



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

MIAMI COUNTY CHAPTER NO. 1870

OCTOBER 2016 NEWSLETTER Vol. 25 No. 10

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Sorrow is Not Forever -- Love Is!

So often, one attempts to face the whole future at once. But we will not live that period all at once, only day by day.

Don't try to face twenty years. Face today.

When that has been achieved, face tomorrow.

You will find more and more ways in which you can cope.

The Chinese have a saying that a journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. There is no way you can take the fifteenth, or the two hundred seventh step, before you have taken the first.

It can be difficult to face going out again and resuming your regular activities. It can take more courage to face the little things than the big things in life. Going out shopping for groceries for the first time can become an ordeal.

Making the change more complete could help. Try a different store, a different day or time, and go with a friend.

When it seems very hard to decide what to do first, maybe it's not very important where you start, as long as you start. Choose a simple task and get started.

Once you've begun, it will be far easier to set your priorities, and you will have gained in confidence for already having achieved something."

Michael A. Simpson
Birmingham, Alabama TCF

**October Meeting—Oct. 27, 2016
7:00 P.M.**

*****Topic: Surviving the Holidays*****

We will discuss ideas for making it through the holiday events as easy as possible. Also, we will share ways to remember your child and include them in your holidays.

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.

October Refreshments

Carolyn Pearson (Memory of Sam)

Jackie Glawe (Memory of Jordan)

Next Meeting - November 17, 2016

This meeting will be the 3rd Thursday due to Thanksgiving. Please mark your calendar.

If Rain Is...

that space between sunshine
and a rainbow, then deep grief is the
valley between what we were and who
we are becoming. Lyn Praschant says the
darkest part of grief is that place when
what we had can no longer be ... and
what will be is not yet fully formed ...
pretty good way of describing our grief,
don't you think? I am still evolving and
probably always will, but the darkness
of the valley is subsiding."

Alan Pedersen, Ashley's dad

Articles to Help us with the Holidays....

Since our topic is about the holidays I will provide several articles in this edition to offer ideas and discussion items for our chapter meeting. I hope that these help in some way.

Happy memories are dulled by the pain and sorrow of experiencing the holidays without a loved one who has died.

Grief and the Holidays

Thanksgiving, Chanukah, Christmas, New Year's, birthdays, and anniversaries; for most people, just thinking about these special days spent with family and friends can bring back a flood of happy memories. However, for others, happy memories are dulled by the pain and sorrow of experiencing the holidays without a loved one who has died.

Holidays and special days, such as birthdays and anniversaries, are extremely difficult for those who have experienced the death of a loved one, especially during the first year after the death. At a time when everyone is supposed to be happy and enjoying themselves, the bereaved can feel sad, lonely, and depressed.

It seems everywhere you turn there is something to break your heart a little more. Stores are decorated with the symbols of the holiday. Television and radio abound with stories and songs of togetherness, love, and sharing. Everyone you meet asks that question you dread hearing, "What are you doing for the holidays?" They cannot seem to wait for that special day to arrive. You can't wait for it to be over.

The holidays do not necessarily have to be entirely sad. There are ways to help you cope with your grief during this time. This booklet explains some of the steps you can take to help you get through this difficult time of year.

Plan Ahead

Bereaved individuals who seem to experience the most difficulty with the holidays are those who have given little thought to the challenges they will encounter. Many people who are grieving feel that they would like to just go to sleep and wake up when the holidays are over. Hiding from the holidays should not be an option. So, in dealing with them, do it proactively and plan ahead.

During the planning, you may experience some emotional pain. As much as it hurts, it is helpful to you. You will find that when the holiday actually arrives, it is likely to be less painful than you anticipated.

Set Your Limitations

The number of decisions you have to make during the holidays along with the family and social pressure that accompanies them can be overwhelming.

Decisions to deal with:

- ◆ To accept or decline party and dinner invitations.
- ◆ What about cooking and baking?
- ◆ Should the house be decorated?
- ◆ What would be best for the children?
- ◆ What would be best for me?
- ◆ What to do about traditions - forget them for this year, try them, or develop new ones?
- ◆ Should a visit be made to the cemetery that day?
- ◆ How will I ever get out of bed that morning?

Do not let these decisions make you feel worse. Choose a few to deal with at a time so as not to overwhelm yourself.

