



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS INC.

International Organization Offering Friendship and Understanding to Bereaved Parents

MIAMI COUNTY CHAPTER NO. 1870

September 2020 NEWSLETTER Vol. 33 No. 8

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

You are going about your everyday tasks, thinking that just maybe this might turn out to be an "okay" day, one that you think you might actually get through. But then a certain song plays on the radio, or you see someone tilt his/her head and smile in that certain way your child did, or the smell of the air after a rainstorm brought you back to, a poignant memory of your child. And without warning, you find yourself suddenly spiraling into despair, collapsing in a torrent of tears. Even something that may seem harmless can trigger a grief storm, sneaking up on you when you least expect it. I remember one of the parents in our group telling how the sight of a box of Kraft Macaroni & Cheese could make her leave her cart behind and flee the grocery store because it was one of her son's favorites. For example, the month of September may seem innocent enough. There aren't any major holidays like Christmas to deal with. But this is a month that isn't easy for me and I am sure that any bereaved parents would agree. Starting the school year is a momentous occasion for many children. Those whose child that died wasn't old enough for school will never get to see the excitement on their child's face as they go off to their first day of school with their new lunch boxes and backpacks, knowing that their child should be among them and is not. Those whose children were older when they died have memories of the preparation of getting ready for the school year. For example, my daughter Nina LOVED to go shopping with me for school clothes. The first fall after she died I could barely endure walking into the department stores, seeing those mannequins dressed in all the latest back-to-school fashions. I could picture how she would scurry through the racks of clothing picking out her favorites. She would run into the fitting rooms where she would poke her head out to ask me what I thought about her choices. Seeing the moms and daughter shopping together was agonizing. Listening to those mothers with irritated, hassled voices chiding their children to "Hurry up, I don't have all day!" made my head swim. If they only knew that there could come a day when they would be sorry they did not savor the time spent doing those kinds of mother/child things. The dilemma for me was that Nina would be of college age and, knowing her love of school, I am quite sure she would be headed off to college. She would have been so excited. The September after she would have graduated, a parent whose child had left for a college out West called me and said "Now that Kim is at college, I know exactly how you feel about losing Nina. That was one of those moments that I was rendered speechless. I might now have the wherewithal to respond, but not at that particular juncture in my grief journey. I remember my mind racing and wanting to say, "You can hop on a plane whenever the urge strikes you to see her is overpowering; you can pick up the phone and

September Meeting – Sept 24, 2020, 7:00pm

**Meeting outside in the church parking lot.
(weather permitting).
Please bring your own chair.
Bottled water will be available.**

Topic: Topic cards-pick a question to discuss

Thank you for August Refreshments
Randy & Debbie Turner (memory of Leslie)
Jeff & Jackie Glawe (memory of Jordan)

Meetings are held
at:

Nashville United Church of Christ
4540 W. St. Rt. 571, West Milton, Ohio

hear her voice 24-hours a day; she will be coming home over the holidays and summer vacation when the school year has ended. But my daughter will NEVER come home again! How can you compare the two???" I guess we can only forgive them for their lack of empathy and comprehension, and be glad for them that they don't really know how it feels.

We can't block out what is happening around us or change the sometimes inappropriate things that come out of people's mouths. But we can keep those close to us who understand - a spouse or significant other, our surviving children if there are any, close family and friends. And, of course, we know our Compassionate Friends will always be there: those TCF friends who appreciate the difficulty of the path we are walking; those who understand that we need others to be gentle with our fragile hearts, and accept that there are no timetables in grief and recognize our present frailties. Those same priceless fellow grievers who know the sun will shine again, but, for now, realize they may need to hold the umbrella for us.

Bless all of you who have been there, and who continue to be there, for other bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents in need of understanding. May all of us be that fortunate to have people like that in our currently shattered lives, so that someday, when the cloud has lifted, we can be that "Compassionate Friend" for someone else.

