



JULY—AUGUST—SEPTEMBER 2024

CONTACT US

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



P.O. Box 3065
Portland, OR 97208-3065
Ph. 503-307-8450
www.portlandtcf.org

“A Nonprofit Self-Help Organization for Families
Who Have Experienced the Death of a Child”

Portland, Oregon



TGF PICNIC AT LAURELHURST PARK ~ JULY 17th DETAILS ON PAGE 3

The Dragonfly (Is your child like the Dragonfly?)

Once, in a little pond, in the muddy water under the lily pads, there lives a water beetle in a community of water beetles. It lived a simple and comfortable life in the pond with few disturbances and interruptions.

Once in a while, sadness would come to the community when one of their fellow beetles would climb the stem of a lily pad and would never be seen again. They knew when this happened, their friend was dead, gone forever.

Then, one day, one little water beetle felt an irresistible urge to climb up that stem. However, he was deter-

mined that he would not leave forever. He would come back & tell his friends what he had found at the top.

When he reached the top and climbed out of the water onto the surface of the lily pad, he was so tired and the sun felt so warm, that he decided he must take a nap. As he slept, his body changed and when he woke up, he had turned into a beautiful bluetail dragonfly with broad wings and a slender body designed for flying. So, fly he did! And, as he soared he saw the beauty of a whole new world and a far superior way of life to what he had never known existed.

Then he remembered his beetle friends, & how they were thinking by now he was dead. He wanted to go back to tell them, & explain to them that he was, now more alive than he had ever been before. His life had been fulfilled rather than ended.

But, his new body would not go down into the water. He could not get back to tell his friends the good news. Then he understood that their time would come, when they too would know what he now knew. So, he raised his wings and flew off into his joyous new life!

~ Author Unknown



Zoom meetings are available on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, 6:30—8:00 pm.
Contact Carolyn Harrington, (503) 307-8450 or Jeff Littman, (503) 284-2725 to participate in the Zoom meeting.

PLEASE JOIN US ON THE 1ST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH @ 10:30 AM

First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW Jefferson, Rm. #134, Portland, OR 97205

FOR MORE INFORMATION: (503) 307-8450

Chapter Leader

Carolyn Harrington
(503) 307-8450
linerharritonton@gmail.com

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WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.

The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit, self-help organization composed of bereaved parents/grandparents & siblings. We offer friendship and understanding. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child of any age, from any cause, is welcome. Our meetings give parents an opportunity to talk about their child/sibling and about the feelings they experience through the grieving process.

There is no religious affiliation. There are no membership dues. The purpose of this support group is not to focus on the cause of death or the age of the child/sibling, as it is to focus on being a bereaved parent, along with the feelings & issues that evolve around the death of a child.

The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

THE MUSIC BOX



SEE YOU AGAIN by Carrie Underwood
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTnWFT3DvVA>

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Email your address change to
Jenna Moon, Member Database at
jennarmoon84@gmail.com



Our surviving children not only lost a sibling, but they also lost a mother & father they once knew. Everything is different now.

~ Unknown author

CALENDAR

July 4th—Independence Day
July 28—Parent's Day
August 30—Nat'l Grief Awareness Day
Sept 2—Labor Day
Sept 8—Grandparents Day
Sept 9—World Suicide Prevention Day
Sept 11—Patriot Day
Sept 22—Fall Equinox
Sept 25—Nat'l Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims



OTHER TCF CHAPTERS IN THE AREA

CLACKAMAS COUNTY CHAPTER #2047

4th Tuesday of the month 7:00 pm.

NAMI, 10202 SE 32nd Ave., Suite 501, Milwaukie, OR 97222

Phone: Mary (503) 266-2677 or Karen (503) 982-4711

Email: tcfclackamascounty@mail.com

NEW

EUGENE/SPRINGFIELD CHAPTER #2571

Willamette Christian Center
2500 W. 18th Ave. Eugene, OR 97402

*Contact Chapter co-facilitators Rachael at 541-221-5792
or Ben at 541-704-5938 or eugspfdtcf@mail.com
for meeting dates & times

WASHINGTON COUNTY CHAPTER #1901

2nd Tuesday of the month 6:30—8:30 pm.