*Thank you
love gifts!*

- ♦ Wanda & Joe Bailey for the Birthday Love Gift in memory of their daughter, Heather Denise Bailey, who would have been 41 years old on September 8th.
- ♦ Betty & Kyle Quinn for the Love Gift in memory of their son, Kyle Quinn 12/1994 -- 05/2014.

Love Gifts – A Way to Remember

There are no dues to belong to the Compassionate Friends, because we have already paid the ultimate price; the loss of our loved one(s). A **Love Gift** is a gift of money given in Honor of a child who has died from their family members or as a Memorial from friends. Your gifts are tax deductible and are used to reach out to other bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings.

Your gifts support this newsletter, our TCF Library, Brochures and other Chapter Expenses.

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.

Sometimes all we need is
someone that understands
and is willing to listen.

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.

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

December Mark your calendars!

Candlelight Memorial Service
Sunday December 11, 2016
3:00 pm
Zion Lutheran Church
Main and Third Street
Tipp City, Ohio

We celebrate our loved ones' lives through the lighting of candles in their names. After the candle lighting service in the church, we will have a reception dinner downstairs.

This year will be special in the fact that we will display pictures of our children with the chapter's new projector throughout the service. Please turn in your pictures as soon as possible to Kim.

More details of this event will be provided in the November newsletter.



WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING
December 11, 2016
7:00pm

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 20th annual Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. TCF's WWCL started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance, but has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

Chapter members are asked to join the world in this wonderful event by lighting a candle for your child at 7pm and allow it to light in their memory until 8pm to keep the light moving throughout the world for all of our loved children.

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

Thanksgiving

by Bev Rosen Katowitz

November: cool days, chilly nights, autumn leaves changing colors, football games, apple cider, and pumpkin pie. Ah, November! ... *Is it November already? Oh, no! Make it go away! Just let me sleep; wake me up in January.*

November is here, the start of the holiday season. This is the time of year most bereaved parents dread. This is the time of year when thoughts turn to spending time with family, friends, and celebrating. Holiday decorations start popping up everywhere you turn, and holiday music begins to play at the malls and on the radio. People are busy cleaning their homes and are all abuzz with getting ready for ...

Oh, no! Thanksgiving! Everyone is asking, "What are you doing for Thanksgiving?" For the bereaved parent, especially the newly bereaved, this question can become daunting and almost horrifying. *What am I doing for Thanksgiving?* Thanksgiving-giving thanks. *But, I don't feel very thankful.*

How can I be thankful, when my child lives no more?

How can I be thankful, when he/she will never again walk through my front door?

How can I be thankful, when my eyes are filled with tears?

How can I be thankful, when he/she won't be here throughout the years?

How can I be thankful, when my heart will never mend?

How can I be thankful, when I've lost my dearest friend?

How can I be thankful, when his/her hugs and kisses have now ceased?

How can I be thankful, and sit down to a feast?

How can I be thankful, when my heart is filled with sorrow?

How can I be thankful, when I can hardly make it

to tomorrow?

What do you answer? What will you do this year? For some, the choice is to keep the same tradition they have in the past. Others choose to remain home and ignore the holiday completely. There are parents who go on vacation, or go out to Thanksgiving dinner at a restaurant.

Newly bereaved parents may question, "What am I supposed to do?" There is no standard right or wrong answer. Whatever feels the most comforting is the right answer for you. Family members or friends might disagree with your decision and say you are wrong. This often happens if you decide to break tradition, want to be alone, or decide not to celebrate at all. People can become very insistent and tell you that Thanksgiving is about being with others. I have found that my choice has varied over the years, from choosing to be alone and not acknowledge the holiday at all, to going to friends' and family members' homes, to just having dinner at home, and when asked, I say, "I know that you may not like my answer, but still, I need to do what is best for me."

However you decide to spend this Thanksgiving, please remember that for however short or long your precious, awesome, amazing, wonderful child was with you here on earth, you are blessed to be their parent. You have been given a most spectacular gift—a one-of-a-kind, unique, extraordinary child to carry in your heart, thoughts, and soul for all eternity. And this is a reason to be forever thankful.

From my home and heart to yours, may you have a blessed Thanksgiving, and may it be filled with peace .

Bev Rosen Katowitz, her husband, Mitch, and their son Eric Joel reside in Charlotte, North Carolina. They lost their son Scott Aaron Katowitz in March 1992 at the age of 17 years. Bev is a member of the Charlotte, North Carolina, Chapter of The Compassionate Friends.



