



The Compassionate Friends

Minneapolis Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

8701 36th Ave N

New Hope, MN 55427

Meeting Schedule

We meet 7:00–8:30 pm on the third Monday of each month.

St. Joseph Parish Community

8701 36th Ave N

New Hope, MN 55427

Corner of 36th Ave N & Boone Ave N

Bereaved Sibling Group Meeting

We are proud to have a Sibling Loss Facilitator at our Minneapolis Chapter. Join us for support in dealing with your grief. Siblings meet separately, but at the same/ location and time as our Chapter meeting.

Monday, May 15

"Getting Unstuck: Moving Forward in Healing Your Grief"

"Stuck" may mean different things for different people at different times in the grief journey. Reflection may inspire hope.

Monday, June 19

"Bucket of Blooms"

We'll pick a fresh flower from a bucket of blooms and share why that flower reminds us of our child. A favorite activity and an opportunity to share our child's name.

Monday, July 17

"Picnic and Balloon Release"

See Page 3 for details. Note earlier start time. Picnic 6:00 pm followed by Balloon Release. At our regular meeting place.

We Need Not Walk Alone

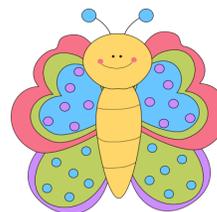
The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child at any age, from any cause, is welcome. Our meetings give parents the opportunity to talk about their child and feelings as they go through the grieving process. Our meetings are also open to grandparents, older siblings, and extended family. There are no membership dues. There is no religious affiliation.

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. **The Mission** of The Compassionate Friends is to provide highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or daughter, a brother or sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

The Secret of TCF's Success is Simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward, and both are helped to heal.

To Our New Members: Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But, you have nothing to lose, and much to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you find the right person...or just the right words spoken that will help you in your grief work.

To Our Members Further Down the 'Grief Road': We need your encouragement and your support. Each meeting, we have new parents. Think back, what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been any TCF "veterans" to welcome you and share your grief?



About Our Meetings:

Please don't stay away from a meeting because the scheduled topic does not interest you. At each meeting there will be time to discuss and share whatever is on your mind. We welcome your participation, but it is not required.

Inside This Issue:

Chapter and National Contact Info	2
Balloon Release & Picnic	3
Book Review	3
Father's Day Will Never Be the Same	4
Birthdays and Angel Dates	5-6
Serendipity & A Mother's Day Card	7
Find Someone...Talk to About Your Grief	7

Resources

Check Out Our Chapter Website:

<http://compassionatefriends.wordpress.com>

You'll find back issues of newsletters, links to other grief support groups, and more.

Our Local Chapter Is On Facebook.



Join our Minneapolis Chapter's private Facebook community online: [TCF Mpls](#)
Or log onto Facebook and search: TCF Mpls

www.facebook.com/groups/TCFMpls

National Organization Resources

may be found by visiting:

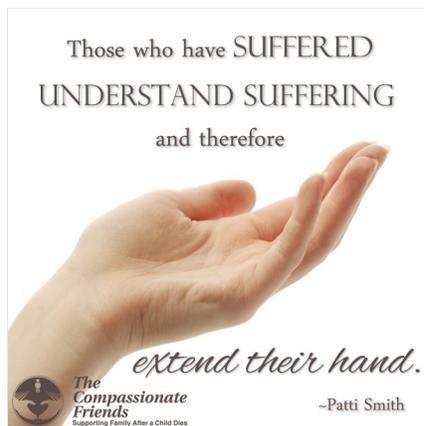
www.compassionatefriends.org

Click "Find Support" tab.