Reeds Crossing Health Center Building—Conference Room
7305 SE Circuit Dr., Hillsboro, OR

Phone contact: Phyllis H. (503) 310-2504

We Need Not Walk Alone magazine shares poems, articles, and expressions that touch the hearts of bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. Items in the magazine offer different perspectives and experiences of grief from those who have been bereaved for varying lengths of time. We hope that you find the magazine relatable, supportive and filled with hope.

You can find this e-mag at
www.compassionatefriends.org



Please support Portland TCF!

Just by shopping at Fred Meyer with your Rewards Card!! Through their Community Rewards Program they donate to local community organizations/nonprofits of your choice. You just link your Rewards Card and scan it every time you shop at Freddy's.

*Whenever you use your Rewards Card you will be helping Portland TCF earn a donation from Fred Meyer.

*You will still earn your Rewards Points, Fuel Points & Rebates, just as you do today.



Please see page 12 for more information.

PORTLAND TCF PICNIC POTLUCK

Wednesday, July 17, 2024 @ 6–8 pm.



Join us for an evening of sharing & feel free to bring family & friends.

LAURELHURST PARK, 3800 SE Oak St., Portland 97214 (see map attached to email)

*We will gather at Picnic Area "F" just to the right of the green building (restrooms) at the park entrance on ANKENY ST. Ankeny St. cannot be accessed via Cesar Chavez Blvd. except from the north (I-84)

Details . . .

- ♥ TCF will provide water and paper products.
- ♥ Bring a photo of your child/grandchild/sibling to display at a special table.
- ♥ Bring a dish to pass
- ♥ Bring a lawn chair—just in case!
- ♥ Bring an umbrella—just in case!

RSVP requested but not required. Reply to portlandtcf@gmail.com
Questions? Call Carolyn (503) 307-8450

47TH TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

JULY 12 @ 8:00 AM—14 @ 1:00 PM, 2024

Compassion
FILLS THE AIR



TCF 47TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2024
New Orleans, LA

We are very pleased to announce The Compassionate Friends (TCF) 47th Annual National Conference in New Orleans! TCF's National Conference is an enriching and supportive event for many newer and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Attendees come and find renewed hope and support, as well as strategies for coping with grief, all while making friendships with other bereaved people who truly under-

stand the heartbreaking loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. Lifelong friendships are often formed and rekindled each year at TCF conferences.

Unique and cherished highlights of our conference include our heartfelt Saturday evening Candle Lighting Program, Sharing Sessions, Keynote Addresses, Healing Haven, Butterfly Boutique, Crafty Corner, and Silent Auction. Our weekend of inspiration, sharing, and learning is followed by the Walk to Remember on Sunday morning.

This year's conference will be held at the New Orleans Marriott. Reservations can now be made online at TCF's dedicated reservation link. Our discounted room rate with the Marriott is \$144 per night plus applicable taxes and fees. Please note that each attendee can reserve a maximum of two rooms. Many attendees arrive on Thursday since the conference begins early on Friday morning. We also have pre-conference activities that are offered on Thursday evening, that attendees find beneficial.

We look forward to seeing you in New Orleans!

For further information contact www.compassionatefriends.org



Empty Places

I drove the old way
yesterday.

It'd been a while, you see.

And there, without a warning,
the pain washed over me.

I drove the old way yesterday
and sadness came on strong,

taken back by so much
feeling, since you've been
gone so long.

Places seem to lie in wait
to summon up the tears,
to say remember yesterday,
those days when you were
here.

Places where you laughed &
played are places where I cry.
These places hold the memo-
ries that will live as long as I.

~ Genesse Gentry, In memory of Lori
Gentry, TCF, Marin County, CA

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

GRANDPARENT'S DAY—SEPTEMBER 8TH



Grandparents are a special gift that God gives to children ... and the children know it ... with all the love they hold in their hearts for their parents ... there is a special love in their hearts for grandparents ... We as grandparents hold an unending volume of love ... and our grandchildren become the receivers of the deepest of that love.