Christmas Past, Christmas Present



As the holidays approach, most bereaved parents feel anxiety, apprehension and some little bit of fear. The past is gone, along with our beautiful children. We live in the now, the new reality of holidays without our children.

This will be my fifth Christmas without my son, Todd. It will be my fourth Christmas without his children. And yet, I find that on some small level, I am looking forward to the holiday. I imagine the Christmases of the past when Todd was growing up and after he started his family. I also imagine Christmases of the future where Todd's children share in the traditions that their Dad so dearly loved. But that won't happen. I have come to accept that wives and children go on with their lives. I have come to accept that my son's children will not be a part of their father's family, his heritage or his legacy. That is the reality. But I have also found that wonderful people can help make the holiday special.

We won't be decorating this year, but we haven't decorated for five years. We have changed our traditions - traditions that Todd loved so much. It is simply too painful to do this alone. Christmas will never be what it once was, but I no longer dread the holidays as I once did.

Some of my Compassionate Friends have returned to old traditions with their surviving children and maybe even with grandchildren. Each of us learns to deal with Christmas in our own way. Each year I am a different person with a new perspective on the holidays. Next year I may decide to skip it all or immerse myself in the season. My truth is changing.

Find what is right for you. Pressures from others mean nothing. You choose whether a celebration is in order. You choose how to celebrate. You choose the old traditions or you choose some new ones ... maybe you choose nothing and decide to go with the flow of the moment. As bereaved parents, you will always remember your child at Christmas, but as the years add up and grief starts to release its grip on your soul, you may find that you can keep your child in your heart and have room for the spirit of Christmas as well.

Ideas to help you get through the holidays....

- ♦ Change traditions. Have Christmas dinner at a different house this year. The more you try to make it the same as before, the more obvious your loved one's absence will be.
- ♦ Balance solitude with sociability. Solitude can renew strength. Being with people you care about can be equally important. Plan to attend some holiday functions. You may surprise yourself by having a good time.
- ♦ Relive the happy memories. Pick three special memories of past holidays with your loved one. Recall them often, especially if outbursts of grief seem to occur at an inappropriate time.
- ♦ Set aside "letting go" time. Schedule specific time on your calendar to grieve. When you know you set aside this time, it will be easier for you to postpone your flow of grief in public.
- ♦ Counter the conspiracy of silence. Because family and friends love you, they may think they are doing you a favor by not mentioning your loved one for fear you will be upset. Break the ice by mentioning him or her yourself. Tell you family and friends that it is important for you to talk about your loved one during the holiday season when that missing person is very much on your mind.
- ♦ Don't forget the rest of the family. Try especially hard to make it a good holiday for the children. Listen to them. Talk to them. If decorating the tree or buying Christmas gifts is too difficult for you to do this year, ask a friend to do it for you.
- ♦ Utilize available resources. If your faith is important to you, participate in the holiday religious services.

It's tempting to conclude life is awful during the holidays. Yes, there can be difficult times, but you can also experience some joy. Having a good time does not mean that you have forgotten your loved one or that you loved him or her any less.

Above all, remember that you cannot change the past. You can, however, take care of the present. What you kindle from the ashes of your tragedy is up to you.

Our Children Lovingly Remembered

October Birthdays

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

Brad M. Massie - Barbara Massie
 Allison Rudy - Lora Rudy
 Montgomery Alan "Monte" Mott - DeDe Mott
 Zachary O. Patrick - Mike & Tina Patrick
 Joshua Matthew Lightle - Matt & Kristi Lightle
 Jessica Back - John & Roberta Back



October Angel-versaries

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

Brent A. Snyder - Claude & Mary Snyder
 Douglas Ray Lavy - Robert E. & Sharon Lavy
 Samuel Pearson - Randi & Carolyn Pearson
 John Patrick McLaughlin - Don & Pam Fortener
 Justice Meade - Jenni Warner
 Sue Brown
 Linda Kimerling - George & Harriet Holbert
 Aaron T. Duvall - Kim Duvall
 Joshua Matthew Lightle - Matt & Kristi Lightle
 David J. Elam - Danny & Tammy Elam
 Brooklyn Renae Pope - Darin Pope
 Liam Seamus Gillespie - David & Julie Gillespie

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....

