



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

May-June 2023

Volume 24, 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, daughter, brother, 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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TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA

Website: www.compassionatefriends-scv.org

MEETINGS

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

May 4, 2023

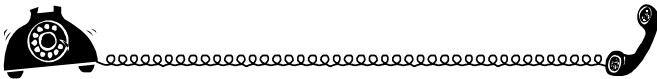
June 1, 2023

TIME: **7:00 PM**

MEETING **Bethlehem SCV**

PLACE: **27265 Luther Dr. Room 5 (Second Driveway)
Canyon Country, CA 91351**

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



FOR INFORMATION OR FOR A LOVING LISENER, 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)



Surviving

There's no way to know,
in those first, early years,
if the crying will stop,
be an ending to tears.

But slowly, so slowly,
through the grieving and time,
will come moments and days,
when hopefulness shines.

Backwards and forwards,
into darkness, then out,
we begin to start living;
scraps of new life peek out.

This happens most surely,
survivors will tell,
when we find time for others
and give of ourselves.

~Genesee Bourdeau Gentry
From her book: "Stars in the Deepest Night"

*Little by little, step by step
I learned that I didn't need
To hang on to the death
To remember the life
What a joyous discovery!*

~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 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 internal 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 what that will be 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
TCF Katy, TX*

In Memory of my son, Todd Mennen

Badge of Courage for Grieving Moms

Such a loss
That no heart should ever know
The loss of a child
It is our soul's eternal foe.

No one understands
The pain that our heart endures
With the loss of a child
We held once so dear.

When the pain strikes those
Who do not understand
With the loss of a child
We try our best to continue to stand.

Their reverence we have earned
We wear the badge of courage
With the loss of a child
No one should ever judge.

Let the light of our angels
Be a beacon of light
With the loss of a child
To follow within our sight.

We are moms with
So much love in our heart
With the loss of a child
Our angels we will never part.

Let us honor those moms
Whose light shines on and on
With the loss of their child
To win the battle that goes on and on!

*~Lana Golembeski
TCF St Paul, MN*

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.



*"A Mother holds her children's hands for a while,
their hearts forever."*

~unknown

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

May 4 - Meeting, "Mothers Day" - Do It Your Way??

June 1- Meeting, "Fathers Day" - How to help him through this day!

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:
Marie Whitehead, Mother of Michael
Terasa Papa, Mother of Danny



IMPORTANT!!! Newsletter Renewal Time

You should have received your newsletter renewal letter by now. Please fill it out and return the form by May 30 if you would like to remain on our mailing list and continue receiving our newsletters, Birthday & Angel cards. If we don't receive it by that date, this newsletter-May/June will be the last one you will receive! Thank you to all of our members who already have returned it!

Thank you, Alice Reynolds, Editor



Thank you so very much for your generous Newsletter Renewal Donations, they are greatly appreciated!

BALLOON RELEASE/PICNIC CANCELLED!

Unfortunately for this year, we are cancelling our Balloon Release/Picnic usually held in May/June. Due to several of our key members who have moved and our leader Diane Briones who is still recovering from her second injury, this event will be extremely hard to put on this year.

We are so very sorry and disappointed but hope to continued with this great family gathering next year!



46th Annual TCF National Conference

July 7 - 9 Sheraton Denver Downtown

The TCF National conference is an enriching and supportive event for new and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Attendees come to find renewed hope and support, as well strategies for coping with grief.

Reservations can now be made online at National's TCF's reservation link located on their website www.compassionatefriends.org.

Brue Peddie, in memory of his son Nigel
Nancy Rickhoff, in memory of her son Kevin
Steve & Jeanne, in memory of their daughter Sarah
Patricia Vassallo, in memory of her son Sean
Dave & Kay Thomas, in memory of their grandson Sammy
Eric & Elena Cates, in memory of their daughter Selena
Mona Gonzalez, in memory of her daughter Cyrena
Richard & Carol Costin, in memory of their son Jeffrey
Bobbie Mathers, in memory of her sons Eric & Peter
Michele Davis, in memory of her son Miles
Carolos & Ana Rodriguez, in memory of their son Eric
Barbara Evans, in memory of her Edward
Barbara Rawson, in memory of her son Christopher
Tammy Gauld, in memory of her son Bradley
Kathy Hilton, in memory of her son Greg
Ted Sykes, in memory of his daughter Jeanene

Midnight Gifts

The grief
that takes
your sleep away
at midnight,
it brings you hurt.
It also brings you love.