When our grandchildren are hurt or die ... a huge part of us dies with them and a bigger piece dies for our children. Our belief is that we are put here to care for and protect our children and the death of a grandchild places a deep-seated guilt in our hearts that we failed in our task ... we couldn't do it ... we couldn't do enough.

Although on a cognitive level we know that there was nothing more that we could have conceivably done, our hearts and souls forever hold the question ... and WE CRY.

~ Excerpt from "And Nana Cried" by Pamela S Rowe, R.N., Grandmother



A Love Gift is a special note to your child that is printed in the newsletter. It is a wonderful way to remember and honor their memory! Families often submit these either on their birthday or anniversary date of their child, but it can be done at any time! There is no charge for printing a Love Gift, but many families choose to donate a tax deductible contribution to help support TCF expenses such as newsletter expenses, brochures, outreach, special events, etc. Please complete the form on the back page with your love note and submit with your favorite photo.

To include a picture with your Love Gift, please email your special photo to debsmoon@gmail.com or mail to TCF, PO Box 3065, Portland, OR 97208. *Your photo will be returned with current address.

DEADLINE to submit for the next newsletter is SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

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Borrowed

I borrowed you for the moment
The moment turned to days
The days then turned to years
And the years just slipped away

I borrowed you for a season
We had no guarantees
We weathered every storm
And embraced every breeze

I borrowed you for the decades
I knew our love would last
I forgot that you were borrowed
In a blur the decades passed

We thought we had tomorrow
Just like we had yesterday
We thought we had forever
But forever was today

I borrowed you for eternity
For eternity has no time
So I will keep you for eternity
Wrapped around this heart of mine.

~ Hazel Gay Lee

"I'm Fine"

Today I said, "I'm fine",
not once
But five times altogether
When people asked "how
are you?"
Then made small talk of
the weather

And so I hid behind my
mask
The one I'd worn a while
I set in place my bravest
face
And dressed it in a smile

And that was how the day
went
All "I'm fine" & talk of rain
Until somebody asked
me how I was
Then asked again

They asked if I was
truly fine
And I said I was not
And they said they
were sorry
That they couldn't do a lot

But then they sat beside
me

Whilst I spoke the truth at
last

They listened & they held
me

As the tears slipped
through my mask

And where before, I'd felt I
should
Maintain this brave
façade,
I realized there was
much to gain
By letting down my guard

See, though my load was
still the same
It now was not as heavy
'Cause sitting and offload-
ing it
Had helped a bit already

Today they asked "how are
you?"
And I told them I was fine
"Til someone saw behind
the mask
And asked me one more
time

And though they may have
felt
That there was little they
could do
They'll never know how
much it meant
To tell someone the truth

*Author, Hemsley, Becky. What the Wild
Replied: Poems from Human Nature
Printed w/permission*



Grief lasts longer than sympathy, which is one of the tragedies of grieving.

~ Elizabeth C. McCracken



The unofficial end of summer. The time to .. what? Watch with tear-filled eyes as the bus picks up other children for school, but no longer stops at our house.

To see other parents standing with their eager little ones, waiting for that first school bus ride to the “big” school. To see tears of joy in the eyes of other parents through the tears of pain in our own.

Watch with anxious anticipation as the kids begin middle school. New experiences, new expectations, new fears. Time to wonder if we told them enough to keep them safe from peer pressure. Time to wonder if we are giving them too much freedom or not enough. Time to learn that saying “I love you” must be done in private. Time to realize that with us, “I love you” will always be said in silence.

Time to watch our teenagers experience high school and its freedoms and decisions. Time to hand over the sports coaching to someone we don’t know. Time to wonder if our child is taking too many academic hours. Time to wonder what temptations await our children. Time to wonder about that car they bought. Time to realize all these things are happening to some other parent.

Time to buy single bed linens for the college dorm. Time to buy a new computer to take to school and keep the old one for us. Time to get an extra credit card for the student, “just in case.” Time to give last minute instructions about calling home every Sunday night. Time to listen to other parents talk about these experiences.



No, for us, Labor Day is just that—a day to labor through the memories left behind by the loss of our child, a day that truly signifies the end of the summer of our life.

