



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Jan-Feb 2023

Volume 24, 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, regeneration and beauty.

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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 5, 2023
February 2, 2023

TIME: **7:00 PM**

MEETING **Bethlehem SCV**

PLACE: **27265 Luther Dr. Room 5**
Canyon Country, CA 91351

(Please note) This is our new location for meetings)



**FOR INFORMATION OR FOR A LOVING LISTENER,
PLEASE CALL:**

Diane Briones (Leader) 661-373-5070
Alice Renolds (Co-Leader) 661-252-4374
Kathy Kelly (Treasurer) 661-724-1450

Linda Stout (Facebook Manager)
Joanne Campos (Remembrance Secretary)
Steve Crittenden (Webmaster)
Jeanne Crittenden (Button & Angel Board Manager)

Another Year



Old year has gone away
with gift and candle -
old year has gone away
with thought and song.

Old year has given light
and dark and season.
Old year has been too short
and been too long.

Old year has been given joy
and disappointment.
Old year has given grief
and strength to cope.
Old year was memory
and was forgetting -

Another year is come:
give it your hope.

~Sascha Wagner
From: For You From Sascha

*Hope is like the sun, which,
as we journey toward it,
casts the shadow of our burden behind us.*

~Samuel Smiles

Hello, Did I Hear a Big Sigh?

The holidays are finally over, and we can put our hurt and pain back in the boxes along with the Christmas decorations. Oh, how easy that would be, if that were so.

Dealing with the anticipation of the holidays without our loved ones early on in our grief is devastating. We find ourselves not wanting to cope and wishing away the oncoming celebration. This is a natural reaction, of course, and one we must fight to overcome. Memories and the thought of celebrations without our children are fought with tears and heartache.

We can only hope that the next time we must encounter a specific holiday, we will find it less painful to cope with because we have put one more year behind us. Time does have a way of helping to soften our grief, but the road can be very bumpy along the way to recovery.

Our children were our reason for life, and their memories are our reason to go on living.

Because of my sons, my affiliation with TCF has given me many treasured friends whom I can sympathize with and have empathy for.

Let's all start the New Year with the promise of mending our bodies; holding the memories of our children, sow love, in our hearts, and helping each newly bereaved parent and sibling to better cope with the difficult task of their loss. By supporting one another in our grief, we find the comfort and understanding we so sorely need.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

~Mary Senbertrand
TCF Cape May, NJ

*"I move a step ahead and then back,
but still gaining, if even but a little."*

~Mary Rapke, TCF Grand Junction, CO



For the New Year... Some Thoughts on Rebuilt Engines

All of us who receive this newsletter have experience something in common—the shattering of our human machinery upon impact with a son or daughter's death. What ever helped us keep moving before, nothing works for us now. Our lives ground to a halt.

In the stillness of grief's long night, I felt despair over trying to repair something that would always lack a vital part. How could I ever rebuild the machinery of my life without that precious part? Any repair work would require my permission and participation. Looking at the tangled, damaged parts of myself, I questioned how to salvage anything workable from the wreckage.

Eventually, blessedly, the desire to move again, to get back into life's traffic, got me doing something. At first it was tinkering, experimenting with the broken parts, imagining them whole again. Then I tried to learn by watching others who were rebuilding. It helped to read repair manuals, painfully written by people like me. The process was tedious and exhausting; there were setbacks, hidden costs, and false starts.

One surprising day my engine actually turned over—and moved a little. Before long, the motor sounded stronger. It almost seemed to hum, as I remembered it could. With persistence, I worked up to a decent speed, regained my sense of direction, and even began appreciating some sights along the way. I discovered that a rebuilt engine could carry me, despite the missing part.

Occasionally it sputters, misfires, or floods, being sensitive to road hazards other drivers don't see. Some hills always seem too steep; certain roads have too many memories. Sometimes the fog is too thick to drive through. When necessary, I slow down, make adjustments, or pull off the road temporarily.

I wanted to write about my experience out of gratitude. Each of us has our own long night of grief and our own reawakening from it. The mystery of healing defies simple explanation. Do invisible hands help us in the healing process? I don't have an answer, just astonishment at the process which moved me from the tangled wreckage of myself to a sturdy rebuilt that appears whole, even though it isn't.