- National Magazine, *We Need Not Walk Alone*®
- Monthly E-Newsletter
- Online Grief-Related Webinar Series
- Online Support Community
- Facebook Closed (Private) Groups
[TCF/USA National Facebook Page](#)
www.facebook.com/TCFUSA

MINNEAPOLIS CHAPTER INFO**TELEPHONE:** (612) 444-1301**EMAIL:** tcf.mpls@gmail.com**Minneapolis Chapter Leader**
Monica Colberg**Treasurer**
John Jordan**Newsletter Editor & Co-Leader**
Gloria Jordan
tcf.mpls.editor@gmail.com**Database Coordinator**
Mary Jo Peterson**Webmaster**
Charlie Brown**Facebook Page Administrator**
Lisa Gross Crees**Hospitality Coordinator**
Gail Hokemeir**Sibling Facilitator**
Maggie Bauer**Steering Committee Meetings**
Held quarterly to plan events and Chapter direction. Next meeting: Friday, July 7.**NATIONAL OFFICE**

Toll Free: 1-877-969-0010

TCF National Office
PO Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522*E-mail:*
nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org
www.compassionatefriends.org*Facebook:* www.facebook.com/TCFUSA*Twitter:* <https://twitter.com/TCFofUSA>**REGIONAL COORDINATOR**Cathy Seehuetter: 651-459-9341
Email: peachy3536@comcast.net

Articles printed in this newsletter reflect the author's personal views, and not necessarily the opinion of the newsletter editor or The Compassionate Friends.

SURROUNDING AREA ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS**The St. Paul Chapter**

Meets at Beaver Lake Lutheran Church at 2280 Stillwater Ave. in Maplewood.
Second Thursday each month, 7 pm.
Sandy, (651) 528-6073
Cathy, (651) 459-9341

The Rockford Chapter

Meets at Our Father's Lutheran Church at 3900 Gilbert Ave SE.
Fourth Tuesday of each month, 7 pm.
Sandy, (763) 843-8685

The Monticello Chapter

Meets at St. Henry's Catholic Church at 1001 7th St. E in Monticello.
Second Monday of the month, 7 pm.
Beth Hill, (763) 295-3610.

The South of the River Chapter

Meets at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church at 12650 Johnny Cake Ridge Rd., Apple Valley.
Third Tuesday each month, 7 pm.
Susan, (651) 683-9236

Make Plans to Attend: 2017 TCF National Conference

Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek in Orlando, Florida, will be the site of the 40th Annual National Conference

July 28-30, 2017



Conference Registration will be available online until July 7 at www.compassionatefriends.org. There is also a link to print a registration form on the Conference page. Make your hotel reservations by calling 888.353.2013 at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek

Support TCF's National Conference through a sponsorship, silent auction donation, or an outright donation directly in support of the Conference. Your generous assistance is greatly needed and equally appreciated.

For updates with details, visit TCF national website as well as www.facebook.com/TCFUSA.

Submit a Child's Name for the National Conference Walk to Remember



The Compassionate Friends holds an Annual Walk to Remember in conjunction with the National Conference. Thousands of names are submitted by those who are unable to attend the National Conference in Orlando so that their beloved children's, sibling's and grandchildren's names will be carried along with all the others in the Walk to Remember. The walkers who have volunteered to do this in the past say that they find it a great honor and a privilege to carry these names. We invite you to submit the names that you would like to be carried in this year's Annual Walk to Remember which will be held on July 30, 2017 at the Hilton Bonnet Creek in Orlando. Click [here](#) or visit the TCF National website to register your child's, grandchild's, or sibling's name.

<https://www.compassionatefriends.org/walk-remember-name-submission/>

Shout Out to Siblings...

"But perhaps one of the best ways to find someone to talk with is to come to the National Conference of The Compassionate Friends. Each year, 200 to 400 surviving siblings journey to the TCF conference. There are many activities at the conference for surviving siblings: workshops, sharing sessions, a hospitality room with free drinks and snacks, a sibling lunch or dance, and much more."

Consider joining them! If not this summer, maybe next year. Catch the rest of this Siblings article "Find Someone to Talk to About Your Grief" on page 7.

Balloon Release & Picnic

Members and extended family are invited to join us Monday, July 17, at 6:00 pm for our annual Picnic and Balloon Release ceremony. This event will take the place of our regular July meeting, but has an earlier start time of 6:00 pm. Rain or shine, we will dine indoors. Dinner will be first, followed by the Balloon Release.

Experience a release of grief as we send our balloons into the sky. It's a powerful symbolic image, lifting our pain as we watch the balloons dance out of sight.

Please note the earlier start time of 6:00 pm. The location for the Picnic and Balloon Release is the same as our regular meeting place:

St. Joseph Parish Community, 8701 36th Ave N, New Hope, MN 55427

Once again, the Chapter will prepare all the food for the picnic. All you need to bring is your beverage. The Chapter will provide the main course, side dishes, dessert, and dinnerware, and Balloons. A suggested \$5 donation/per person will be appreciated to help with expenses.

