



JULY—AUGUST—SEPTEMBER 2021

CONTACT US

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



P.O. Box 3065
Portland, OR 97208-3065
Ph. 503-248-0102
www.portlandtcf.org

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

Portland, Oregon

44th Annual TCF National Conference *Uniting Grieving Hearts Across Our Communities* July 16—18, 2021

Please see page 3 for further details.

OVER 100
WORKSHOPS
TO CHOOSE
FROM!



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS PERSONAL FLOWER FLOAT MEMORIAL TUESDAY JULY 20, 2021

Because of the uncertainty about Covid-19, Portland TCF is cancel-
ling our Annual 2021 Flower Float gathering. Instead we invite all our
families to honor the memory of their child in a personal way.

Amidst the chaos of this time, we encourage everyone to take a moment on Tuesday July 20th with
a special remembrance by floating a flower in water ~ in a river, a stream, or even a small bowl of
water on your table. Take a deep breath and feel the love and joy your loved one has brought into
your life and know that you are always connected through this love.

Our Children. Always Remembered. Always Loved

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

*Physical meetings have been cancelled due to Coronavirus. In it's place is a Zoom group meeting
available at the same day & time. Contact Jeff Littman or Peggy Smith to participate.

503-284-2725 ~ jwlittman@comcast.net

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 1838 SW JEFFERSON, RMI 130, PORTLAND, OR 97205 (Corner of SW 18th/Jefferson)

FOR MORE INFORMATION: (503) 248-0102

Chapter Leader

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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/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 experience 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.

JULY'S CHILD

“Everyone
hears what
you say.
Friends
listen to
what you say.
Best friends
listen to
what you
don't say.”

~ Author unknown

*The fireworks race toward Heaven, brilliant colors in the sky.
Their splendor ends in seconds on this evening in July.
Her birthday is this Saturday, I whisper with a sigh...
She was born this month, she loved this month,
& chose this month to die.
Like the bright & beautiful fireworks glowing briefly in the dark,
They are gone too soon & so was she, having been & left her mark.
A glorious, incandescent life, a catalyst, a spark...
Her being gently lit my path & softened all things stark...
The July birth, the July death of my happy summer child
Marks a life too brief that ended with rancor, without guile.
Like the fireworks that leave images on unprotected eyes,
Her lustrous life engraved my heart with love that never dies.*

~ Sally Migliaccio, TCF, Babylon, NY
In memory of her daughter, Tracey

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Due to COVID-19 most of our chapters are currently not holding a physical chapter meeting. Many chapters are offering a virtual meeting, please reach out to your local chapter to get information about what they will be offering.

OTHER TCF CHAPTERS IN THE AREA:

WASHINGTON COUNTY CHAPTER

Elsie Stuhr Center
5550 SW Hall Blvd.
Beaverton, OR 97005

2nd Tuesday
6:30 PM—8:30 PM
Phyllis (503) 324-2504

CLACKAMAS COUNTY CHAPTER

1500 Division Street
Oregon City, OR 97045
Email:
tcfclackamasco@gmail.com

4th Tuesday
7:00 PM



TCF's 44th National Conference will be presented virtually July 16-18, 2021. Although we would love to be together in person, we can still connect, support, and gather as a community virtually.

The Coronavirus pandemic continued to have strict restrictions for large gatherings during the planning stage of this conference, therefore we made the difficult decision to cancel the in-person conference in Detroit.

The cost per person is \$95.

At the present time there are 111 workshops to choose from.

For more information & to register go to ...

COMPASSIONATEFRIENDS.ORG

Uniting Grieving Hearts
Across Our Communities

44th TCF National Conference | Presented Virtually
July 16-18, 2021

THE MUSIC BOX

You Will Never Be Forgotten—Jessica Andrews
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9g35fMP8u0&list=PLtLsmguUtGfi9t875Z8OqEo4nlUeaUbSu&index=3>



Take a moment to enjoy this musical selection ~

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 she must have cried.



CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Email your address change to Jenna Pigeon, Member Database at jrpigeon@gmail.com

Have a happy & safe

INDEPENDENCE DAY

4th of July



INTRODUCING

amazonsmile

You shop. Amazon gives.

The Compassionate Friends, Portland Oregon chapter!

See page 12 to see how you can participate!