~ Sondra Wright, TCF, Atlanta, GA

If you're wondering where to find me, I tell you where I'll be.
I'm in that in-between bit, that space where sky meets sea.
In the whispers of the trees and the edges of your dreams,
close enough to almost touch but slightly out of reach.
I'm in the moon and in the stars but never really far, and
always, always I'm there deep inside your heart.

~ Catherine Prutton, TCF

YES, LIFE DOES GO ON . . .
BUT IT'S NEVER THE SAME.

~ Facebook.com/MissingLovedOne

OTHER SUPPORT GROUPS:

SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

www.sbsrnw.org
Facebook—SBSNNW
(503) 200-0382

*Groups are being held several times per month on virtual Zoom meetings & in-person meetings. Please visit website for meeting dates/times/locations in the Portland metro area.

NE Portland * SW Portland * Milwaukee * Gresham * Hillsboro

HELPING PARENTS HEAL

Annie & Marc Adams
hphportlandoregon@gmail.com
Annie (503)752-8024
Marc (503) 880-4467
www.helpingparentsheal.org

Support groups of grieving parents to connect with each other and with Spirit

BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

Ph. 503-699-8006
Spanish (503) 972-3376
Peace House, 2116 NE 18th St.
Portland ...2nd Mon 7 pm
Beaverton ...4th Thu 7 pm
Vancouver ...2nd Thu 7 pm
www.briefencounters.org

Support groups for parents who have experienced infant or pregnancy loss or who are considering or experiencing a subsequent pregnancy/adoption.

PARENTS OF MURDERED CHILDREN

Ph. 503-761-1304 or 503-656-8039
Peace House, 2116 NE 18th Ave
Portland... 1st Mon @ 7 pm
www.pomc.com/portland

SIDS RESOURCES OF OREGON

4035 NE Sandy Blvd Suite 209
Portland
Ph. 503-287-8265

IN THIS TOGETHER

(formerly Me too, & Company)
Contact: Meg McCauley
Ph. 503-890-7027
www.oregonhospice.org

Supports children & families who have experienced the death of a family member or friend.

THE DOUGY CENTER

Ph. 503-775-5683, www.dougy.org
3909 SE 52nd Ave., Portland, OR 97206



Provides safe place for children, teens, young adults & their families who are grieving a death.

STEPPING STONES

Ph. 360-696-5120

SW Washington Medical Center, Vancouver, WA
Support groups specialize in helping children with their grief.



STEPPING STONES

Come, take my hand, the road is long.
We must travel by stepping stones.
No, you're not alone. I've been there.
Don't fear the darkness. I'll be with you.
We must take one step at a time.
But remember, we may have to stop awhile.
It's a long way to the other side
And there are many obstacles.

We have many stones to cross.
Some are bigger than others.
Shock, denial, and anger to start.
Then comes guilt, despair and loneliness.
It's a hard road to travel, but it must be done.
It's the only way to reach the other side.

Come, slip your hand in mine.
What? Oh, yes, it's strong.
I've held so many hands like yours.
Yes, mine was once small and weak like yours.
Once, you see, I had to take someone's hand
In order to take the first step.
Oops! You've stumbled. Go ahead and cry.
Don't be ashamed. I understand.
Let's wait here awhile so that you can get your
breath.
When you're stronger, we'll go on, one step at a
time.
There's no need to hurry.

Say, it's nice to hear you laugh.
Yes, I agree, the memories you shared are
good.
Look, we're halfway there now.
I can see the other side.
It looks so warm and sunny.
Oh, have you noticed? We're nearing the last
stone
And you're standing alone.
And look, your hand, you've let go of mine.
We've reached the other side.

But wait, look back, someone is standing there.
They are alone and want to cross the stepping
stones.
I'd better go. They need my help.
What? Are you sure?
Why, yes, go ahead. I'll wait.
You know the way.
You've been there.
Yes, I agree. It's your turn, my friend ...
To help someone else cross the stepping
stones.

~ Barbara Williams Copyright © Barbara Williams



STEPPING STONES TO VOLUNTEER

Your First Few TCF Meetings

- Were you surprised to meet others who were also grappling with the terrifying trauma and shock of losing a child, grandchild or sibling? Did this help you feel less isolated, more understood?
- Were you encouraged to talk about your loved one and say their name? Was there a genuine interest in your child?
- Did you notice that crying and tears are perfectly acceptable, and in fact, normal?