We would appreciate a few volunteers to arrive early to help set up the serving line, and/or stay after to help clean up. When you RSVP, let us know if you are able to help.

If July is a Remembrance month for you, please bring a photo or memento for display on the Remembrance Table.

Please RSVP so we can more accurately estimate food and balloons needed. **RSVP by Email: tcf.mpls@gmail.com or call our Chapter phone number and leave a message, (612) 444-1301.**



Leader's Corner

Our quarterly newsletter is an outreach effort from the Minneapolis chapter of The Compassionate Friends to you. We are a mix of new members and seasoned grievors who have the long view following the death of our loved ones. At our chapter meeting we talk quite a bit about hope. Look for messages of hope and healing in this newsletter.

As you approach our chapter's meeting room you won't see a welcome mat. There is no door to our room. You enter a space where by day children eat school lunches.

We will see you take your first steps into The Compassionate Friends meeting. We will welcome you and ease you in on your journey for hope.

Monica Colberg
TCF Minneapolis Chapter Leader

Renewal Forms & Love Gifts

It warmed our hearts to see many Renewal Forms returned with a Donation included!

Our Minneapolis Chapter depends solely on donations to fund our activities and special events such as the Candle Lighting and Balloon Release, room rental, speakers, meeting supplies, lending library, printing and mailing the quarterly newsletter, outreach materials, and more. There are no dues or membership fees. All contributions are voluntary. We are a 501(c)3 and all donations are tax-deductible.

The chapter leadership is grateful for your contributions of any amount.

Donation In Memory of: **by TCF Members/Family**

Andy Arriagada	Jorge & Violeta Arriagada
Michael John Blesi	Carolyn Blesi
Eric Brodin	Buck and Judy Brodin
Corey & Missy	Mary Feigh
Kameron Gurule	Dawn Gurule
Lisa Marie Hall	Ron & Ursula Hall
Nicholas Morgan Harter	Brian and Sandra Harter
Brian Henry/Carson Jordan	Janine Jordan
Logan Bruns	Paul and Julie Kingsbury
Andrea	Martin and Joan Leeper
Ann	Barbara McNamara
Julie Olson Topp	Barbara F Olson
Gregory Sather	Nancy Sather
Arthur Colberg	Brandon Schultz
Sarah Tilman	Cathie Tilman
Scott Tuma	Shirley Tuma
Frank Weber	Mary Weber
Kevin Troy Williams	Shirley Williams

Save the Date: Sunday, September 24, 2017

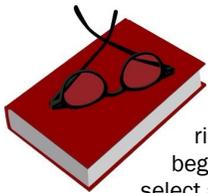
Minneapolis Chapter Walk to Remember

Walk begins 12:30 pm, Bassett Creek Park, Crystal, MN

This is our Chapter's annual fundraiser. Invite friends and family to join us! Details to follow in our August newsletter.

A Time to Grieve

by Carol Staudacher



For those of you who find it difficult to concentrate right now, this helpful little guide might be a good beginning. You can just flip through the pages and select a topic or check the list in the index.

The headings for these short meditations remind me of titles for workshops at The Compassionate Friends national conferences. Some will speak to you more than others, or during different phases of your grief.

Perhaps you are in the early phase of "retreating" and are in shock and disbelief. Then you come to a page with the quote, "My whole world has fallen apart." The few short paragraphs help you reflect on how your world has changed.

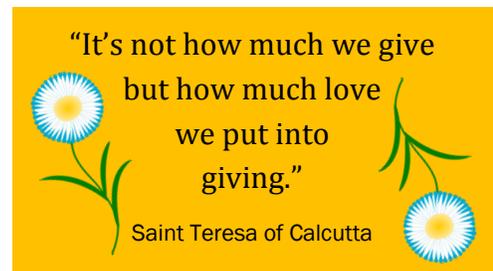
When you get to the "working through" phase, the quote, "I need to tell my story over and over" will help you understand how each time you tell your story, you remove another small bit of hurt inside you.