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

"GOD KISSES",

The Journey through the loss of my daughter and finding my soul.

by Ginger Reynolds



This is a mother's view on the loss of her 13 year old daughter and her new found relationship with God. She states the same kind of struggles as we as bereaved parents so often have in common and shares some ways she has found to keep going and one of those is her new relationship with God. She shares the many signs, visions and dreams that not only she has experienced but also friends and family as well. To quote the author, "I see now the beauty coming out of these ashes, Praise God!".

**This book is available in our chapters library.



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Happy Birthday, Pete

-By Sara Kaylor

Peter was always an independent child. However, his type of independence was one that was always secretly envied by all his peers, because Pete was not afraid to express his creativeness and individuality. In his preschool years, Pete felt completely comfortable going to the grocery store wearing his Batman cape with his cowboy boots, and saw the world as being full of opportunity to get rid of "bad guys." In fact, most of his childhood was spent as either Batman, a cowboy chasing Indians and exploring never before seen parts of the Wild, Wild West, or as a special agent police officer similar to Dick Tracy. Pete's imagination was overflowing with curiosity, and when it came to exploring various outlets for that curiosity, the world had no boundaries!

This month, on May 20, Pete would have celebrated his 21st birthday, which is no doubt a significant "mile marker" birthday in and of itself. As a college student, turning 21 represents the final stage between adolescence and adulthood, and students' relationships with their parents begin to change into more of a friendship. Even right up to his illness, occurring at the age of 19, Pete continued to express his creativity through song- writing, music, poetry, guitar playing, and a deep love of history.

A student at the University of Alabama, Pete was struggling to decide what he wanted to do with his life as an adult, and wavered between majoring in political science (with the intent to someday go to law school) and mathematics. Indeed, his relationships with his parents and me, his sister, began to grow and mature, and I remember viewing Pete for the first time as an adult.

In the two weeks between discovering his illness and death, Pete made some very mature and adult decisions about his life and his death that made me realize just how strong and independent my brother had become. It was difficult to look at him, lying in his hospital bed, making those adult decisions about his life, and to avoid picturing the adorable blond-headed little boy dressed as a Batman cowboy.

Birthdays can be difficult when you have recently lost a loved one. They serve as a time for reflecting on the memories of your loved one, but can also at times be unpleasant reminders of your loss. I truly believe that we can honor and celebrate one's life by focusing on the years we have spent with them, rather than the years since they have been gone. This year for his birthday, I am choosing to remember Peter's childhood, and to reflect on all the laughs, smiles, tears, and memories that our family shared together over the years. So perhaps this year I will make a Batman cake and eat cowboy-baked beans in honor of the beautiful, creative, and independent life that Peter lived!

Sara is the daughter of Shari and Jerry Kaylor, members of

TCF Huntsville. She writes in memory of her brother, Pete, on his birthday. Copyright © June 2008.

KENNY

-By, Candice Wilson

It's been one year since I've seen him. Since I've touched him. Since I smelled his sweaty boy smell that I love so much. Since I hugged his warm, hard body. He wasn't supposed to leave me. At least, not yet anyway. He was supposed to grow up, and be my older brother who took care of me. He was supposed to graduate from high school and college, get married, and have kids.

Why would God take him away from me when I needed him the most? I was going to be a lowly freshman starting high school that year. Just like a fish at the bottom of the food chain. At least I would have my brother to tell me where all my classes were and to bring me lunch from Panda Express. At least, I thought I would. He was going to be the all-powerful junior. That was the year he would decide what college he wanted to go to and what major he wanted.

That also would have been his first year playing varsity football. And I would be cheering him on and screaming his name in the stands just like everybody else. He was loved and cherished by anyone who came to know him. It was hard not to love him. Nobody would have guessed

that his life would be taken from him that fateful day in August. If only he hadn't gone to practice that day. If only

we'd been on vacation instead like we were planning in the beginning. If only I had got to say something to him that

morning before he left. If only ... I know that we are going to be reunited in the future. There's not one day that goes

by that I don't think of him. He will never be forgotten, and I don't think of this as an end, but a beginning. So thank

you, Kenny, and I love you .

Candice is a sophomore at Beckman High School in Irvine, California. Her brother, Kenny, died of heat stroke the first day of football practice August 17, 2007. He was 16 years old.



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?

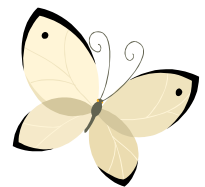
The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization which offers support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Only a person who has experienced the trauma of losing a child can fully understand the pain and suffering involved.

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.