The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE.

As Time Goes On

Grief has no timeline, it is different with each individual.

Talking about our child, sharing memories we hold dear, celebrating their birthday, honoring the day they died, are all helpful steps in the healing process. In time, the sharpest pain of grief softens, the sadness of loss always remains. **OUR CHILDREN ALWAYS REMEMBERED, ALWAYS LOVED.**

The Idea of Hope

Hope is a powerful and universal human experience. After the death of a child, hope for a normal life again may feel elusive. If you have reached out to welcome a new member, shared a hug of support, or just a gentle touch on the shoulder of another grieving person, you have extended HOPE. These small gestures help not only the deeply bereaved, but also help strengthen and heal yourself.

The Portland TCF Chapter is always seeking volunteers; to assure we have a presence in the community for newly bereaved families now and in the future. If you feel TCF has played a positive part in your healing journey and would like to help our chapter remain strong, we urge you to take a step forward and become a volunteer!

**HELPING OTHERS ALWAYS HELPS OUR OWN HEART
GROW STRONGER.**

Questions? Please contact Jeff Littman jlittman@comcast.net or Carolyn Harrington linerharrington@gmail.com

**MEMORIES ARE THE BRIDGE BETWEEN
THE HEART AND THE MIND**

~ Author unknown

What I Didn't Know

To my beautiful and beloved firstborn son,

It has been long. So long. Way too long since I last beheld your presence, your smile, your laughter and your love. I had NO idea how long, how arduous, how painful and how permanent this grief would be. Life became divided, before and after. Before the unthinkable tragedy, and after. Oh how bright and joyous “before” was. How vastly different “after” is. Oh yes, there are joys, laughter, happy moments and things to be grateful for. Yet all those things sit beside the ache and the longing. If only I could feel your skin, see the way your eyes would smile, hear your voice as you said “love ya mama”. It is not to be. Not on earth anyways. I am, by nature, a more positive person, so I do believe life will afford us new chapters, new adventures and new things that will bless us. But I no longer believe life will be lived without this ache. I once thought if I do “this” or “that”, read this book, journal daily, etc. that I would be “healed”. Nope. But it is not a symptom of an incomplete list nor is it a failure on our part. It is simply a part of a bereaved parents life. It does not mean we “can’t get over it” or are “stuck” (as society likes to tell us). It simply means we must live out our lives without our precious child. They are no longer here but our hearts remain filled with love for them. Grief is love you can no longer give away. So we learn to be grateful for the ways simple joys can have a new richness. It is said that our capacity for pain was greatly enlarged, but so is our capacity for joy. It’s a strange phenomenon but one I have experienced. The little joys are felt more deeply. I’m sure we can all agree that this path is harder than we knew, with ongoing twists and turns that require all our strength. But we can take comfort in the fellowship found here, and that is good. And I am grateful. Hugs.



Michelle Thomason, TCF, Portland, OR
Mom to Michael, 08/25/87 ~ 9/07/07

TODAY

Today I feel fragile.
Today I feel sad.
Today I've been crying.
Today I miss you a lot.
Today I couldn't laugh.
Today I feel lonely.
Today the crack in my heart is wider.
Today I love you even more than I did yesterday.

~ Reg

The first time a memory slides over us like a wave of warmth, we have turned the corner on our grief. When a once painful reminder evokes a gentle laugh, when we recognize the joy of the present in an image from the past, we have arrived at an important moment. Those memories are being transformed, unmistakable, into messages of hope.

~ Molly Fumia in *Safe Passages*



Remembrance

I see your smile in the brightness of the summer sun.
A gentle breeze is the touch of your hand on mine. A wave breaks softly on the shore and I hear you whisper, “Remember me.”
A winged bird begins its flight into the distant sky.
The sound of children's laughter fills the air.
The evening stars become your eyes,
and I reply, “You are ever near.”

~ Priscilla D. Kenney, TCF, Kennebunk, ME

I can be grateful for all I have while also feeling grief for all I have lost.