At our May meeting I will present a few ideas from this book about not getting stuck in our grief. We have this book in our chapter's lending library, if any of you wish to check it out.

Pat Brown
TCF Minneapolis Chapter, Co-Librarian

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Father's Day— It Will Never Be the Same



Our precious daughter and only child, Jill Kathleen, passed away on September 3, 1990 from a brain stem tumor. She was less than three months over six years old. I think back to my own father's Father's Days. It's pretty hard to remember what we did. Maybe we went fishing or to a baseball game. I know I always told my dad I loved him, because I did. We probably always had a good dinner that day too, a favorite of Dad's no doubt. To me somehow Father's Day always meant at least part of the day devoted to house or yard work.

When Jill came into my life, it was the greatest thing that ever happened to me and when she left it, it was the worst that ever happened. Therefore, Father's Day will never be the same. I keep diaries and for Jill's last year and the years after, there are some very painful entries. But, before she passed on there are some interesting entries. When she was four, I noted that I got a card from her. Have it stashed away someplace. When she was five, she gave me a card but hid my present and couldn't remember where she put it. We went to a church picnic that year, and Jill had her "first date" with a neighbor boy from up the street. I played Monopoly with her in the evening; she won! I put her to bed and read her a bedtime story. When she was six she was sick, but could still get around pretty well. We made a big deal of the day. She gave me a "rainbow" colored, golf size umbrella for a present. I still have it because it's now very special to me. I'd rather get wet than see that umbrella wrecked on a windy, rainy day.

Since Jill is gone, Father's Days have been different. For the first three years our friends and relatives tried to console me as best they could on this day. In 1992 I wrote in my diary, "I'm not a Dad without you, Jill." Now I have to correct myself—I was a Dad and always will be one except that I had to bury my daughter. It's not the way it should be, but it's the way it is, and I can't change it. God, how I wish I could.

I don't cry as much anymore, but the feelings that will trigger the tears are just under the surface waiting for the right emotional circumstances.

Dad, you have every right to be sad, depressed, and heart broken on Father's Day, because you have lost a son or daughter who can never be replaced. I know because I'm one of you. If you try to work through grief (it is hard work) and not run away from it or stuff it somewhere, your pain will lessen as time goes by. The scar you have from the loss, however, will remain forever. The day will never be the same again, but you can make it different. Life isn't easy, and it isn't fair. But you can make it bearable by treasuring the memories of your daughter or son. Some of you, unfortunately have lost more than one, but even one is too many. Treasure also the memorabilia of your daughter or son no matter how long they lived. Cry if you feel like it. I feel better after I do, because it makes me feel I'm not losing touch with her. Do whatever works for you.

Think of how your son or daughter whom you loved and who loved you would want you to feel on Father's Day. Then plan and do something that will make you feel just a little bit better and dedicate it to your daughter's or son's memory. It's worked for me.

Michael Ebert, BP Chapter Hinsdale, IL

HOPE

*Hope is the melancholy angel of grievers,
elusive and beautiful.*

*Hope is the light from nowhere, telling us we must
reach for the promise that waits to be fulfilled
in a future we do not yet understand.*

Sascha Wagner from Wintersun

Vacations

Vacation time can be painful for bereaved parents. Caught up with normal demands of making a living or keeping a household going, we have less time to think than we do on vacations, especially the "take it easy" kind—at a hideaway, tucked away somewhere.

In the summers following Tricia's death, I found vacations could bring a special kind of pain. We avoided going to places where we had vacationed with her. At one time, I thought Williamsburg might be off my list forever since we had a very happy time together there. I tried it one summer three years later and found that she walked the cobbled streets with me. Now that nine years have passed and the pain has eased, maybe the happy memories we shared in Williamsburg can heighten the pleasure of another visit there.

For the first few years after Tricia's death, we found fast-paced vacations at places we had never been before, to be the best. The stimulation of new experiences in new places with new people refreshed us and sent us home more ready to pick up our grief work. That is not to say when we did something or saw something that Tricia would have enjoyed, we didn't mention her. We did, but it seemed less painful than at home.

One caution: Do allow enough time for sleep; otherwise, an exhausted body can depress you.

