



The Compassionate Friends Fayetteville Area Chapter



Volume 20, Issue 4

October 2016



There's No Law Against Grieving--Even for Men



Two years have now passed but I still remember that day like it was yesterday.

If you are reading this, then you have probably lived that day, too. It may have been slightly different—but still the same.

Even though there was a bunch of relatives and friends in the waiting room with me, it was like I was completely alone. I had been called to the hospital less than an hour before. There had been a car accident. My wife was injured but not in danger. But no one would tell me anything about my 8 year-old Stephanie or 5 year-old Stephen who were riding in the car with her.

I had been led to a waiting room, hoping for word from the emergency room doctor. The minutes seemed like hours. Then the doctor came in. Stephanie was in critical condition and would be flown to Children's Hospital. But they were unable to

revive my precious Stephen.

The words echoed over and over in my brain.

"Your son has died." The shock and the grief struck me at the same time. I had expected them to come in and tell me the kids were injured but would be just fine thanks to the excellent efforts of everyone involved. After all, that's the way it always happens on "Rescue 911."

But that wasn't the way it happened this time!

I only half remember being led back to my wife where I broke the news to her.

A moment later when I had been led into the corridor, someone asked me if I wanted to see my son. I don't even remember my response—just walking down the hallway, a nurse on each side holding my arms. . All I could take were little half steps. My legs had no strength. Through the tears I could see all the nurses and hospital personnel stop everything they were

doing and stare at us. Apparently they hadn't seen a grieving father before.

Finally we reached the emergency room at the end of what seemed like the longest corridor in the world. The door swung open and I spotted my son lying on a table at the far end of the room. I was helped to him and then left alone.

Waves of grief overcame me as I looked at Stephen's sweet face, laying there as if asleep. And the realization that I would never hear his laugh, I would never see him smile, I would never feel his kiss again.

After a few minutes a nurse came back and told me I would have to go because my daughter was being loaded into the helicopter and I should give her some words of encouragement, even though she might not be able to hear me.

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Our Quarterly News



I can't believe that it is fall again, what happened to spring and summer. Our August meeting was started by listing to "Stone in My Pocket" by Olivia Newton-John, Amy Sky & Beth Neilsen Chapman. Discussion followed on what grief feels like for each of us. This group performed at the National Conference & has released an album entitled "Liv On". The September meeting started with a song by Alan Pedersen called "The Elephant in the Room". Mabel Walden brought a beautiful cake to celebrate her son Spencer's birthday. Thank you Mabel for allowing us to share such a special day and thank you for sharing Spencer's memory with us. There is a photograph of his

cake on page 8 at the end of the birthday list.

Check out the new changes to our website at www.tcffayetteville.org

The Fayetteville TCF Candle Lighting is scheduled for December 11, 2016 at 2:pm. The service will take place at Second Baptist Church on Person Street. If you would like to volunteer to read something at the service, please contact me by the end of October. Unfortunately am unable to attend this years service. Sharon Jackson-Davis has graciously consented to be in charge of the service. Thank you Sharon. See page 3 for full details.

Jennifer German

Our Credo

We need not walk alone.
 We are The Compassionate Friends.
 We reach out to each other with love,
 With understanding, and with hope.
 The children we mourn have died at All
 ages and from many different Causes,
 but our love for them unites us.
 Your pain becomes my pain
 Just as your hope becomes my hope.
 We come together from all walks of life,
 from many different circumstances.
 We are a unique family because
 We represent many races, creeds and
 relationships.
 We are young, and we are old.
 Some of us are far along in our grief,
 But others still feel a grief so fresh
 And so intensely painful
 That we feel helpless and see no hope.
 Some of us have found our faith
 To be a source of strength;
 While some of us are struggling to find
 answers.
 Some of us are angry,
 Filled with guilt or in deep depression;
 While others radiate an inner peace.
 But whatever pain we bring
 To this gathering of
 The Compassionate Friends,
 It is pain we will share
 Just as we share with each other
 Our love for the children who have died.
 We are all seeking and struggling
 To build a future for ourselves,
 But we are committed to
 Building that future together
 We reach out to each other in love
 to share the pain as well as the joy,
 Share the anger as well as the peace,
 Share the faith as well as the doubts
 And help each other to grieve
 As well as to grow.