~ Joanne Cacciatore

Birthdays

If it's your child's birthday month, we invite you to join our monthly meeting and share their story!

Birthdays hold treasured memories and are especially difficult for surviving parents and siblings; TCF offers a wonderful venue to honor and celebrate the precious life-story of your loved one. Taking a few minutes to share a picture, memento, award or even their favorite toy is a gentle reminder to all that *love continues and grows* with each passing year.



Fireworks are Like the Love in our Hearts



July brings Central Oregonians lingering blue skies, lazy afternoons and the Fourth of July celebration, completed with the grand fireworks finale bolting from the top of Pilot Butte. This was one of my son's favorite holidays. When he was six I asked him why fireworks were so special to him. He said, "The lights explode in the dark & make the whole sky light up!" that was obvious. I said "Hum?" He gave me one of his "Oh mom" looks, then went on to say "The fireworks are like the love in our hearts, we should always try to spread our love out to others". I knew then and I still am aware today that profound wisdom comes from the lips of our children. From that summer on, in my mind, fireworks have been a triumphant testament of love's enduring power and wonder. I miss my son, Joshua terribly. I comfort myself knowing that his wisdom and kindness were precious gifts in my life.

Wherever you are on the Fourth of July, I hope that the splendor of sparkling fireworks might comfort you as you acknowledge that the love you hold dear for your child is the light that is able to shine through you. We all have known grief well, yet as compassionate friends we need not walk alone in the darkness. We can lighten the path for others.

Grief can cripple and destroy us, but as we gather to share each other's burden, we are able to gain strength. Love for our children is our common flame, sharing and caring keep the flames afire. I look forward to our next meeting and the opportunity to hug and listen to my comrades.

~ Jane Oja, TCF, Central Oregon Chapter

Missing you isn't the problem...
It's knowing you're never coming back
that's killing me.

~ Author unknown



Please Support Portland TCF...

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~ Whenever you use your Rewards Card you will be helping Portland TCF earn a donation from Fred Meyer.

~ You will still earn your Rewards Points, Fuel Points and Rebates, just as you do today.

Great Way for Families & Friends to Support TCF!

- Go to www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards
- Sign up online (even if you already have a card, you must create an online account)
- You will immediately receive an email to confirm your account (check your Spam or Junk Mail!)
- Sign up using your email address and password
- From the top menu select: Reward —> Community Rewards
- Click "[LINK YOUR CARD HERE](#)"
- Enter # FT805
- Be sure to click the bubble!
The Compassionate Friends, P.O. Box 3065
Portland OR 97208

TCF Portland earned **\$44.15** during the 4th quarter!
2023 YTD = \$166.43 ~ 2022 YTD = \$137.02

~ Thank you for participating
& enjoy shopping! ~

HEALING VERSUS RECOVERY


by Birdie Tracy

When a child dies, there is, indeed, an injury of massive proportions. All systems physical, mental, and spiritual are affected. There is physical pain, emotional wrenching, spiritual upheaval and struggling. All this may be occurring simultaneously. Though there may not be bleeding in the physical sense, there is emotional hemorrhaging. The body and psyche are in crisis. Bereaved parents are often unable to eat; they may experience sleep disturbances and disorientation. Believe it or not, all these reactions are normal. Grief is a normal part of life. This is not a mental illness or some chemical imbalance of the brain. What is not normal is to experience the death of a child.

The major difference between recovery and healing is that the goal is not to return to who we were before our child died, that goal is impossible to achieve. To continue to try to achieve a goal of recovery is to assume that life will be basically the same with a few minor adjustments. We'll set one less place at the table, buy less food, feel sad on holidays, cry a bit more. Our lives have been permanently and irrevocably changed. Part of the healing process is accepting that not only has our life changed, but that we are, in fact, becoming different people. The becoming is the healing.

During this process, we examine every facet of our lives and our belief systems. This is a journey, not a "repair." By living through this journey, we become different people. True, we may basically look the same, but we are not the same as before our child died. We look at life in a new way. Our interests change and our priorities change. We have a new and deeper level of understanding and compassion for those experiencing pain ... all kinds of pain. We have a different understanding of spirituality. We ourselves feel new and different. We carry some of the old person with us through the healing process, but we emerge different. We are healed, not recovered.

