

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS INC.
Organization *Providing Grief Support After the Death of a Child*

MIAMI COUNTY CHAPTER NO. 1870

AUGUST 2016 NEWSLETTER Vol. 25 No. 8

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Facebook page "The Compassionate Friends of Miami County Ohio Chapter 1870".

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www.compassionatefriends.org - e-mail: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org.

What a beautiful day we had for the Butterfly Release!!

Sorry if you missed this year's Annual Picnic. We had a butterfly release in memory of our children in celebration of our chapter's 25th year anniversary. This was our first time ever to hold a butterfly release and it was heart lifting when each butterfly took to the sky carrying a special child's name. As you know the butterfly is a symbol of a new life born from the life of a caterpillar. Our children that have left this life is now living a new spirit life. They may be gone from our sight, but their presence is forever around us and within our hearts.



The day of the picnic was very warm to say the least, but we had more than 80 people in attendance. It was sunny and clear for the annual picnic and butterfly release as we enjoyed socialization, shared memories, our children's pictures, and some great food.

After eating, we formed a large circle and received our butterfly in a special envelope. Kim read a wonderful butterfly poem. Then we spoke our child's name and released our butterfly one after the other.

There were some surprises by the butterflies. Some stayed on hands for several minutes before flying away. Some flew around a little and landed on a few



August Meeting—August 25, 2016
7:00 P.M.

Nashville United Church of Christ

4540 W. St. Rt. 571, West Milton, Ohio

Meetings are held in the basement of the church. Please park in the lot on the west side of the building. Enter the building Through the door facing the west parking lot.

Topic: How to help our employers, friends, and family members to understand our grief.

Rev. Bobbi Predmore will lead us with this discussion of possible ways to help others understand our loss.

August Refreshments:

If you signed up for August refreshments, you will receive a telephone reminder from Deb Turner.

Thank you for June Refreshments

Sandy O'Dell (Memory of Mark Kurtis)

Tammy Elam (Memory of David)

Next Meeting - September 22, 2016

of the participants to visit them for a few minutes. Some circled around for a while before flying off. Many flew straight up and settled in the trees for us to watch them in the trees.

It is joyful knowing that our children's memories have also added more Monarch butterflies to Miami County.



To the caterpillar it is the end of life.

To the butterfly a whole new beginning.

RETURNING TO WORK AFTER LOSING A CHILD

By Helen Fitzgerald, CT

After a death in the family, the time comes when grieving family members begin to re-enter the routines of everyday life. Out-of-town relatives return home. Children go back to school and grieving adults must get back to work. For some, returning to work is a welcome change. It is a part of their life that did not include their loved one, and it can create a break from what has been an ever - present grief. The office may be the only part of life that seems normal and routine.

But for many who have experienced a recent loss, returning to work can be difficult. If you are grieving, you may be dreading the thought of returning to the business world for several reasons:

*Seeing co-workers for the first time exposes you to "I'm so sorry" comments, and they remind you of your loss. As difficult as these expressions of sympathy may be to hear, they are better than no acknowledgement at all. A simple "thank you" is all the response that is necessary. You do not owe anyone a story you do not wish to share.

*You may have a high- pressure job with many deadlines and little room for mistakes. You have probably noticed that it is hard to concentrate and retain information in your grief. You may be easily distracted, and errors can occur. It is useful to check everything twice, or ask a coworker or supervisor to review what you have done. Let your co-workers or supervisor know how difficult things seem at this time and where you need their help.

*You may worry about breaking down in front of colleagues or in the middle of an important meeting. This can happen, but save yourself embarrassment by briefly letting people know what has occurred in your life. If you need to excuse yourself, do so.

Before returning to work, try some of the following suggestions:

*Be sure your office knows what happened. Give them as much information as you are comfortable sharing. Sometimes the circumstances around a death are very personal; if people ask too many questions, let them know you are not comfortable going into that right now. Allow one key person to have enough information to keep speculation at a minimum. Keep him or her informed about funeral arrangements, time away from work, and how you are doing.

*Let your office know you want to be included in regular e-mail correspondence so you can be kept updated on what is happening at the office.

*You might arrange to go into the office to meet co-workers for lunch, getting past the first encounters and I'm so sorry' comments. It can make it easier to go back to work at a later date.