*With gentle thoughts, Cathy Seehuetter, Nina's mom
TCF, St. Paul, MN*

Together We Will Walk the Stepping Stones

Come, take my hand, the road is long.
 We must travel by stepping stones
 No, you're not alone, I'll go with you.
 I know the road well, I've been there.
 Don't fear the darkness, I'll be there with you.
 We must take one step at a time.
 But remember we may have to stop awhile.
 It is a long way to the other side
 and there may be obstacles.
 We have many stones to cross,
 some are bigger than others, shock, denial,
 and anger to start.
 Then comes guilt, despair, and loneliness.
 It's a hard road to travel, but it must be done.
 It's the only way to reach the other side.
 Come, slip your hand in mine.
 What? Oh, yes, it's strong, I've held
 so many hands like yours.
 Yes, mine was one time small and weak like yours.
 Once, you see, I had to take someone's hand
 in order to take the first step.
 Oops! You've stumbled; go ahead and cry.
 Don't be ashamed; I understand.
 Let's wait here awhile and get your breath.
 When you're stronger we'll go on, one step at a time.
 There's no need to hurry.
 Say, it's nice to hear you laugh.
 Yes, I agree, the memories you shared are good.
 Look, we're halfway there now; I can see the other side.
 It looks so warm and sunny.
 Oh, have you noticed, we're nearing the last
 stone and you're standing alone?
 We've reached the other side.
 But wait, look back, someone is standing there.
 They are alone and want to cross the stepping stones.
 I'd better go, they need my help.
 What? Are you sure?
 Why, yes, go ahead, I'll wait.
 You know the way, you've been there.
 Yes, I agree, it's your turn, my friend--
 To help someone else cross the stepping stones.

~Barb Williams, TCF. Ft. Wayne, IN

Where are you now?

where are you now
 but in my heart
 your voice clear in my mind
 I know we're never far apart
 mind to mind
 heart to heart
 and, maybe, if I'm fortunate,
 soul to soul
 we connect
 you, watching over me
 me, so unaware
 but, oh, to actually see you
 how you've grown and changed
 still, oh, to embrace you
 feeling your strength and youth
 breathing in your life
 now held only within
 mind's eye
 heart of hearts
 and lonely soul

~Victor Montemurro
 TCF Brook-haven in Medford, NY

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

What Would He Tell Me About His First Day of School

OK. I didn't think it was going to bother me this much. I've been saying for weeks that I couldn't wait till school started to get Scott and Ashley out of my hair. (They couldn't wait to get me out of theirs, either!)

So here it is, the eve of the first day of school, and I'm thinking, "What would tomorrow be like if Nicholas were here?" His turn finally comes to stand outside with backpack and new shoes, waiting for the big yellow school bus. Or would he have been the only one of the three who wanted Mom to take him to his first day of kindergarten?

What would he come home and tell me about his first day of school?

And what about the kids- "his class?" Will I forever look at these kids (and their parents) and wonder "what if?" They don't even know that they're missing a classmate.

Here it's been almost six years and I feel compelled to hang around the school and grab every kindergarten parent I see and say "I would have had a child in this class."

I surprised myself because I don't usually have those urges anymore. But this is harder than I thought it would be.

Another milestone of life- the first day of school- that Nicholas (and I) missed. The thing is, nobody will think of this. It's not a birthday or Mother's Day or Christmas. It goes by unnoticed except by a mother with kids too excited to sleep tonight - one starting 5th grade, one starting 2nd, and one ...

*Linda Moffatt
TCF of St. Louis, MO*

CHAPTER NEWS

Upcoming meetings:

Sep - *Topic cards*

NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE?

A listening ear is sometimes the best medicine.

<i>Kim Bundy (suicide)</i>	573-9877
<i>Pam Fortener (cancer)</i>	238-4075
<i>Donnie Fortener (cancer)</i>	760-2238
<i>Pam Fortener (siblings)</i>	238-4075
<i>Cathy Duff (auto accident)</i>	473-5533
<i>Jackie Glawe (auto accident)</i>	478-3318

Thank You

for your love gifts!



Love gifts are a wonderful way to help with chapter expenses in memory of your child.

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.

**Waves of Hope on the Shores of Lake Erie
TCF Ohio Regional Conference
Maumee Bay State Park Lodge
and Conference Center**

CANCELLED

OREGON, OH 43010
Oct 2nd - 4th, 2020

Our Children Lovingly Remembered

September Birthdays

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

Douglas Ray Lavy - Robert E. & Sharon Lavy
Emillie Joyce Stapleton - Julie Martin
Heather Denise Bailey - Joe & Wanda Bailey
Kathryn Trushaw - Tim & Julia Trushaw
Mark Kurtis O'Dell - Tim & Sandy O'Dell
Mark Nordquist - Peggy & Tom Nordquist
Matthew "Matt" Schaaf - Marlene Schaaf
Michael Guerra - Terry Guerra
Molly Murphy - Kerry & Sarah Murphy
Patrick O'Neill Betsy O'Neill
Samuel Pearson - Randi & Carolyn Pearson
Silas Carver - Mary Anne Evans
Terry A. Baker, Jr. - Candy Ullery



September Angel-versaries

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

Chad Fisherback - Tammy Sackett
Lindsay Rose Donadio - Rick & Janell Claudy
Matthew Cameron Ferror - Ken & Louise Ferror
Michael Bundy - Tony & Vesta Bundy
Michael Daniel Mitchell - James & Marilyn Mitchell
Michael James McGuffey - Kathy McGuffey

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 a book review....