Memories ...

When you need to ...	When your needs have been	For surely something
Reach deep inside and take one of	Almost satisfied	As wonderful as this
Your precious memories.	Pause for one more second	Is meant to be shared.
Wipe away the cobwebs,	Then gently fold it back up,	Don't be afraid of using them—
Lay it out in front of you	Give it a big	That's what memories are for
And let the sunshine	Hug and a tender kiss	You will never lose them ...
And the sounds engulf you.	And return the treasure	For as certain as the sun
Revel in the experience of it ...	To where you found it.	Will rise tomorrow,
Re-live each precious moment,	Then to make the experience	Love once attained
Be overwhelmed by them	Complete,	is never lost.
And taste the wonderful sweet tears	Find someone special and share the	~ Steve Channing
That are their gift.	Feelings with them ...	

THIS IS A LISTING OF SEVERAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM THE NATIONAL COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

www.compassionatefriends.org

24/7 ONLINE SUPPORT

The Compassionate Friends offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. Several days & times available.

*FirstTime Chatter Orientation ~ Parents/Grandparents/Siblings ~ Loss to Substance Related Causes
Bereaved More Than Three Years ~ No Surviving Children ~ Pregnancy/Infant Loss ~ Suicide Loss*

PRIVATE FACEBOOK GROUPS

The Compassionate Friends offers a variety of private Facebook Groups. These pages are moderated by bereaved parents, siblings, or grandparents, and may not be accessed unless a request to join is approved by a moderator. Please click on the link next to the group you wish to join and answer the screening questions so we can confirm your request. If you are waiting approval, please message one of the administrators. Join requests to our Facebook groups must be requested personally, therefore when you wish to share the group with someone please pass along the link to the group.

Loss to COVID-19 & Other Infectious Diseases ~ Loss of a Stepchild ~ Loss of a Grandchild ~ Sibs (for bereaved siblings) ~ Bereaved LGBTQ Parents with Loss of a Child ~ Loss of a LGBTQ+ Child ~ Multiple Losses ~ Men in Grief ~ Daughterless Mothers ~ Sudden Death ~ Loss to Substance Related Causes ~ Sibling Loss to Substance Related Causes ~ Loss to Suicide ~ Loss to Homicide ~ Loss to a Drunk/Impaired Driver ~ Loss to Cancer ~ Loss of a Child with Special Needs ~ Loss to Long-term Illness ~ Loss After Withdrawing Life Support ~ Loss to Mental Illness ~ Loss to Miscarriage or Stillbirth ~ Miscarriage, Stillbirth, Loss of an Infant Grandchild ~ Infant & Toddler Loss ~ Loss of a Child 4—12 Years Old ~ Loss of a Child 13—19 Years Old ~ Loss of an Adult Child ~ Loss of an Only Child/All Your Children ~ Finding Hope for Parents Through TCF SIBS ~ Grandparents Raising their Grandchildren ~ Bereaved Parents with Grandchild Visitation Issues ~ Inclusion and Diversity ~ Grieving with Faith and Hope ~ Secular Support ~ Reading Your Way Through Grief ~ Crafty Corner ~ Loss of a Child

PATRIOT'S DAY

Remembering those who died on 9/11

Lady Liberty

I wonder what she thought as she stood there, strong and tall.
She couldn't turn away, and was forced to watch it all.
Did she long to offer comfort as her country bled?
With her arm forever frozen high above her head.
She could not shield her eyes, she could not hide her face.
She just stared across the water keeping Freedom's place.
The smell of smoke and terror somehow reduced her size.
So small within the harbor but still we recognized ...
How dignified and beautiful on a day so many died.
I wonder what she thought and I know that she must have cried.