*Consider returning for half -days for a week or so, easing your way back into the normal routine.

*Ask a grief therapist - or ask your employer to arrange for one - to meet with co-workers, especially if the death was sudden or traumatic. An example: One employer called a grief therapist to help employees after a co-worker- reported the death of her child. These co-workers had some good questions: "What do we do with the pictures of our kids that are on our desks? Should we put them away because it is going to be so hard on her?" The answer: "It will be hard for her to see the pictures. But she must deal with it at some time, and it is better she do it with people like you who care for her. It may be worse if you put all the pictures away. She'd surely notice, and know it is because of her. Expect her to keep the picture of her dead child on her desk, and it is okay to comment on it,"

*Encourage your co-workers to learn more about grief so they can better understand what you are going through. Let them know what is helpful to you when you are having a particular hard day, giving you a hug, allowing you to have some alone time, fixing you a cup of coffee, or going for a short walk. The more they know what they can do for you, the more comfortable they will be with your tears and the more comfortable you will be in their presence.

*Keep good communication going. Set up regular meetings with your supervisor, colleagues or employees to talk about what is happening. Ask for feedback. Good, clear communication will discourage idle and unhelpful chatter,

*It is important to tell your story. But be careful not to share your feelings too much or too often. If you notice people getting bored, looking at their watch, or changing the subject, you may be overdoing it. Ask a trusted co-worker if you are talking too much. However, the need to talk to help yourself heal is very real; setting up an appointment with your company's EAP (Employee Assistance Professional), contacting your local hospice, or joining a support group can give you an appropriate place where you can say what you need to say.

*You may need help with certain projects or deadlines. Don't forget to thank those who help you. Small rewards are often appreciated, such as coffee break snacks, flowers, public thanks at a meeting, or an appreciative e-mail.

Thinking ahead will make your return to work easier and less painful. Healing from the death of a loved one is a long, slow process, but getting back into a routine is an important step in the journey.

*Thank you
love gifts!*

- ♦ Kern & Pam Carpenter for the Love Gift in memory of their daughter, Tasha Nicolle Longyear 11/1978 -- 04/2008.
- ♦ Cathy Duff for the Birthday Love Gift in memory of her son, Shaun Bradley Duff 08/1985 - 01/2009.
- ♦ Kim Duvall and Steve McFarland for the Love Gift in memory of Kim's son, Aaron Duvall 04/1977 -- 10/2013.
- ♦ Bob & Frank Karl for the Love Gift in memory of their son, Matthew "Matt" Karl, 11/1961 -- 02/2003.
- ♦ Pat Meadows for the Love Gift in memory of her son, Bill Meadows 03/1966 -- 05/1991.
- ♦ DeDe Mott for the Love Gift in memory of her son, Montgomery Alan "Monte" Mott 10/1973 -- 02/2001.
- ♦ Tamra Pressler & Joe Miller for the Birthday Love Gift in memory of their son, Cody Pressler 07/1992 -- 05/2011.
- ♦ Richard & Sandra Saurber for the Birthday/Anniversary Love Gift in memory of their daughter, Jill Myers 08/1960 -- 08/2012,

Love Gifts should be made out to:

The Compassionate Friends and mailed to Barb Lawrence, 4031 Wolcott Place, Englewood, OH 45322. Please send your donation by the 15th of the month prior to the month you want your child remembered in the newsletter.

NEED A PHONE FRIEND?

A listening ear is sometimes the best medicine.

Kim Bundy (suicide)	573-9877
Lori Clark (organ donation)	233-1924
Pam Fortener (cancer death)	254-1222
Sheryll Hedger (siblings)	997-5171
Lora Rudy (infant death)	339-0456
Cathy Duff (auto accident)	473-5533

CHAPTER NEWS

Upcoming Topics

Topics are subject to change. Refer to the month's newsletter for confirmation of meeting topic.

August - How to help our employers, friends, and family members to understand our grief. Rev. Bobbi Predmore will lead us with this discussion of possible ways to help others understand our loss.

September - Child's Favorite Food. Everyone will be invited to bring their child's favorite dish to share in a pot luck dinner.

October - Surviving the Holidays. Ideas and suggestions will be discussed for both including our children in the festivities and how to handle our grief through these extra difficult holiday events.