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL



Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL



Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL



Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL



SUMMER TIME—VACATION TIME—FAMILY TIME

I'll bet you never dreamed that there would ever be a time in your life when you would not welcome vacation from work...and the day-to-day hassles of routine living. It's probably a shocker to you that the slow pace of summer, cook-outs, softball games, etc., are now a nightmare. Everywhere we go, there are kids out of school enjoying their leisure time, and our bodies jolt as we search for our own absent child who enjoyed this time of the year with a passion!

Surrounded by summer fun, a bereaved parent need only to look around and there are painful memories at every corner. When we are faced with all the living, loving, happy families with their children, the anger boils within and we feel cheated. And this year we are afraid to go back to the beach cottage we visited every year, or to the favorite mountain retreat where we laid around for a week and relaxed, or the family-oriented amusement park where the kids had to ride every ride, and see every attraction, no matter what the temperature was...or how much talking is required. Yes, fear of our memories, fear of too much time to think, fear of too many kids, fear of bursting inside from our pain...all of these feelings are part of the first few years of summer vacations for bereaved parents.

It's been nine years now for me, and I need to tell you that it will get easier, but I found that for the first few years I needed to consciously change some of my routines in order to deal with my fears. I could not visit the same places we had visited when Todd was with us. We tried new experiences in new places with new people. That isn't to say there weren't some downtimes, however, the faster paced vacations worked better for us. I could not allow myself too much time to think. I now enjoy those week-ends away, but for the first few summers I had to dig in the yard, repaint lawn furniture, rearrange the garage, and the multitude of busy projects we'd been putting off for lack of time.

That was a better vacation for me than forcing myself to go somewhere and feel miserable. You've read it a hundred different ways, you have to find your own way and your own peace—leave yourself room to escape if it becomes necessary. If you can find enjoyment and relaxation relish it, you deserve it, and it does not mean you don't care. It simply means you are healing. Now, I walk down the beach and enjoy the solitude, or laugh when I see a toddler, or listen to the joy of kids laughing, and it warms my heart. Yes, I miss him, but I know he enjoyed every minute of this season, and I know that's what he'd want for me...and thank God, I can do it once more.

~ Brenda Holand



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, 2021

In Loving Memory of MICHAEL EDWARD THOMASON

My beautiful son,
Why doesn't it get any easier?? It's been too long.
The desire to touch you, hear you, hug you remains.

I have locks of your hair, so that must suffice.
Your birthday is coming, and I don't know how it is
for anyone else but it's still a very painful day for
me. It once was a day to celebrate. I pray you're
celebrating in Heaven. See you soon my sweet one.

Love Mom,
Thomason 5 Forever



Michelle Thomason

In Loving Memory of AMANDA JOY SCHULTZ

Still missing you
and loving you,
always and forever.

Mom & Dad

Ilena & Stuart Schultz



In Loving Memory of JOREY BENJAMIN ELLEFSEN



The insanity of time. Sometimes I feel like it's
been a day and yet an eternity. There isn't a
day that goes by that I'm not thinking of you.
Dreaming of who you would be today.
Missing you is the hardest thing I will
ever have to do in my lifetime.

You are and forever will be my first grandchild.
Thirteen years later & I still can't believe you are gone forever.
I love you so, so very much.

Love, Grandma

Debra Moon



Someone I love has gone away & life is not the same,
The greatest gift that you can give is just to speak their name.

I need to hear the stories and the tales of days gone past,
I need for you to understand these memories must last.

We cannot make more memories since they're no longer here,
So when you speak of them to me it's music to my ears.

~ thegoodgrieftrust.org, Wimborne, UK

Grass Stained Knees

My little boy started walking today
In the backyard, he fell down a few times
Got grass stains on his knees
I picked him up & hugged him,
He squeezed me back.

Several years later playing soccer
In the backyard, always me & Jake
Vs. Andy & Zach

Got grass stains on his knees
I picked him up & hugged him,
He squeezed me back.

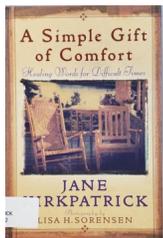
Some years later I taught him
how to cut the grass
In the backyard, edge it, mow it,
sweep it up

Got grass stains on his knees
Too big to pick up, I hugged him,
He squeezed me back.

Now I go to his grave & I cut his grass
I trim it, I edge it, I water it, I care for it
Now grass stains are on my knees
I tell Jake I love him,
Can't wait until
He can squeeze me back again.