In closing, I lovingly acknowledge my daughter, Beth, who believed deeply in the possibly of rebuilding her own life.

~Joan Page
TCF Miami, FL



New Year, Old Memories

Sun going down in the western sky
A lonely feeling of dread inside.
On this eve of the old year, the new waiting to be
I reflect on days past,
And ponder the new ones I wait to see.
What will they bring, will they be like the old?
I wait and wonder for them to unfold.
Another year gone, one more mark on time
Yet another year gone, but you remain on my mind.
I gather the memories of all the days past
For I know in this New Year they will still last.
Into this year I timidly step
Along with the love precious kept.
New Days will come, old ones will pass.
But my love for you will forever last.

~Sheila Simmons
TCF, Atlanta

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

January 5 - Meeting, We will be having a guest speaker for this meeting. Please see below for more info.

February 2 - Meeting, Love & Grief

Guest Speaker!

JANUARY 5TH - MEETING

Please join us for this special night, as we will be having Jeff Zhorne, M.A. as a guest speaker at our January 5th meeting. After the deaths of his two young children in a traumatic auto accident in England, Jeff searched everywhere for relief and finally discovered lasting help.

He will give a short presentation on the tools and skills for working through significant emotional loss such as the death of a child, grandchild or sibling.

He has presented workshops at the TCF National conference, Parents of Murdered Children support groups, college classes and church congregations. Jeff was also the designated counselor for KTWV's (The Wave) Adopt-a-Family program and the primary referral for Rose Memorial Park.



An Argument With Myself

So hard to go to a TCF Meeting,
but it's harder to stay away.
I have to handle this...
I must get through the loss of part of myself by myself.
But it helps to have real help.
Especially when you've stuffed the pain down
into the tip of your big toe.
Cause some of it comes out at TCF meetings.
But what if this grief is an endless stream...
as if the toe were a bottomless pit?
It hurts to let it out, but it feels better knowing
some of the pressure is gone.
And sometimes something I say
even helps somebody else.
It's so hard to go to a TCF meeting,
but it's harder to stay away.

~Sandy Kramer
TCF, NW, Nebraska Newsletter

21st Annual Candle Light Remembrance Program



On Sunday, December 11 our chapter held its annual candle lighting program indoors in the Worship area of the church where we hold our meetings. It was nice to have it indoors once again, as it was very cold that night!!!

Almost 30 beautifully embellished luminaries lined the sidewalk into our program. The bags glowed with our beloved children, siblings, and grandchildren's faces and their names as the ceremony took place and tugged on our hearts.

We gathered together in this beautifully decorated area, so many - this their first time attending along with many familiar faces. We came to together in friendship and love to celebrate and remember our children, grandchildren, and siblings when most are celebrating the holidays. As we listened to the poems and songs we lit our candles and watched our loved ones faces float across the screen, you could hear weeping and see glistening tears shimmering down our cheeks. But those tears signify the forever love we hold deep within our hearts for our children no longer here. Whether they lived three score and ten or never tasted earth's air they are ours, now and forever. No longer being with us the way we want does not lessen our love for them in our hearts.

It is our hope that this program for just a short time helped you feel the warmth of your loved one's memories and presence in your heart and that you were given some small measure of peace for the holidays.

Thank you to Jeff & Tracey Mogg, Kathy Hilton, Jeanne Crittenden, Linda Stout, Tom Reynolds, Bert Briones, Kathy Kelly, the family of Aiden Lopez, and anyone else who helped to put this evening on. If you weren't able to attend, we hope you were able to light a candle from home, so that..."their light may always shine."

~Alice Reynolds, Editor

Healing

Sometimes you have to take it on blind faith that your heart is healing. It may not feel like the pain is going away. You might still cry just as hard as ever. But strength, confidence, and wisdom grow invisibly and you must trust that it is there.

~Stephanie St. Claire
TCF, Valley of the Sun

Its Been Years- What's Wrong With You?

If you think that time makes a difference to a mama missing a child who ran ahead to Heaven without her, you don't know as much as you think you know.

Time does not heal all wounds - especially the kind that shatter a heart into a million pieces.

It takes time for the wound to scar over, but it doesn't undo the damage.

So if you are wondering why your coworker still takes the day off on his child's birthday or the anniversary of her child's homegoing, I'll let you in on a little secret: Years disappear when those milestones loom large.