We need not walk alone....

We are The Compassionate Friends.

I did that and I was driven to Children's Hospital where Stephanie died later that night.

The grief that I felt was so intense. The shock was incredible. This couldn't be happening. Both of my children were dead.

I remember the newspaper reporter who showed up at my house the next day. I had gone home to get some clean clothes and take a shower. On my way into the house she approached me. We sat on the porch and both cried and grieved as I related to her the story of the wonderful life I had spent with my children. This reporter never once stared at me with that critical look that I have seen from others. If translated into words, it would be "Men don't cry."

So often men are not allowed by society to grieve. They have to be strong for their wife and their remaining family. How many bereaved mothers have told me that "He holds it all in. He never cries. He never talks about our dead child." They want me to meet their husband because maybe I can get him to understand it's okay to open up and feel grief.

I was fortunate that I grew up in a family where it was okay to let my feelings show. If I was beaten up by the school bully, my father and mother let me know it was okay to cry. When the first person I was really close to died, my grandmother, no one told me it wasn't alright to grieve.

And this upbringing stuck with me. If I'm in a store and Bette

Midler's song "God is Watching Us From a Distance" (Stephen's favorite tune to sing) comes on, I've given myself permission to cry, right then and there. If I read a poem that touches me, I've given myself permission to let it all out. And if I hear about the death of another child, I've given myself permission to feel my grief all over again.

The only thing bad about men grieving is that society looks down on us because we are not "strong." After losing both my children, I really don't care what society thinks. Only a small percent of them have had a child die, and they understand my feelings. The rest of them don't. And, God willing, they never will.

If you are a man and having a hard time allowing yourself to grieve, look at your inner being. Are you better because you haven't grieved? Or are you worse? Have your feelings of frustration from not grieving affected your relationship with your spouse or remaining children?

Our deceased children would, no doubt want us to accomplish something meaningful with our lives. They would want us to go on living.

Maybe it is time to grieve so that we can move forward with our lives.

Wayne Loder
 TCF Lakes Area, MI
 In Memory of my daughter and son, Stephanie and Stephen

MEETINGS

First Tuesday of each month At 7:00pm;

October through December 2016 meetings will be held in room 224 of the General Class Building at Fayetteville Technical Community College, 2817 Ft. Bragg Road, Fayetteville, NC 28303



If you have questions contact Jennifer German
 joegerman@outlook.com or (910) 245-3177





**The Compassionate Friends
Candle Light Memorial Service
December 11, 2016 at 2PM
Second Baptist Church, 522 Person Street,
Fayetteville, NC 28301**



The service is open to bereaved families and friends who have experienced the death of a child at any age and from any cause.

Please come and bring a picture or an item of remembrance for the memory table.

We will have refreshments after the service.

Please bring your favorite refreshment (finger foods, deserts, etc.) to share.

There will be a slide show presentation of our children during the service. If your child's picture was not in last years slide show and you would like it added for this year please contact

Jennifer German at (910) 245-3177 or jojegerman@outlook.com.

The deadline to add pictures is December 1, 2015.

Please arrive early, the service will start at 2pm

**For more information or questions call
Jennifer German at (910) 245-3177 Or
Sharon Jackson-Davis at (910) 850-4998**

***Sibling Walking
Together***

(Formerly The Sibling Credo)

We are the
surviving children of The Compassionate Friends.

We are brought together by the
death of our brothers and sisters.

Open your hearts to us. But have
patience with us.

Sometimes we need the support of
our friends.

At other times we need our families
to be there.

Sometimes we feel we must walk
alone, taking our memories with us,
continuing to become the individuals
we want to be.

We cannot be our dead brother or
sister; however, a special part of
them lives on with us.

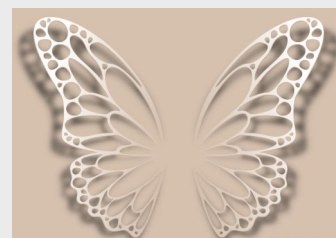
When our brothers and
sisters died, our lives changed.
We are living a life very different
from what we envisioned, and we
feel the responsibility to be strong
even when we feel weak.

Yet, we can go on because we
understand better than many others
the value of family and the precious
gift of life.