November - Topic Card Questions. Random questions will be chosen from our cards and discussed around the members.

Please let Chapter Leader, Kim Bundy, know if you have new suggestions for meeting topics. This is your chapter and your input is very welcomed.

I give you this one thought to keep -
 I am with you still - I do not sleep.
 I am a thousand winds that blow,
 I am the diamond glints on snow,
 I am the sunlight on ripened grain,
 I am the gentle autumn rain.
 When you awaken in the morning's
 hush,
 I am the swift, uplifting rush
 of quiet birds in circled flight.
 I am the soft stars that shine at night.
 Do not think of me as gone -
 I am with you still - in each new
 dawn.

Native American Prayer

Support Groups Assisting Your Healing Process

Nothing will ever be the same after your child has died, but you can heal if you have the courage to live through the mourning process and have the willingness to embrace the healing process.

It was November 13, 1988 when I experienced the most horrific, unthinkable and unimaginable event that changed my life forever. My son Michael, at age 16, died violently in an automobile accident. I'm sharing this with you because being a bereaved parent for 27 years and working as a licensed counselor, I have been in a position to assist individuals and families with their healing process. There are many ways to heal from our losses and this article is about what I know to be one of the most positive ways we can help ourselves live and move through our healing process.

How do we heal from losses? After the shock and denial of what just happened, there are very clear ways that we have learned through the work and research of leaders in the field, such as Elizabeth Kubler Ross, on how to understand the process of grieving and healing. Once we understand that healing is a process, we begin to understand that this journey of loss and healing is part of the human experience on planet Earth. It is impossible to live our life without loss, pain and suffering. I wish it could be otherwise, but it just is not.

If we are to heal from our losses, two distinct processes must occur. The first is the mourning process, grieving through the stages of loss which include: shock and denial, bargaining, withdrawal, depression, guilt, anger and finally acceptance. The mourning process is a feeling process. A willingness to feel and live through these emotions is how we begin. The second process is action. How and what do we do to survive and go on with our life? Though these are two distinct processes (feeling and action) depending on the individual and the Significance of the loss, they can dovetail and occur simultaneously. The intensity of the process is directly related to the significance of our loss. Healing is unique to each individual and there is no time frame that will assure that we've completed these processes. We live in a culture that for the most part does not honor these processes. Often when we experience a loss, people who we thought would support us, suggest to us to just get over it and go on with our lives. This does not honor the healing process and if we do not embrace and work through the healing process, our next loss will reopen the wounds of the loss that was not healed.

What is available to us to work through the healing process? For some people it is reading every book they can find that can help them understand what's happening. For others, it may be working with a grief counselor. And, for many, participating in a support group helps the most.

Now after over 40 years of studying human behavior, counseling individuals with personal problems and challenges, and assisting individuals in their personal growth and development, it is my opinion that support groups are pivotal, significant and essential for healing from life's losses. Fortunately, there are support groups available to assist individuals, families and groups with every and any challenge they may be experiencing. Support groups are successful if they are focused on healing from loss. They are not successful if the individuals participating do not understand and embrace the mourning (feeling) and healing (action) processes.

When Michael died, I didn't know that there was an organization that had a support group available to me called The Compassionate Friends. This organization at that time was in existence for nearly 20 years, but I didn't know. In my work I knew the value of support groups and had directed many people to them. Had I known there was an organization that would support me through friendship, understanding and hope after Michael died, I am certain that my feelings of isolation, loneliness and abandonment would not have been as intense.

As I look back at my experience in dealing with Michael's death, I am certain that there are countless people that are going it alone after the death of their child, grandchild, sibling. It doesn't have to be that way. Every opportunity that I have when meeting new people, I will ask them if they know about The Compassionate Friends. I'm still amazed that the majority of times they've never heard of our organization. I would never have chosen to be part of this organization be-

cause the price of membership is horrific. Having said that, if you or anyone you know or love has experienced the death of the child, I encourage you to explore what The Compassionate Friends have to offer and if you haven't experienced this loss, be a friend and take someone you care about, someone you love, that has experienced the loss of a child, grandchild, sibling to a Compassionate Friends support group meeting. Know that after our loss, the sooner we connect with people who have been there, who have walked in our shoes, the sooner the healing can begin.