“Grief’s Ladder” by George Huzinec
 The Uncharted Journey of Child Loss

On January 4, 1997 Carolyn and I lost our 17-year-old son, Andy, in a car accident. Two weeks later, one of the first suggestions taken from a child-loss bereavement group was that I journal my thoughts and feelings as a way to deal with my grief, thus capturing both behaviors and thinking as they were happening, effectively cutting through the fog of memory loss caused by Andy’s death. I have consistently journaled my thoughts ever since Andy’s loss, together with continuing to attend and then assist in a child-loss bereavement group. During these ensuing years I read voraciously on loss to better understand my emotions and how to deal with grief’s all-encompassing tentacles.

*This book is available on Amazon and on the Centering Corporation websites for purchase.

The Child That's Not There

*The child that's not there
Takes up every piece of me
The child that's not there
Consumes my every thought
The child that's not there
Makes me feel like I failed
The child that's not there
Took away a main reason for being*

But

*The children that are there
Still somehow bring me joy
The children that are there
Still need my love
The children that are there
Don't need any more grief
The children that are there
Force me to go on.
By Tricia Palmer, TCF, Tidewater, VA
In memory of my son, Gabriel Boyer*

Book recommendation for readers 18+
by Teammercy.org (supports siblings after loss)

"The Empty Room" by Elizabeth DeVita-Raeburn

Ted is Elizabeth DeVita-Raeburn's older brother, best friend, and the "ringmaster of her days." On a September morning when she is six, she wakes up and Ted is gone. Her parents explain that he went to the hospital for a while. "A while" turns out to be eight years in a plastic bubble, where he dies of a rare autoimmune disease at age seventeen. The Empty Room is DeVita-Raeburn's unflinching, often haunting recollection of life with Ted, woven into a larger exploration of the enormous -- and often unacknowledged -- impact of a sister's or brother's death on remaining siblings. With an inspired blend of life experience, journalistic acumen, and research training, DeVita-Raeburn draws on interviews of more than two hundred survivors to render a powerful portrait of the range of conditions and emotions, from withdrawal to guilt to rage, that attend such loss. Finding little in professional literature, she realizes that those who suffer are the experts. And in the end, it is DeVita-Raeburn and her experts who present a larger, more complex understanding of the sibling bond, the lifelong impact of the severing of that bond, and the tools needed to heal and move forward. The Empty Room is a fascinating literary hybrid in which Elizabeth DeVita-Raeburn seamlessly fuses deeply affecting remembrance with a pragmatic, lucidly written exploration of the healing journey.

Do I Have To?

Mom, do I have to stop loving my brother because he is not here?
Will I forget all about him because he's not near?
I remember all the things we did together, even though we were very young.
I laugh and feel warm each time I think of a particularly funny one.
Sometimes I get so angry that he's no longer here to share,
But I know he knows it's only because of how much I still care.
I miss him, so even though at times we didn't agree,
Just knowing he was there made things feel safe for me.
He always felt he had to be my strong, protective big brother,
And that's a bond we'll always share forever with each other.
He tried to protect me even when he, too, was just scared.
No, I won't stop loving that big brother of mine,
Not now, not ever, not till the end of time.
He will always be a part of what makes me be me.
And that's the part of our love that will live eternally.
By Jackie Rosen
TCF N.Dade/S. Broward, FL

To a Special Sister

A sister us one of the nicest things that can happen to anyone.
She is someone to laugh with and share with,
to work with and join in the fun.
She is someone who helps in the rough times
and knows when you need a warm smile.
She is someone who will quietly listen when you just want to talk for awhile.
A sister is dear to you always,
for she is someone who is always a part
Of all the favorite memories
that you keep very close to your heart.
--Author Unknown



**The
Compassionate
Friends**

Miami County Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

2445 N Montgomery County Line Rd
Tipp City OH 45371

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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) 478-3318 AND LEAVE A MESSAGE.

Thank you.