Our goal is not to be the forgotten
mourners that we sometimes are,
but to walk together to face our
tomorrows

as surviving children
of

The Compassionate
Friends.





Love Gifts



A Love Gift is a donation to honor a child who has died, or as a memorial for a relative or friend.

The Compassionate Friends depends entirely on voluntary contributions from individuals and organizations to meet chapter expenses. TCF is a 504(c)(3) non-profit organization: all donations are tax deductible. 100% of every dollar donated goes toward chapter expenses.

We thank the following for their kind generosity, love and sharing. There are no dues. We have already paid the ultimate price to be a member.

Mike & Petra Syfrett in memory of their son Archie Kagy

John & Jennifer German in memory of their daughter Amy German



The National Office of The Compassionate Friends

P.O. box 3696

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Regional Coordinator for the Fayetteville Area Chapter of TCF

Donna & Ralph Goodrich

704-822-4503 or iluvu2lauren@gmail.com



TCF 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.



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

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. Starting in New Zealand, candles are lit at 7:pm local time. As candles burn down in one time zone, they are lit in the next, creating a virtual 24-hour wave of light as the observance continues around the world. 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.

I hope there is eternal life,
So we can meet again.
I not only lost my brother,
I lost my very best friend.

The reason you left so early
I'll never understand why.
I just wish I had known you were
never coming back,
Because I would have said good-bye.

By: Martha, TCF-Concord

Tissues, Tears & Treasures

A circle of chairs and boxes of tissues,
A roomful of tears and emotional issues.
Frightening at first, I did not want to enter
Into this strange group, and be in the center.

What I soon learned, as we sat side by side,
We were bound by the love of our children
who died.

Each shattered heart,
desperately seeking a moment of peace,
from the pain and weeping.

So many things different, and yet all the
same,

Hearts lost in a fog of loss and pain.
Those who have journeyed, much further
than me,

Reached out in comfort, listened quietly.
Each shattered heart spoke, and the tissues
were passed,

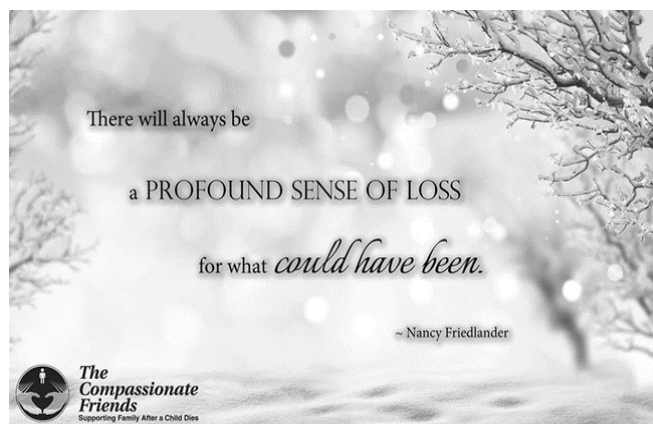
We never avoid speaking of the past.

This circle of friends, have found a bond,
And here I'm still known
As "Tony's Mom."

Slowly, I've found
I can reach out to others
Who are newly bereaved, fathers and mothers.

Strength I have found in this
Circle of chairs,
To grieve and to heal
And to show that we care.

Diane Barta
TCF Portland, OR
In Memory of my son, Tony



There are several closed Facebook groups:

TCF - Loss of a Child

Moderators: Donna Goodrich, Dave Roberts, Cathy Seehuetter, and Goody Tendall

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/407123299460580/>

TCF - Loss to Substance Related Causes

Moderators: Barbara Allen, Mary Lemley, Diana Wittkepp, and Karen Zaorski

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1515193738693712/>

TCF - Loss to Suicide

Moderators: Donna Adams, Leanna Leyes, Barbara Reboratti, and Cathy Seehuetter

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/100315106988458/>

TCF - Loss to Homicide

Moderators: Debbie Floyd and Kathleen Willoughby

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/924779440868148/>

TCF - Infant and Toddler Loss

Moderators: Susan Peavler and Tiffany Barraso

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1511758585777339/>

TCF - Loss to a Drunk/Impaired Driver

Moderators: Robin Landry and Rebecca Perkins

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/858226880883307/>

TCF - Loss to Cancer

Moderators: Kari Olson and Michelle Setzer

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/903539646362818/>

TCF - Loss to Mental Illness

Moderators: Sherry Cox and Annette Swestyn

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1481781792114726/>

TCF - Sibling Loss to Substance Related Causes

Moderators: Andrea Keller and Barbara Allen

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1516508415263760/>

TCF - Loss of a Grandchild

Moderators: Betty Jeanne Farrel and Jennifer Sue Hale

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/421759177998317/>

The Compassionate Friends Sounds of the Siblings (for bereaved siblings)