The Compassionate Friends-- this organization, its leaders, its members- - understand and implement the healing process through a support system of over 650 chapters worldwide. Embracing the mourning (feeling) process happens through monthly meetings, regional and national conferences, publications and online closed Facebook support groups. Embracing the healing (action) process is forming friendships and bonds with people who understand your loss and will be there for you 24/7, participating in events that honor and remember your child, grandchild, sibling through the Annual Candlelight Service, Memorial Walk and Butterfly Release.

No loss in life will ever compare to the loss of a child. Nothing will ever be the same after your child has died, but you can heal if you have the courage to live through the mourning process and have the willingness to embrace the healing process. Honor the process of mourning, of healing. Know that our children (with their awareness now) love us unconditionally and want us to honor them by enjoying the rest of our experience on planet Earth until we reunite with them.


Elizabeth Horwin is a Licensed Professional Counselor offering workshops, seminars and retreats to individuals, organizations and employers assisting them in dealing with and healing from life's losses. She is a bereaved parent and spouse and the author of Love Never Dies.

Member Memorial event at right.

Anyone that would like to place a memorial event announcement may send the information to me by the 15th of the month prior to the event.

Send to the email on page 1 - Cathy Duff.

Our chapter loves to support its members any way that we can. This is a wonderful way to share our children's memory.



Cameron's Smile

5 K WALK/RUN

September 4, 2016

Race registration is in parking lot 4, with the starting line on Edison Drive at Edison Comm. College on Looney Road.

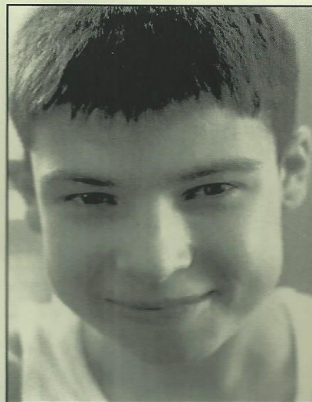
Awards given to top 3 Females & top 3 Males.
Awards given in each age group.
Door Prizes

PRE-REGISTRATION BY 8/19/16

ENTRY FEE
 \$20.00 – Pre-Registration Runners/Walkers with shirt
 \$25.00 – Race Day Registration Runners/Walkers without shirt

1:00 pm Registration Begins – 2:00 pm 5K Begins

Contact Person: Tonya Fofror (937) 418-2847



Our Children Lovingly Remembered

August Birthdays

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

Adam Douglas Cheadle - Gary & Elaine Meyers
 Brian Keith Willis - Keith & Linda Willis
 Brian Patrick "Stew" Stewart - Joel & Connie Kempton
 Emily Watson - Mary Watson
 Jill Myers - Sandra Saurber
 Leslie M. Turner - Randy & Debra Turner
 Ryan S. Thuma - Scott & Renee Thuma
 Shaun Bradley Duff - Michael & Catherine Duff
 Tony Robert Lavy - Robert E. & Sharon Lavy
 Chad Fisherback - Tammy Sackett
 Nicole Barker - Rod & Kathy Barker
 Cassandra "Cassie" Campbell - Dawn Duff

August Angel-versaries

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

Brad M. Massie - Barbara Massie
 Denise R. Brown - Darlene N. Brown
 Emily Watson - Mary Watson
 Jeffery L. Miller - Marilyn Miller
 Jill Myers - Sandra Saurber
 Jordan Elizabeth Glawe - Jeff & Jackie Glawe
 Samuel James Barga - Linda Barga



We all know how difficult those "Special Days" can be - birthdays and death anniversary days. Please remember these parents on their special days and let them know that they are not alone; someone cares about their pain and their grief. It means so much to be remembered!

Every effort is made to publish accurate information regarding the birth and remembrance dates. Please let me know if there is an error in the listing, in order to correct our records. If you receive this newsletter and you have not given us the name and dates for your child, but want them listed here, please contact me. - Editor

NOW FOR BOOK REVIEW....



CHOOSING TO SEE

by Mary Beth Chapman

Choosing to See is written by Mary Beth Chapman, the wife of Contemporary Christian singer Steven Curtis Chapman. She shares her story of how her life didn't end up as she had planned including experiencing the worst tragedy a parent can face when her biological teenage son accidentally backs over and kills one of her and Steven's adopted daughters. Even amongst this tragedy this book brings encouragement for our journey as bereaved parents and she shares how her and her husband and family had to choose to see the hope for the future.

