brandywine Hundred, Delaware*



Our Butterflies

We are weary caterpillars
Awash on life's tide.
Little do we realize
There's a butterfly inside.

Our feet solidly on the ground
The earth, it holds our eye.
It's hard to imagine
That one day we will fly.

While we mourn our children's loss
They fly freely up above.
Floating free and peacefully
On breezes of God's love.

Their wings and iridescent glow.
Their bodies are pure light.
And somewhere choirs of angels sang
The moment they took flight.

They live in joy and happiness
And peace we cannot know
We can only bide our time
And await our time to go.

But one day we will join them
And together we will fly.
Then we will have forgotten
We ever said good-bye.

*~Marilyn Futrell
In memory of my son John Robert (J.R.) Woodfin
TCF, The Heart of Florida*

Full Circle

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.

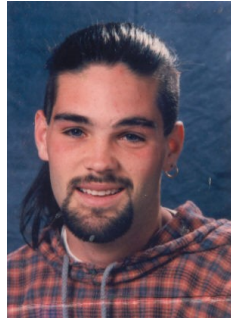
~Sascha Wagner

A Love Gift

Was Received From:

*Jim & Suzy Kirk
In Loving Memory of their children:*

**Justin Knopf
11/28 - 11/21**



**Jamie Knopf
10/21 - 11/21**



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, 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.santaclarita@gmail.com Love gifts should be received by the 10th of the month to be placed in the up-coming newsletter. **But remember our newsletter is bi-monthly.** 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!



When You Stop Asking Why

All these emotions, change by the moment.
Stuck in time, inside my mind.
Shifting tides changed my life.
Tore me apart, and broke my heart.

But when you stop asking why,
Then you can start to say goodbye.
The pain will only hold you there,
And never get you anywhere.
And so I must go on with life.
That I cannot sacrifice.
And I will hold you in my heart,
As I make this brand-new start.

Precious memories,
Can I take them with me?
Oh, they hurt, oh so deeply.
But they were true, and they were mine.
And I can't erase time.
Can't change the past to ease the pain,
And so they must always remain.

And when you stop asking why,
Then you can start to say goodbye.
The pain will only hold you there,
And never get you anywhere.
And so I must go on with life.
That I cannot sacrifice.
And I will hold you in my heart,
As I make this brand-new start.

Curtains open,
I step forward.
Take a breath, to see what's left.
Arms wide open,
No more trembling.
Brace my heart, for this new start.

And when you stop asking why,
Then you can start to say goodbye.
The pain will only hold you there,
And never get you anywhere.
And so I must go on with life.
That I cannot sacrifice.
And I will hold you in my heart,
As I make this brand-new start.

~Tonya Thompson
In honor of my older brother, Randal Wagoner
Who passed January 2011 at the age of 41
We Need Not Walk Alone, Winter/Spring 2011-2012

"Forever In Our Hearts"

Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings

Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays



March

April

Name	Date	Member	Name	Date	Member
Timothy Renolds	3/17	Tom & Alice Renolds	Erik Fleischer	4/26	Rita Fleischer
Michael Rodriguez	3/7	Debbie DiCorrado	Bradley McBurney	4/22	Tammy Gauld
Jeanene Sykes	3/2	Ted Sykes	Walter Rodriguez	4/25	Carole Rodriguez
Melissa Matters	3/26	Kirk & Dianne Mueller	Reese Stout	4/30	Linda Stout
Colleen Brown	3/17	Keith & Lin Brown	Kevin Rickhoff	4/30	Nancy Rickhoff
Bailey Haney	3/28	Myra Kulick	Jacob Kaplan	4/1	Michael & Robyn
Alan Bartfai	3/8	John & Susan	Emily Mogg	4/16	Jeffrey & Tracey
Jeremy Silverstein	3/31	Mel & Jeniffer	Emily Mogg Grandchild	4/16	Gary & Sandy
Amin Moinzadeh	3/21	Azita Azarpira			
Sean Goodman	3/8	Steve Goodman			



Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates

March

April

Name	Date	Member	Name	Date	Member
Sean McPhie	3/9	Fran McPhie	Sammy Thomas Grandchild	4/10	Kay & Dave Thomas
Brianna Smith	3/30	David & Laurie Millard	Michael Arvizu	4/22	Robert & Juanita
Nicholas Colley	3/28	Scott & Jade Colley	Justin Hakola	4/11	Cheryl Landreth
Aiden Lopez	3/26	Cesar & Jessica Lopez	Aurora Boehlert-Rubinfeld	4/10	Aron & April
Aiden Lopez Grandchild	3/26	Carmen Smith			
Monique Gutierrez	3/24	Irene Frenes			
Jake Vachon	3/25	Michelle Vachon			
Tommy Sziklay	3/10	Keith & Lise Parcels			
Sean Goodman	3/6	Steve Goodman			
Andy Benaudes	3/20	Jeanette Geiger			



I Remember

Dear one,
 I greet you every morning
 As I arise and look at your picture
 . . . and remember.
 I see you every day
 As I look at the field we walked
 . . . and remember.
 I hold you every year
 In my heart on your birthday
 . . . and remember.

I grieve for you always
 As the years come and go
 . . . and remember.
 I hope to be with you again
 As I pass into eternity
 . . . and rejoice.

~Jean Fisk
 In Memory of my son Barry
 TCF, Contra Costa County, CA