Moderators: Tracy Milne and Keith Singer

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/21358475781/>

The Compassionate Friends Chapter Leadership (for anyone currently serving on a Chapter Steering Committee)

Moderator: Debbie Rambis

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1422251371371148/>

New Facebook Groups: Seeking Moderators

We are continuing to expand our outreach with new closed Facebook groups. Currently we are seeking moderators for:

- O Loss to Long-term Illness
- O Stillbirth and Miscarriage
- O Loss to a Vehicular Accident
- O Loss of a Child with Special Needs – Colleen Hines and Debbie Gossen
- O Grief of Stepparents – Ralph Goodrich and Crystal Downey
- O Men in Grief – Gary Odle

Frost

On a cold winter's day,
 Frost etches a beautiful artistry
 On every thing it touches, every blade of grass
 It glitters and sparkles, and for moments
 Before the sun comes out and the master piece evaporates
 before our eyes, we stand memorized cherishing the wondrous sight.
 Like frost, our children were only here for a brief moment
 But, while they were here
 Whether it was moments in the womb
 Days, months or many years
 They etched their beautiful artistry of love
 On our hearts and lives and all of those
 They touched.

Unlike frost, what they etched is forever,
 It is something that we can cherish and hold onto always.
 We stand here tonight lighting a candle to remember children we will never forget.
 Their light, their spirits, their artistry lives on and like the flame of the candle gives warmth on a cold winter's night
 And light in the darkness
 The love our children gave us still remains.
 It keeps us warm when the cold winds of grief blow.
 It lights our way through the darkness and loneliness
 That we feel,
 And it gives us hope!

Julie Short
 2007 Southeastern TCF
 In Memory of Kyra

Choosing Life

"It will never be the same. Never." As a bereaved parent, you have often heard or said these words to express grief's profound feelings of sorrow and disorientation. Your life has suddenly taken an unexpected course that appears both uncharted and endless. Bewildered, you vainly search for pathways back to your former life, until you confront the reality that there is no way back. Your child is dead forever. It is then that you may say, "...never the same."

This is the aspect of grief that Simon Stephens calls "The Valley of the Shadow." It is that very long time between the death of your child and your reinvestment in life. *Between*. It is not supposed to be a permanent resting place. Although some people do take up residence in the valley, it is a transition from the death of your child to life with renewed purpose.

The key to this transition is yourself. You must choose between life and the valley. You and only you can decide. And you must make that decision again and again, each day.

Giving in to the hopelessness of the valley is tempting. Choosing to move on toward life requires a great deal of work. You must struggle with the pain of grief in order to resolve it. It is a daily struggle full of tears, anger, guilt and self-doubt, but it is the only alternative to surrendering yourself to the valley.

Little by little you choose to move on. Little by little you progress toward the other side of the valley. It takes a very long time, far longer than your friends or relatives suspected. Far longer than you had believed – even prayed – that it would be. When one day you find yourself able to do more than choose merely to live but also how to live, you will know you are leaving the valley of the shadow. There will still be more work to do, more struggle and choosing. The valley, however, stretches behind rather than in front of you.

When you have resolved your grief by reinvesting in life, you will be able to realize that nothing is ever "the same." Life is change. We would not have it be otherwise, for that is the valley of the shadow. Change has the promise of beginning and the excitement of discovery.

Life is never the same. Life is change. Choose life!