Review by Jackie Glawe (Jordan's Elizabeth's mom)



Siblings in Grieving Page

What does Your Story Look Like?

Steven's story: Everyone's grief journey is unique because YOU are the only person who has to make that journey.

As someone who identifies with the LGBT community, I do not think LGBT individuals grieve differently. There are some people who are trying to figure out who they are, and when a loved one dies, not only do they lose a part of themselves, they question their own identity. I have asked: who am I without my sister? Would I be the person I am today or would I be someone totally different?

My sister Stacy died when I was 16 and she was the first person I came "out" to. I did not understand my sexuality and I did not know grief.

As I have hidden my sexuality, I notice people hide their grief. Telling people I am gay can end a conversation before it starts, just as when talking about our loved ones.

You might not be near a Chapter that has meetings for sibling--the forgotten mourners--but there is a TCF Siblings-only Facebook page where you can post how you are feeling, as well as to see if there are any siblings in your area. The siblings-only page is very active; whenever you post, a Sibling will respond with support and love. Grief may change who you are but it does not have to define you.

This is YOUR journey and no one can tell you how to do it.



Dear Dr. Heidi,

My son died in a boating accident last year, he was very close to his sister, Sarah. This loss has been devastating to me and my husband, but Sarah is acting like she is not impacted. She spends a great deal of time with her friends, and hardly ever cries in front of us. We are bothered that she isn't more impacted by her brother's death.

*Sincerely,
Confused Parent*

Dear Confused Parent:

Trust me, Sarah is greatly impacted by her brother's death, even though it may not look like it. We become very good at hiding our grief, and crying in places where no one will hear us. It is devastating to lose a sibling, someone who you thought you were going to spend the rest of your life with. The death of a sibling is a difficult loss, it makes you feel different, and it's a loss that most of your friends can't relate to. Before going to The Compassionate Friends, I had never met anyone who had lost a sibling. Often bereaved siblings don't grieve in front of their parents, because they don't want to upset them, and they don't want their parents to see them as dependent. I hid much of my grief from my parents, because I was told to "be strong for my parents." As a parent, you can acknowledge the loss, letting your kids know how awful it must be to lose a sibling. Making statements such as, "I'm here if you want to talk," or "It must be very difficult for you" can be very validating for bereaved siblings. Even if we don't respond, we've heard what you've said and it means more to us than you will ever know!

Dr. Heidi Horsley, PsyD, is a bereaved Sibling as well as a psychologist. She is the executive director of the Open to Hope Foundation, cohost of the Open to Hope radio program, www.opentohope.com, an adjunct professor at Columbia University, and a national board member of The Compassionate Friends. She will be answering your questions related to loss, grief, and recovery for siblings.

Please send your question to: Dr. Heidi Horsley, c/o The Compassionate Friends, PO Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696.



The Compassionate Friends

Miami County Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

9665 W Covington Gettysburg Rd
Covington OH 45318

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

What is The Compassionate Friends?

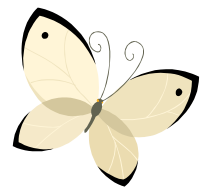
The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization which offers support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Only a person who has experienced the trauma of losing a child can fully understand the pain and suffering involved.

We gather to listen) to share) and to support each other in the resolution of our grief. We need not walk alone, we are The Compassionate Friends.

MISSION STATEMENT ... The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

If you are receiving our newsletter for the 1st time, it is because someone told us that you might find it helpful. To find out more about The Compassionate Friends, please call our Chapter Leader, Kim Bundy (937) 573-9877. We cordially invite you to our monthly meetings held on the fourth Thursday of each month. Nothing is ever expected of you. You don't have to speak a single word. Parents who do attend, find comfort, support, friendship and understanding from others who have also lost a child. You do not have to come alone - bring a family member or friend with you.

**You need not
walk alone!**



IF YOU ARE RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER, AND WISH TO HAVE YOUR NAME REMOVED FROM OUR MAILING LIST, PLEASE CALL (937) 473-5533 AND LEAVE A MESSAGE.

Thank you.