It's just as painful today as it was on **THAT** day when a bereaved parent has to face an unavoidable reminder that his or her child is gone, gone, gone.

I'm not diminishing anyone's loss when I say this but **child loss is unique**. If we lose a spouse, we cannot replace that person, but we can enjoy the same type of relationship with another one.

When we lose a parent, we cannot replace that individual or that relationship, but we all know age eventually makes a claim on every life. We anticipate (even if subconsciously) that younger folk will outlive the older ones.

A parent's heart is not equipped to outlive their child. **And yet, some of us do.**

So if the bereaved parents in your life need extra space, extra grace, extra accommodation on those days when the loss is unavoidable don't be surprised.

What **SHOULD** astonish folks is that we are able to function as well as we do on all the other days of the year without additional help.

We get up. We go on. That's the real surprise.

~stillstandingmag.com



Your Heart Will Mend, But It Will...

- ... be a different heart,
- ... wear a deep and lasting scar,
- ... be a more compassionate heart,
- ... know life in a new and different way,
- ... understand the Eternity of Love,

*~Nancy Green
TCF Livonia, MI*



S.W.A.K.

(Sealed With A Kiss)

Valentine's Day

Remember how we used to write to those we love the best?
Our letters we would fill with hopes and dreams and seal them with a kiss.

To you our child, we write today - and wish we could impart,
The hopes and dreams that once we had,
now crush our breaking hearts.

The thoughts of what we had planned for you float through
our wishful minds,
Then burst like bubbles in the air,
while dreams explode with time.

And yet we still have hope and still dream on,
and think of all we'll miss,
And wish with all our hearts we could write to you,
And seal it with a kiss.

The grief we have for you is like a weight upon our chests,
There's no way we can ignore it - it never give us rest.

And no words could ever tell of our longings to express,
to write a love letter to you, our child,
and seal it with a kiss.

And if we had but one chance more to write to you today,
The words would come with no regrets
and we'd like for them to say...

"To love and to be loved by you, our child...an honor
and so blessed,
Our time on earth cut short, it's true...But We Sealed it
With a Kiss."

*~Faye McCord, Co-Leader
TCF Jackson, MS*



Love Gifts



Were Received From:

Jim & Susan Kirk

In Loving Memory of their daughter & son:

Jamie Knopf
10/21 - 11/21



Justin Knopf
11/28 - 11/21

Tom & Alice Renolds

In Loving Memory of their two sons:

Tim Renolds
3/17 - 2/17



Danny Renolds
6/22 - 2/17

Bobbie Mathers & Dan Spencer

In Loving Memory of their son:

**Peter
Spencer**
2/5 - 9/4



Steve & Jeanne Crittenden

In Loving Memory of their daughter:

**Sarah
Crittenden**
5/30 - 10/20



Barbara Rawson

In Loving Memory of her son:

**Christopher
Rodriquez**
9/22 - 6/13



"No matter how old your child who died, the essence of this unique being remains within you forever.

It is through us and others who knew them that our children continue to live and affect our present world.

Though not in the way we hoped and expected, our beloved children are still alive."

~Kitty Reeve

"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
			Brian DeCaro	2/27	Mary Yancey



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	Nico Trogan	2/6	Amy Trogan
Emily Mogg	1/30	Jeff & Tracey Mogg	Troy Covert	2/24	Melanie Miller
Emily Mogg	Grandchild 1/30	Gary & Sandy Johnson			

A Loved One Is A Treasure

A loved one is a treasure of the heart and to lose a loved one is like losing a piece of yourself.
 But the love that this person brought you did not leave, for the essence of the soul lingers.
 It cannot escape your heart, for it has been there forever.



Cling to the memories and let them find their way to heal you.
 The love and laughter, the joy in the togetherness you shared will make you strong.

You'll come to realize that your time together, no matter how long, was meant to be,
 and that you were blessed to have such a precious gift of love in your life.

Keep you heart beating with the loving memories and trust in your faith to guide you through.
 Know that though life moves on the beauty of love stays behind to surround and embrace you.
 Your loved one has left you that to hold in your heart forever.

~Debbie Burton-Peddie

*"What lies behind us
 and what lies before
 us are small matters
 compared to what lies
 within us"*

~Ralph Waldo Emerson