Marcia F. Alig
 TCF, Mercer Area Chapter, New Jersey

Our Children & Siblings Remembered on Their Birthday's

Each month some of our members face special but very painful days. We ask that you keep in your thoughts the parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings of the following children following children's:

October

Bryan Bowles October 1

Jimmy Wallace October 2

James Page October 4

Sharnale DeMar Thompson October 8

Mark Draughon October 15

Kevin Harlan October 15

Ryan Malcom October 20

Sean Payne Jr. October 27

November

Preston Riley November 1

Ryan Stevens November 5

Elijah Caddick November 8

Carolyn Kapperman November 7

Baby Davis November 9

Renee Anderson November 11

Omar Sharaf November 11

Keith Parker November 12

Jeffrey George November 13

Charles Cook November 14

Zackery Hollister November 14

Johnny Cole November 15

Brianne Stewary-Goodrich November 18

Lamont Saffore November 21

Lawrence Boivin November 24

Brittney Stokes November 24

Kristen Wactor November 30

Matthew Guin November 30

December

Joe Konen December 1

Pam Tatum December 5

Crystal Dawn Jackson December 5

Zach Grullon December 6

Tammy Owens December 7

Kendra "Candy" Seay December 8

Christine Geier December 9

Shawn Leigh Watkins December 15

Ricky Diaz December 15

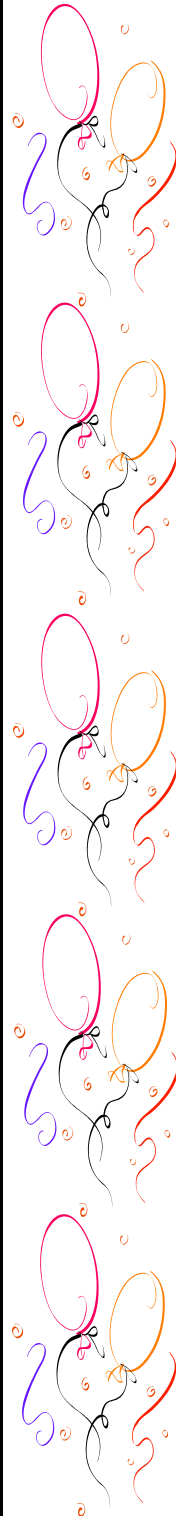
Derrell Lee Dean December 16

Hope Parker December 19

Nickolas Ross Hayden December 25

RaMael McArthur December 28

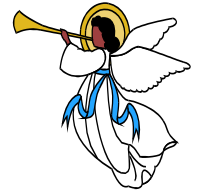
Lexi Minyon December 31





Children & Siblings Remembered On Their Angelversary

*Each month some of our members face special but very painful days.
We ask that you keep in your thoughts the parents, grandparents, aunts,
uncles and siblings of the following children.*



October

Melba Ross October 1

James Page October 5

Carla Parker October 9

Valencia Fredrick October 10

Kirsten Wactor October 10

Pam Tatum October 11

Brittney Stokes October 19

Ralph Lanier October 20

Archie Kagy October 21

Johnathan "JD" McKenzie October 21

Christopher Ortega October 26

November

Kyle Harris November 6

Christopher Hrvoj November 7

Talisha Morris November 8

Kendra "Candy" Seay November 8

Baby Davis November 9

Joe Konen November 9

Patrick "Pat" Shea November 14



Joe Konen November 9

Patrick "Pat" Shea November 9

Joshua Gurierrez November 12

Zackery Hollister November 14

Lawrence Boivin November 15

Amy Elizabeth German November 16

Joshua Jona November 16

Christine Geier November 20

Brianne Stewart-Goodrich November 22

December

Andrew Beutelspacher December 2

Stephen Dew December 12

Ryan Malcom December 19

Grant Miles December 22

Preston Riley December 23

Ryan Stevens December 30

"I carry your heart with me

I carry it in my heart

I am never without it

anywhere I go, you go, my dear

~ E.E. Cummings ~

The Compassionate Friends
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 Secretary/Treasurer



The Compassionate Friends
Fayetteville Area Chapter
 Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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We're on the Web
www.tcffayetteville.org
And Facebook

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Love Gifts

There is no charge for our newsletter, meetings, or lending library, and we depend solely on your contributions. Love gifts can be made in memory of your child, grandchild, or sibling. Your love gift will insure that all who need our newsletter, will receive it.

I wish to make a donation in memory of _____

Date of Birth _____ Date of Death _____

Donated by _____ Relationship _____

Address _____

If you would like to make a donation please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends,
 and mail to TCF Fayetteville Area Chapter, 703 Rosebud Court, Vass, NC 28394
 Please send form with check. **A donation is not required to submit items for the newsletter.**