For Jake, 6/21/91 ~ 9/2/07

By his Dad, Mat Summers, TCF, Orange County, CA



A Simple Gift of Comfort
Healing Words for Difficult Times
Jane Kirkpatrick, author
#2019.6-2

With the gentleness of a front porch conversation, words of comfort are offered to ease the pain you face today. Hold close these gifts of meditations, Scriptures, and stories created for your difficult journey.



**HOW DO WE DESCRIBE A PARENT AFTER THEIR CHILD DIES?
~ VILOMAH ~**

<https://www.joincake.com/blog/vilomah/>

Vilomah: Origin & What It Means for Parents Who Lost a Child

Excerpt:

WHAT DOES VILOMAH MEAN?

Vilomah is a Sanskrit word that means *against a natural order*. It took years of pondering, research, and discovery for the word Vilomah to come into the forefront. It's used to describe a person whose child has died. It's a complicated concept wrapped up in a small but powerful word. Its meaning embodies everything that is when a parent has to bury their child. It goes against a natural order.

Karla Holloway, a James B. Duke professor of English at Duke University, coined the term after suffering the loss of a child and discovering that there was no word that gave meaning to a parent whose child has died.

July 4th—Independence Day, July 25—National Parent's Day,
Sept. 6—Labor Day, Sept. 10—World Suicide Prevention Day
Sept. 11—Patriot's Day, Sept. 12—Grandparent's Day,
Sept. 16—Stepfamily Day, Sept. 24—Native American Day

OTHER SUPPORT GROUPS:

SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

www.sbsnw.org
Facebook—SBSNW
503) 200-0382

*Currently groups are being held several times per month on virtual Zoom meetings & will resume in-person meetings when it is safe & allowed by State regulations

NEW...

HELPING PARENTS HEAL

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

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, www.teleport.com

ME, TOO & COMPANY

Children, parents, whole families
Ph. 503-228-2104
www.oregonhospice.org

Supports children and 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.

Long ago it was thought that in order to heal, one should detach, completely, from the one who died. Upon reading this I wondered if that was why there are those who still push us toward such a thing. We've likely all experienced that person who suggests we get rid of all their belongings, or perhaps asks how long we will hold onto something. ("Something" that is more dear to us than they could ever imagine.) Thankfully we know better today. Humans are created for connection. Our days, our lives consist of interaction, intimacy and relation. We form bonds. And so we should. Though we have many relationships over the course of our lives, the bonds between us and our children are the deepest. Death may remove them physically from us, but it

does nothing to sever the emotional connection. I believe a big part of the reconciliation process is learning to integrate our past with our present, our losses into our ongoing lives. Having built several houses, and thus moving multiple times, I have found that I need to keep and bring a few familiar items to each new place. It seems I need a piece of the past. It anchors me. When we lose a child this need is far greater. Necessary to survival. Will others understand why we keep their favorite ski jacket, stuffed animal or skateboard? Possibly not. Does that matter? No. Experts call these "linking objects", and they tell us how crucial they are. No one knows but you what your needs are, what your path will look like, what will see you through each tomorrow. I'm

so grateful to TCF, where we all share an understanding of the need to support one another, to make space for different approaches, and to extend grace and kindness on this path we never would have chosen. Hugs to all. May you hold close a special item and feel the warmth of your beautiful child. They are with us forever.

~ Michelle Thomason, TCF, Portland, OR
In memory of her son, Michael Thomason.



istock.com - 25639154

I'll hold you in my heart until I hold you in Heaven.

I didn't give you
the gift of
life.



Life gave me the
Gift of you.

Missing you so much.

~ FOREVER YOUNG ~

When a child dies, a parent is still tied to that child. Souls tied together across universes. It doesn't matter the age when they passed. It doesn't matter how long ago it happened. It doesn't matter—none of it. Their souls are forever tied.

That's the love of a parent. That's the love that is more powerful than death. That's the heart that breaks and keeps breaking until their arms are filled again. It knows no discrimination based off of age, health, or time, it just is, and it always will be. Their souls are forever tied, and there's nothing that can break them. That's the beauty of unconditional love.