We've said it many times: YOU HAVE TO FIND YOUR OWN WAY, YOUR OWN PEACE. Let vacation time be another try at that; but do give yourself a break in choosing the time and locale where that can best be accomplished. Don't be afraid of change—it can help with your re-evaluation of life.



Elizabeth Estes, TCF Augusta, GA
In Memory of Tricia

A Prayer for Springtime

Like springtime, let me unfold and grow,
fresh and anew from this cocoon of grief
that has been spun around me.

Help me face the harsh reality of sunshine
and renewed life, as my bones still creak
from the winter of my grief.

Life has dared to go on around me,
and as I recover from the insult of life's
continuance, I readjust my focus
to include recovery and growth
as a possibility in my future.

Give me strength to break out of the cocoon
of my grief. But may I never forget it as the
place where I grew my wings becoming a
new person because of my loss.

Janis Heil BPUSA, Ocala, FL

Our Children Remembered...on Their Birthdays

Loved...Missed...Forever in Our Hearts



May

CHILD	MEMBER
Carson Thomas Jordan	Gloria & John Jordan
Logan Bruns	Julie & Paul Kingsbury
Justin Thillman	Sarah Tieszen
Mitch sibling	Rachel Shapiro
Brady	Pat Rasmussen
Ross Alvin Joseph Stenerson	Barbara Stenerson
Julie Marie Olson Topp	Barbara Olson
Noah David Muonio	Michael & Anita Muonio
Gregory	Mary Sincheff
Eric Brodin	Judy & Buck Brodin
Adam	Rhoda Michaelynn
Sawyer James Tate	Robert & Joy Tate
Mandy	Don & Connie Lundholm
Steve Hokemeir	Gail Hokemeir
Jenna Rietmulder	Jay & Holli Rietmulder
Javi	Renee & Ricardo Moron
Scott Tuma	Shirley Tuma
Kameron	Dawn Gurule
Michael Habte	Debra Hudson
Nick sibling	Alyssa Kroll
Eric Lindquist	Bruce Lindquist
Payton Tripp (Granddaughter)	Janet & Richard Tripp
Lisa	Carol Sorensen
Martin Carlson	Jennifer Berry
Andrew Frankel Hurwitz	Doreen Frankel & Jake Hurwitz
John Pecknik sibling	Jeanne Klein
Natalie	Vickie Hackel

June

CHILD	MEMBER
Carolyn Ann Bedford	Barbara & Robert Demsky
Brett Petry	Linda & Vern Petry
Ben Alden	Mary & John Alden
Tyler Russell Hill	Sheryl & Allen Hill
Abigail	Eric & Sam Zander
Alex	Chuck & Trudi Campbell
Tyler Kasin	Tonja & Jim Younger
Vincent	Jeff Lewis
Kelley	Diane Lynch
Lara Rogers	Kitty & Tom O'Brien
LisaBeth McCabe	William & Betty McCabe
Zachary	Melanie & Craig Thielke
Derek	Darwyn & Mary Tri
Zachary Latterner	Sandy DuBois
Ben Freidson sibling	Debe Fefferman
Benjamin Freidson	Judy Freidson
Drew	Judy Pehrson

July

CHILD	MEMBER
Jon Bleyul	Rich & Mary Welke
Daniel Hinschberger sibling	Anna & Todd Lundblad
Daniel Hinschberger	Linda Schaeffer
Eley	Mary Jo & Winston Peterson
Michael	Jessica & John Kunza
Spencer Johnson	Ann Perry
Brianna Leigh	Brenda vanAsch
Andrew John terSteege	Leon & Kathryn terSteege
Daniel Weyrauch	Lori & Rick Weyrauch
Kendra & Cole (brother)	Tom & Terri Lindfors
Paul	Char & Rich Myklebust
Jory Day-Monroe sibling	Seaira Garcia
Jory Day-Monroe grandson	Mary Klingelhoets
Andrea	Joan & Martin Leeper
Cynthia	Liz Keller
Arthur Colberg	Monica Colberg
Arthur Colberg sibling	Jessica & Brandon Schultz
Andrew	Gail Archer
Persephonee	Chris & Ameer Banks
Dawn Ankney	Sharon & Gregory Maidment
Jonathan Townsend	Kelly Townsend
Danny	Georgie Waulk
Sadie Hanson	Dani Hanson
Matthew	Michael Wolfson
Emily Pham	David Pham
Shayde Erin Rudenick	Steve Rudenick
Krista Monyhan	Dave & Tricia Hanson
Krista Monyhan sibling	Erin Hanson
Zachary	Connie Theis
Brian	Julia Malmgren
Dylan Colbath	Lisa Colbath
Jamie Lents	Leslie Elsenpeter
Ryan Trunzo	Scott Wagner & Paula Trunzo

