



**The  
Compassionate  
Friends**  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

*Miami  
Valley  
Chapter  
Newsletter*

TCF Chapter No. 1732, P.O. Box 292112, Kettering, OH 45429 (937) 640-2621

May-June 2015

Website: <http://www.miamivalleytcf.com>

E-mail: [miamivalleytcf@gmail.com](mailto:miamivalleytcf@gmail.com)

### **Butterfly Release!**

Saturday, June 27th  
2-4pm  
Phillips Park  
2144 Dayton Xenia Road, Beavercreek



Our annual summertime event, family-friendly and fun! Spend a couple hours with compassionate friends for a short program, some good food and a beautiful release of sweet butterflies to remember our angels.

A snack to share is appreciated but not required!

**Chapter meetings are on the  
third Wednesday of the month  
at Sugar Creek Presbyterian Church  
Corner of Bigger Road & Wilmington Pike  
Kettering, Ohio**

Directions: from Rt 35, exit at Woodman Drive,  
go south approximately 4 miles to Wilmington Pike,  
turn left, church is about 1/2 mile on right

**OR**

from I-675, exit onto Wilmington Pike (Exit 7),  
go north 2 miles. Church is on left, just after David  
Road

### **Upcoming Meeting Schedule and Topics**

**Wednesday, May 20th, 7pm  
Mother's Day Blues**

**Wednesday, June 17th, 7pm  
Dad's Grief**

### **Newsletter Address Update Note!**

We're updating newsletter files/contact lists. If you're receiving this newsletter and want to change your contact info (name, spelling, preferred e-mail or postal address), e-mail [miamivalleytcf@gmail.com](mailto:miamivalleytcf@gmail.com) or call 937-640-2621 and leave a message—slowly and clearly, please—with your updated info. Also, if you're receiving your newsletter via postal mail and are willing to switch to e-mail, we'd so appreciate saving the postage cost. If by chance you no longer wish to receive the newsletter at all (we hope not!), please let us know, we'll remove you from our list. Thank you!

People will admire your strength, but usually what they mean is your ability to look "together", to be stoic, to have on a mask that indicates "I'm ok." What people don't realize is that the real strength comes in facing the grief, which might look like falling apart, inability to show up, tears, sadness, and head under the covers. You are strong, every day you choose to be alive, but let your real strength be in facing the feelings so that you move through the process.

[www.transendingloss.ashleydavisbush.com](http://www.transendingloss.ashleydavisbush.com)

Sometimes, the people who have been through many storms often take the longest to find their path  
because their sensitivity is a double-edged sword.

At their core lies great strength but they are more susceptible to life's pains.

*Good thing the soul doesn't know a thing about deadlines.*

[lessonslearnedinlife.com](http://lessonslearnedinlife.com)

*The Compassionate Friends— A self-help organization offering friendship, understanding,  
and hope to bereaved families that have experienced the death of a child.*

***Thank You for your "Love Gifts"***  
*in remembrance of these loved ones . . .*

- ♥ *Jan & Chuck Lehman in memory of her son  
Bryan Holl's 40th birthday on April 18th*
- ♥ *Dolly Brunner in memory of her daughter  
Erin Quigley's February 7th Angel Date*
- ♥ *Quenetta Wolan in memory of her son,  
Brandon Taylor*
- ♥ *Tom Gilhooly in memory of his son Ryan's  
March 24th Angel Date*
- ♥ *Brad & JoAnn Nielson in memory of their grandson,  
Corey Richards*

And thanks to all who gave anonymously!  
*(Please contact us if we accidentally omitted any love*

**Please send your "Love Gifts" (tax deductible)  
to**

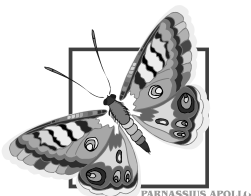
***The Compassionate Friends,  
Chapter # 1732  
Karen Brown, Treasurer  
P. O. Box 292112  
Kettering, Ohio 45429***

***We depend on and are so grateful for your generous donations  
to continue our mission to reach out to grieving families  
who have lost a precious child, grandchild or sibling.***

***Chapter financial reports are available at the  
planning meetings.***

***If you'd like to designate your gift for a particular use, such as a  
new library book or a newsletter mailing, or towards an event such as  
the Candle Lighting, please let us know!***

***Did you know that your United Way contributions can be designated  
to our local Miami Valley TCF Chapter #1732?***



The Compassionate Friends  
Miami Valley Chapter #1732, Dayton, OH 937-640-2621

Chapter Support Meetings  
3rd Wednesdays, 7pm, Sugarcreek Church

Planning Team Meetings  
(all are welcome!)  
2nd Thursdays, 7pm, LaRosa's  
2801 Wilmington Pike near Dorothy Lane