~ SCRIBBLES & CRUMBS



"Grief is like weeding a garden in the summer, you have to do it over, and over again till the season changes" ~ Fay Harden, Songs From the Edge

ALPHABET GRIEF

Allow & express your feelings
Be patient with yourself & others
Cry without shame—tears are healing
Don't compare the depth of your feeling w/other mourning styles—don't waste energy trying to measure someone else's pain
Energy might be low or absent
Fight to survive—one day, hour or minute at a time
Give forgiveness a chance—forgive yourself, your child, the circumstances, your God
Hope hides but will emerge just when you need it
Ignore the dumb & inappropriate comments of others—they don't mean to hurt you
Join a support group—Compassionate Friends understand
Keep searching for your sense of humor—once found, laughter will help you cope
Live each day as best you can—take time to take care of yourself
Make only small goals—baby steps are OK
Note that you are still standing
Overcome your expectations of yourself & others

Pray, if it is part of your belief system, otherwise meditate or spend some time in solitude

Quiet silence & calm

Realize your love for who you lost, and theirs for you, did not die with them

Sleep as much as you can at night, napping in the day is fine also

Take time to grieve & mourn. Don't dive into extreme business or make hasty decisions

Use a compassionate friend, family member, counselor or God to vent & express how you feel

Veer away from expecting others to grieve the same way you do

Write about how you feel & how much you miss your child

Xout feelings of guilt, know you did the best you could as a parent

You are not alone—remember & take comfort in that

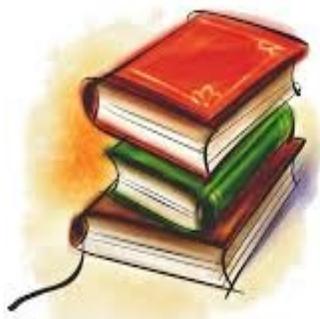
Zoo: Yes, it feels like you're in a zoo. The world keeps moving despite your loss. Be gentle with yourself & don't get stuck & caged in your grief.

~ Author unknown



I wish you could have felt the sun today. You would have laughed. I could have seen your smile. We could have gone to the ocean, I would not feel fear or pain. We could have had sand between our toes for a whole day, I'd feel happy. We could go swimming, I wouldn't be alone. I'd have my best friend back. We could jump the dunes and you'd still be my big brother.

~ Author unknown, lovingly lifted from Bergen/Passaic TCF, Wyckoff, NJ



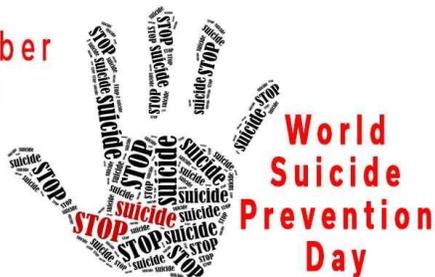
We are pleased to offer our members reading material from our **LENDING LIBRARY!**

The profound challenges and trauma of grief often leave us with desperate, unanswered questions, fear and isolation. *Will our children be forgotten? How does one survive this unthinkable trauma? Will I ever be 'normal' again? Why do people stop speaking to them?* It is during this time that many of us seek answers, comfort and guidance in books authored by those who have experienced the death of a child. We Are Not Alone.

Through the generous donations of our members, TCF has acquired an inventory of books that are now available for you to borrow for a 3-month period. Books will be mailed directly to your home and will include a postage-paid envelope for the return. Visit our website www.portlandtcf.org and browse through the inventory!

If you have books you would like to donate, please contact us and we will make arrangements for pick up. A label with your child's name will be placed on the inner cover of the book.

September
10th



“Light a Candle” is an act of remembrance demonstrating support for suicide prevention, to remember a lost loved one, & for the survivors of suicide. Individuals from all over the world light a candle at 8pm on September 10th.



Please Support Portland TCF . . .

Just by shopping at Fred Meyer with your Rewards Card!! Fred Meyer donates to local community organizations/nonprofits of your choice through their *Community Rewards Program*. 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 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 97208

TCF Portland earned **\$41.33** during the 1ST quarter!
2021 YTD = \$41.33

~ Thank you for participating
& enjoy shopping! ~

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.

A new opportunity to support The Compassionate Friends, Portland Oregon chapter!

Go to smile.amazon.com

amazon smile

You shop. Amazon gives.

AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support the Portland Chapter of The Compassionate Friends every time you shop, at no cost to you.

AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases.

- ⇒ To shop at AmazonSmile go to smile.amazon.com on your web browser or activate AmazonSmile on your Amazon Shopping app on your iOS or Android phone.
- ⇒ Sign in with your Amazon.com credentials
- ⇒ Below the blank search bar choose “Supporting” & link to The Compassionate Friends Portland Chapter
- ⇒ Bookmarking this site will make it easier to return & start shopping at AmazonSmile. Always check for the AmazonSmile logo to ensure you're activated for AmazonSmile.