~ Author unknown, lovingly lifted from TCF York Newsletter

when her son died,
she was 92
her son was 64
"he was my baby"
she cried.
the pain
of child loss
is not
confined by age

Grief to Glorious Unfolding

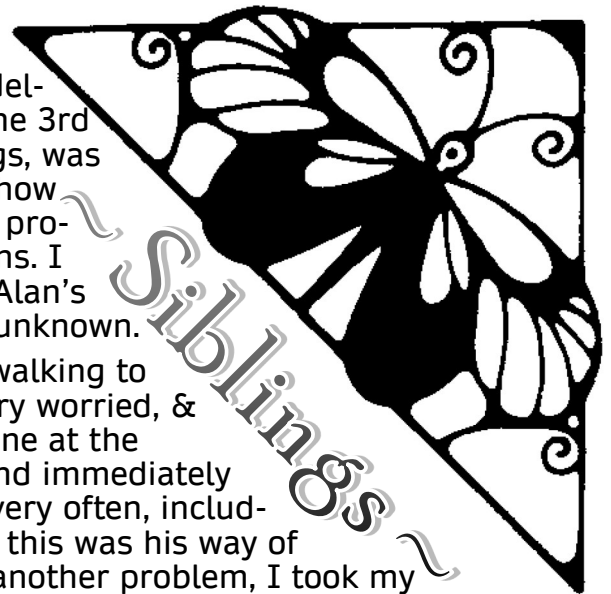
CHOCOLATE ANGEL

I attended my first TCF national conference in Philadelphia, Alan's second hometown, in 1995, shortly after the 3rd anniversary of his death. The first workshop, for siblings, was called Dreams and Visions. Here I had hoped to learn how to live my future without Alan. There was a typo in the program; it should have been called Dreams and Visitations. I was about to walk out. I had dreamt for months after Alan's death that he was still alive but was not ready for the unknown.

A few years later, during tropical storm Floyd while walking to my car during heavy rain and winds, I suddenly got very worried, & upset thinking that the storm could damage Alan's stone at the cemetery. Then I stepped on a Hershey Bar wrapper and immediately stopped worrying. Alan and I had visited Hershey, PA very often, including a two-night stay, by ourselves at age 14. I felt that this was his way of telling me not to worry. Recently I was worried about another problem, I took my nephew to Burger King, where they advertised Hershey Park. The next day I saw a girl wearing a Hershey Chocolate shirt. The following day someone from Hershey checked into my hotel. I finally decided what to do about my problem; I like to think, with assistance from Alan.

I was once asked by a fellow TCF member to visit a medium. I am not sure if it's just by chance, but I like my way of hearing.

~ Daniel Yoffe, TCF of Metrowest Newsletter, Special Sibling Edition



ONE ... It was only one second, one thought, one decision, one action in a lifetime of seconds, & thoughts, & decisions, & actions. It was so fast, so permanent, so irreversible, so hopeless. This moment, this thought, this decision, this action does not define him, does not honor him, does not immortalize him. It is the preceding 946,080,000 seconds, and thoughts, and decisions, and actions that define him, that honor him, that immortalize him.

I remember my brother in all of the other seconds, and thoughts, and decisions, and actions that preceded this one. I remember him coming home from the hospital, lip synching in the basement, falling out of the tree, biking across campus, coming home from school, from boot camp, from war ... I remember him hiking, and skiing, and running, and laughing, and crying. I remember how safe I always felt when he was around. I know he would take care, protect, defend.



I don't remember exactly when my brother became an amazing human being. I just looked at him one day and knew he was. I knew that nothing would make him change his mind about me. He was without judgement, without prejudice, without preconception. I knew my brother because we talked and he listened. I respected my brother most for his humanity, for being so sensitive, so vulnerable, so honest. I loved my brother for sharing the load when it was too hard for someone he loved to carry alone.

I knew my brother because he left so much of him in me. I trusted and respected my brother's decisions in the preceding 946,080,000 seconds, I have to trust and respect this one decision the same. I honor my brother by honoring myself. I do not dwell in that one moment, instead I celebrate and cherish all of the others. In that one second, one thought, one decision, one action, I found the strength he had given me and I will not let him down. I will not let that one moment be the only one.

~ Michele Mallory
TCF of Metrowest Newsletter, Special Sibling Edition

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**JULY—AUGUST—SEPTEMBER
2024**



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Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our Portland TCF!