Other Nearby TCF Chapter  
Miami County TCF, West Milton, OH  
Contact Barb Lawrence 937-836-5939

Other Local Dayton Area Support

- \*Miami Valley Hospital Perinatal Loss Hot Line, Pregnancy Loss/I Infant Death ..... 937-208-6363
- \*Oak Tree Corner, Grief Support for Children 937-285-0199
- \*Survivors of Suicide ..... 937-226-0818  
..... [www.suicidepreventioncenter.tk](http://www.suicidepreventioncenter.tk)
- \*Hospice of Dayton Grief Support ..... 937-256-4490  
..... 800-653-4490
- \*Crossroads Hospice Grief Recovery ..... 937-312-3170  
..... 800-603-6673
- \*HEALing Together, Franklin, OH Miscarriage, Infant & Toddler Loss, Parent/Grandparent Support 513-705-4056

Other Resources

- \*Alive Alone, Support for Death of Only Child or All Children  
Kay Bevington, VanWert, OH: [alivalon@bright.net](mailto:alivalon@bright.net)  
419-238-1091, [www.alivealone.org](http://www.alivealone.org)
- \*American Association of Suicidology  
[www.suicidology.org](http://www.suicidology.org)

Websites to check out:

[www.thegrieftoolbox.com](http://www.thegrieftoolbox.com)  
Tom Zuba [www.TomZuba.com](http://www.TomZuba.com)  
Paula Stephens [www.crazygoodgrief.com](http://www.crazygoodgrief.com)  
Paul S Boynton [www.beginwithyes.com](http://www.beginwithyes.com)

The Compassionate Friends national magazine "We Need Not Walk Alone" is available free through an online subscription at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) - click on "sign up for national publications". If you do not wish to subscribe, you can still view the magazine in the archive once the next issue has been published.

I am the mother of a child who died. And that makes Mother's Day very hard.

Recently I was talking to a mother whose child had just died. "What about Mother's Day?" she asked, through tears. It was hard to know what to say, because it's a terrible day for those of us who have lost a child. Other days of the year you can maybe make it a few hours without thinking about your loss; other days of the year you can pretend that you are an ordinary person and that life is normal. But not on Mother's Day.

On Mother's Day it's in your face that your child is gone forever. On Mother's Day you can't pretend you are ordinary or that life is normal. All the hoopla, all the Hallmark hype, the handmade cards and flowers and family gatherings, make it almost excruciating.

Our town has a Mother's Day road race for which I am eternally grateful -- especially because, in a demonstration of grace's existence, the start and finish are next to the cemetery where my son is buried. On my way I can visit his grave and say what I need to say and look yet again at the name we chose for him carved into stone. At the end of the race, they give all the mothers a flower; on my way home, I go back to the grave and lay my flower there. And then I move forward with the day.

See, that's the real challenge after losing a child: moving forward. It's almost impossible to envision in that moment of loss; how can life continue after something so horrible? But life does continue, whether we like it or not. There are chores to do and bills to pay; morning comes, again and again. So you pick yourself up and you live, but you are never the same.

At first, we are different because of our raw sadness. But over time, the sadness moves from our skin into our bones. It becomes less visible, but no less who we are. It changes into a wisdom, one we'd give up in a heartbeat to have our child back. We who have lost children understand life's fragility and beauty. We who have lost children understand that so many things just aren't important. All that is important is those we love. All that is important is each other. Nothing else.

It can feel very lonely, being the parent of a child who died. Especially on Mother's Day or Father's Day. We feel so different from those around us, all those happy people with children the same age our child was, or would have been. But over the years, I've come to understand that I'm not alone at all.

There is a wonderful Buddhist story about a woman whose son gets sick and dies. She goes to the Buddha to ask him to bring her son back to life; I will, he says, if you bring me some mustard seed from the home of a family that has not known loss. She goes from house to house but can find no family that has not lost someone dear to them. She buries her son and goes to the Buddha and says: I understand now.

That is what I understand now. It doesn't make me miss my son any less, or Mother's Day any easier. But it helps me make sense of it; loss is part of life. There are no guarantees, ever. Our children, and all those we love, are gifts to us for however long we have them.

I understand now too that we are together in this, all of us, in joy and in loss. It's the connections we make with each other that matter -- it's the connections we make that give life value and help us face each morning. As G.K. Chesterton wrote, "We are all in the same boat in a stormy sea, and we owe each other a terrible loyalty."

Years ago, I chose words to say each time I go to my son's grave. It makes it easier to have a ritual. And over the years, the words have come to mean more to me. They aren't just about grief anymore. They are about who I am, what I have learned, and what I can give.

"I will always love you, " I say. "And I will always be your mother."