*You can use your existing account on Amazon.com & AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, & other account settings remain the same.

Thank you for supporting
TCF in Portland!

Following the unexpected death of her 25-year-old son Bryce Mitchell Sain, Battle Ground mother Merlinda Sain has created a wind phone booth as a place for community resource where all



nessed her grief into building a booth to remember her son and as a place where all are welcome.

The concept behind the in-home phone line, inside a private wind phone booth in Japan, which

the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, serving as a source of comfort for those grieving. The wind phone booth provides a private place where people can confide their thoughts and let the wind carry their words to loved ones. The act of picking up a receiver and dialing a phone number is a real tangible connection that creates space for people to process grief.

"To lose a child has been the most difficult thing life has challenged me with, and in those moments when all is lost, it is my community that has pulled me through." said Merlinda Sain. "This place is not just for me to remember my boy. It's about acknowledging how difficult grief can be and the intense pain it creates. My hope is that those who suffer can find a small amount of comfort inside the wind phone booth."

Thanks to an incredible outpouring of support, labor, and donated materials, the new wind phone booth located in Battle Ground, Washington took shape over the span of about four weeks. A candlelight vigil was held on May 17th, the official booth opening to the public.



Those interested in visiting the wind phone booth in Battle Ground, WA can get additional information via Facebook. The booth will be open to all, daily during daylight hours.

[2311 SW 6th Street](#)
[Battle Ground, WA 98604](#)

Follow the [Wind Phone](#) Facebook page
[@WindPhone.BattleGround.WA—Community](#)



**Grieving hearts are glad that you don't understand their pain.
They just want you to understand—that you don't understand their pain.**

~ John Polo

~ Be Good to Yourself This Summer ~

Summertime is a time to get away and renew yourself. When you are grieving, it is even more important to relax and take time to be good to yourself. Grief work takes physical, emotional and spiritual energy.

Here are some mini vacations: Get outside as often as possible. The warmth of the sun and soft breezes help you to feel alive. Exercise helps work off

frustration, anger and depression. Search our local parks, nature trails, even a walk around your own block.

Try to visit places where there is water. Watching water and hearing it lap against the shore is soothing. As the waves recede try to envision your grief receding, as the waves return, imagine them bringing peace & comfort.

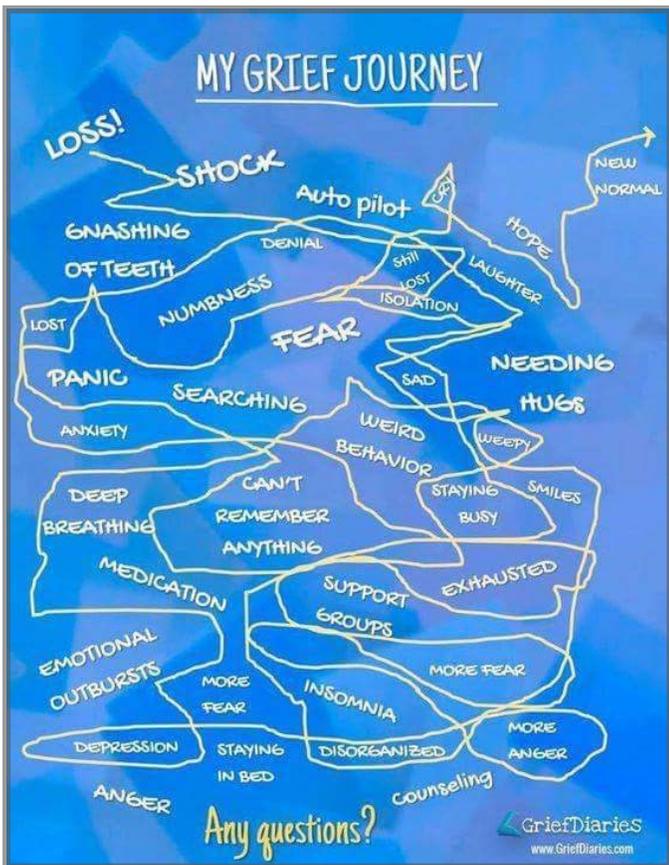
Escape into another world

through a book or go to the movies ... give your mind a break from the grief. Don't push your grief down. Get it out into the open so you can deal with it & control it, or it will control you.