~Sascha Wagner



Father's Day

Mother's Day is a bittersweet day to me. I feel very lucky to have a surviving child and a wonderful grandchild. I realize that there are many parents who do not have any children to celebrate with and my heart breaks for them. At the same time that I delight in what remains for them, and I remember the child who is missing. That emptiness cannot be filled.

I thought about Father's Day coming up and I think of the pain all bereaved fathers will endure. On top of that pain, I feel that society has added a tremendous burden. Fathers are supposed to be strong for everyone else. They aren't asked how are you doing? They are asked instead, how's your wife holding up? They aren't supposed to cry in public; their male co-workers and counterparts, don't want to hear their grief. Fathers often feel isolated and alone in their grief.

I'd like to tell all bereaved fathers that it's normal to hurt; it's normal to cry. If you want to talk about your pain or your child or just cry, a support group is a safe place to do all that. No one will think you are weak, or make any other judgements of you. We all understand. It's OK. I'd also like to say that I'm sure that most, if not all, of your wives know that you feel just as much grief as they do. Try talking to your spouse if you haven't already. You cannot cause your spouse anymore pain by talking together and it might even help. I hope your Father's Day is peaceful.

*~Brenda Hopps
BP/USA North Texas Chapter
www.bereavedparentsusa.org*

To My Husband

Your tears flow within your heart,
Mine flow down my cheeks.
Your anger lies with thought and movements,
Mine gallops forward for all to see.
Your despair shows in your now dull eyes,
Mine shows in line after written line.
You grieve over the death of your son,
I grieve over the death of my baby.
But we're still the same, still one,
only we grieve at different times,
over different memories and at different lengths.
Yet we both realize the death of our child.

*~Pam Burden
TCF Augusta, GA*

STANDING

People say
"Oh you are doing so well,
you are so strong,
you are an inspiration!"
We do not feel strong.

We feel shaken to the core,
Saddened beyond belief,
Pain beyond comprehension,
Forever changed.

What do they see that we cannot see?

"That a horrible storm,
unexpectedly ripped through
our lives and we are
still standing"

They are amazed
We are paralyzed

Still Standing

*~Julie Short
TCF, Southeastern Illinois Chapter
In Memory of Kyra*

Father's Day Revisited

Now I can look back upon that first Father's Day, the first after the death of our son, Jeff. I was a mess, a man without hope, with little or no reason to continue living, deep in my own depressive grief. I could not share any joy with others.

I look back now, wondering how I could have treated my wife and children as I did while they were trying to celebrate in my honor. Inside I was crying out, "What are these useless gifts? Don't you know the only gift I want is to have my son back?"

But it was the love, caring, understanding and nurturing of those loved ones which has brought me so far from that first Father's Day. Now I can enjoy the joy of others. I can laugh once again. There is a life worth living.

For all those fathers for whom this is the first Father's Day without your child, have the best day that you can, with the understand other fathers are with you on this day. One day, you too will be able to revisit this first Father's Day.

*~Paul Kinney
BP/USA Louisville, KY
www.bereavedparentsusa.org*



Love Gifts



Were Received From:

Kirk & Dianne Mueller
In Loving Memory of their daughter:

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



Bruce Peddie
In Loving Memory of his son:

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



Carlos & Ana Rodriguez
In Loving Memory of their son:

**Eric
Rodriguez**
8/11 - 1/20



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 our2angels@twc.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!

Tammy Gauld
In Loving Memory of her son:

**Bradley
McBurney**
4/22 - 7/18



*"Try to strike that delicate balance between
yesterday that should be remembered
and a tomorrow that must be created."*

*~Meg Avery
TCF, Lawrenceville*

"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
Joshua Matthews	5/14	Priscilla DiBlasio			
Joshua Matthews (Grandchild)	5/14	Gloria DiBlasio			
Troy Covert	5/5	Melanie Miller			



Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates

May

June

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
Selena Cates	6/17	Eric & Elena Cates
Selena Cates (Grandchild)	6/17	John & Joanne Campos
Cisco Villasenor	6/24	Francisco & Aracely
Natalie Zhamkochyan	6/23	Harry & Marine
Jeeven Viridi	6/12	Jaswir & Harvinder Viridi

I Know

I know that his pain has passed
except for how it lives in my memory

I know that denying sadness denies healing

I know that I may never resolve
all the issues surrounding his death

I know I may hear his voice and see him
in the shadows

I know the remedies for grief are time,
courage, and love

I know that grieving takes
just as long as it takes - it is a process
and

it may never truly end,
but it will always change

These things I know—I just wish I didn't!



~Bonnie L. Sobry
In Loving Memory of her son
William L. Huff