[Claire McCarthy, M.D.](#)

Claire McCarthy is a pediatrician at Boston Children's Hospital. An Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, an official spokesperson for the American Academy of Pediatrics and a senior editor for Harvard Health Publications, she has been writing about health and parenting for more than 20 years. She and her husband are raising five children ranging in age from 24 to 9. She blogs for [Thriving](#), the health and parenting blog of Children's Hospital Boston, and for Boston.com as [MD Mama](#).



## Dear Mr. Hallmark ... One More Time

Hello there Mr. Hallmark man, I wrote to you in May  
To ask that words of love be shared with my mom on Mother's Day.  
Just as there is no card for Mom to let her know I care,  
There is no card for my dad, too, and I have so much to share.  
It's very hard for my loving dad to know that I'm okay.  
To protect me was his job, he feels, so he thinks he failed some way.  
Although I had to leave this world, while still considered young,  
There is no way he ever failed — there's no more he could have done.  
My dad he tends to question those things he cannot see.  
I always send him little signs to say, "Hey, Dad, it's me!"  
I hear him crying in the car, the shower hides his tears.  
He feels he has to be so strong for those he holds so dear.  
My dad he often gets so mad at what became of me.  
He wants so much to understand, he says, "How could this be?"  
I somehow need to let him know, though impossible it seems —  
For him to live and laugh again will fulfill so many dreams.  
The card I need to send right now to a dad as great as mine,  
Will thank him for the love he gave throughout my brief lifetime.  
He's still the one that I call Dad, our bond's forever strong,  
'Cuz even though he can't see me, our love lives on and on.  
Please help me find a way to tell my dad that when  
It comes his time to leave the earth I'll be waiting there for him.  
And also, Mr. Hallmark man, please help him to believe,  
That nothing will ever change the fact that  
*MY DAD HE'LL ALWAYS BE.*

from Grief Haven ([www.griefhaven.org](http://www.griefhaven.org))  
Via Kelly Farley, To The Brink and Back [www.grievingdads.com](http://www.grievingdads.com)

*There are only two days in the year that nothing can be done.  
One is called yesterday and the other is called tomorrow.  
Today is the right day to love, believe, do and mostly live.*

*Dalai Lama XIV*

*"The best way to honor the  
dead is to love the living, for if our  
lives stop when their life stops,  
Death has killed twice."*

Rev William A. Ritter, Bereaved Father  
Keynote speaker TCF 2006 National Conference

The Compassionate Friends is about transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope. It takes people out of the isolation society imposes on the bereaved and lets them express their grief naturally. With the shedding of tears, healing comes. And the newly bereaved get to see people who have survived and are learning to live and love again.

~Simon Stephens  
Founder of The Compassionate Friends

It's so curious: one can resist tears  
And "behave" very well in the hardest hours of grief.  
But then someone makes you a friendly sign  
Behind a window, or one notices a flower  
That was in bud only yesterday has suddenly blossomed  
Or a letter slips from a drawer  
... *and everything collapses.*

~Collette



#### TCF FACEBOOK GROUPS:

Connect with other Bereaved Parents, Grandparents and Siblings on our national TCF organization's Online Support Community, via several closed Facebook groups.

- ◆ TCF—Loss to Cancer  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/903539646362818/>
- ◆ TCF—Loss to Substance Related Causes  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1515193738693712/>
- ◆ TCF—Loss to Suicide  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1550029471893532/>
- ◆ TCF—Loss to Homicide  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/924779440868148/>
- ◆ TCF—Loss to a Drunk/Impaired Driver  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/858226880883307/>
- ◆ TCF—Infant and Toddler Loss  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1511758585777339/>
- ◆ TCF—Sibling Loss to Substance Related Causes  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1516508415263760/>
- ◆ TCF—Loss of a Grandchild  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/421759177998317/>
- ◆ The Compassionate Friends Sounds of the Siblings (for bereaved siblings)  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/21358475781/>

We welcome contributions to the Newsletter, whether composed by you or found in your reading. Please submit suggestions to [www.miamivalleytcf@gmail.com](mailto:www.miamivalleytcf@gmail.com).

**National TCF**

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.,  
P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696  
(630) 990-0010

Toll-Free Number: 1-877-969-0010

TCF web site:

<http://www.compassionatefriends.org>

**TCF Regional Coordinator for Ohio**

Dean Turner

Email: [Edean234@aol.com](mailto:Edean234@aol.com)

or phone: 614-402-0004

**Miami Valley TCF Chapter Leaders**

Tom Gilhooly and Richard Miller

937-640-2621

<http://miamivalleytcf.com>

Tom and Dick honor their sons,  
Ryan Gilhooly and Brad Miller,  
through their service.

***SEE DETAILS INSIDE!!***

**Saturday, June 27th, 2015**

**Our Annual Butterfly Release!**



**THE  
COMPASSIONATE  
FRIENDS**

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Kettering, OH 45429

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