Attend a support meeting—to give you hope and knowledge that you are not alone.

~ TCF, Fresno CA





An important way to cope with grief is having an outlet, be it interpersonal, be it artistic, that will allow you to not have to contain your grief, but will give you an opportunity to express it, to externalize it to some degree.

~ R. Benjamin Cirlin, Grief Counselor

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

www.compassionatefriends.org

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.

First-Time Chatter Orientation ~ Parents/Grandparents/Siblings ~ Loss to Substance Related Causes ~ Bereaved
More Than Two Years ~ No Surviving Children ~ Pregnancy/Infant 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 of a Stepchild ~ Loss of a Grandchild ~ Sibs (for bereaved siblings) ~ Bereaved LGBTQ Parents with Loss of a 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

PLEASE DON'T DISCOUNT SIBLING GRIEF

I have come to think of sibling grief as “discounted grief.” Why? Because siblings appear to be an emotional bargain in most people’s eyes. People worry so much about the bereaved parents that they invest very little attention in the grieving sibling.

My personal “favorite” line said to siblings is, “You be sure and take care of your parents.” I wanted to know who was supposed to take care of me, I knew I couldn’t.

The grief of siblings may differ from that of a parent, but it ought not be discounted. People need to realize that while it is obviously painful for parents to have lost a child, it is also painful for the sibling who has not only lost a sister or brother, but an irreplaceable friend.

While dealing with this double loss, he or she must confront yet another factor: The loss of a brother or sister is frequently the surviving sibling’s first experience with the death of any young person. Young people feel they will live forever. A strong dose of mortality in the form of a sibling death is very hard to take.

The feelings of siblings are also often discounted when decisions are being made on things ranging from a funeral plan to flower selections. Parents need to listen to surviving siblings who usually know a lot about the tastes and preferences of the deceased.

Drawing on the knowledge that surviving siblings have about supposedly trivial things, such as favorite clothes or music, can serve two purposes when planning funeral or memorial services. First, their input helps ensure that the deceased receives the type of service he or she would have liked. Second, their inclusion in the planning lets them know they are still an important part of the family.

I realize that people are unaware that they are discounting sibling grief. But then, that’s why I’m writing this, so people know.

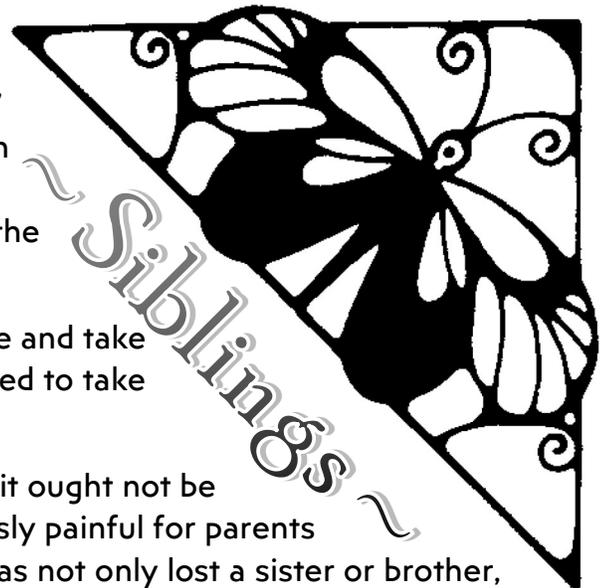
~ Jane Machado, TCF, Tulare, CA



BROTHER

You make a part of me
That alone, I would never be
I carry your friendship in heart, in tow
It gives me more strength than you'll ever know
Forever with me, wherever I go.

~ Author Unknown



Not the Same

He was a very nice man, like so many others, and yet he was so different. His quick smile and gentle ways were like those of others and yet, he was so uncommon. He was kind and loving with unshakable faith like others, and yet he was so unique. He was a dutiful soldier who gave his life like many others, and yet he was so special.

The same as others? No

Not to those who knew and loved him.

He was himself, an individual, and he was my brother!

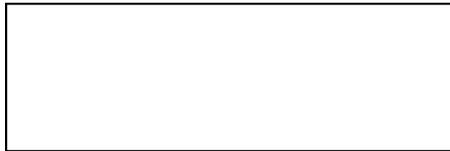
~ Pam Miller Farrell, TCF, Evansville, IL

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