Birthday Table

Birthdays are given special recognition at our monthly meetings. During your child's birthday month, you are invited to bring photos and memorabilia to share and display on our Birthday Table. Some like to sign up to bring a favorite snack or treat (even birthday cake) to celebrate the birthday of their child.

Time changes everything except something within us which is always surprised by change.

Thomas Hardy



Our Beloved Children...in Our Hearts Always

especially during the Remembrance Month of their death.



May

CHILD	MEMBER
Logan Bruns	Julie & Paul Kingsbury
Natalie	Vickie Hackel
Marlys Ann Wohlenhaus	Fran & John Munday
Vanessa Marie	Maureen Voltin
Joseph Engles	Deb & Paul Barland
David Lindgren	Jeff & Jan Bowers
David Lindgren siblings	Adam & Tony Lindgren
Ashley Cochran	Lisa Cochran
Ella	Heather Ward
Carissa Hayen	Linda Hayen
Scott Tuma	Shirley Tuma
Kelley	Diane Lynch
Lori Jensen	Christine Jensen
Melissa Marie Vomhof	John & Ruth Vomhof
Julie Marie Olson Topp	Barbara Olson
Arthur Colberg	Monica Colberg
Arthur Colberg sibling	Jessica & Brandon Schultz

June

CHILD	MEMBER
Alex	Kathy Simanek
Jason Lynn Erickson	Mary Jo Kammerer
Daniel Christian Demsky	Barbara & Robert Demsky
Ron Reinert	Sharon Reinert
Brett Petry	Linda & Vern Petry
David	Derwood Twigg
David Andrew Twigg	Selma Twigg
Andrea	Joan & Martin Leeper
JoAnna	Aron & Ruth Wilterding
Krystie Anna care giver	Patty Beaudry
Krystie Anna	Rick Karl
Krystie Anna	Bruce Steiger
Tyler sibling	Lindsay Kloetzke
Ty	Steve & Pam Kloetzke
Ryan Trunzo	Scott Wagner & Paula Trunzo
Zachary	Melanie & Craig Thielke
Dan Lewis	Chris & Bob Lewis
Katie	Connie Weiss
Roan	Sang, Zoe & Jude Tran
Liv	Sang, Zoe & Jude Tran
Tim	Rozanne & John Puhek
Ashley	Michon Jenkin (Randy Segal)
Leon Harwood	Antonia (Flipper) Filipiak
Corey Fetzer-Londer	Cheryl Fetzer
Kapra Merideth Quain	MaryQuain
Daniel	Dan & Chevis Peso
Justin Thillman	Sarah Tieszen
Tyler Russell Hill	Sheryl & Allen Hill
Kelsey Eberle Granddaughter	Mary Alice Carlson
Kelsey Eberle	Roxanne & Terry Eberle

July

CHILD	MEMBER
Tucker	Dana & Kevin O'Brien
Michael	Jessica & John Kunza
Krista Monyhan sibling	Erin Hanson
Charlotte	Jon & Angie Downing
Claire Richards	Gail Manning & David Richards
Krista Monyhan	Dave & Tricia Hanson
Michael	Jean Shilinski
Tyler Kasin	Tonja & Jim Younger
Allyson	Roger Graphenteen
Adrian	John & Stephanie Merfeld
Jesse Meyers	Sandra Bouressa
Adam	Rhoda Michaelynn
Steve Hokemeir	Gail Hokemeir
Brady	Pat Rasmussen
Rhiley	Mike Henneman
Andrew John terSteege	Leon & Kathryn terSteege
Barry Allan Beal	Carol Beal
Martin Carlson	Jennifer Berry
Ashton Faye Anderson	Scott & Sharon Anderson
Chad Goodspeed sibling	Brenna Goodspeed
Chad Goodspeed	Betty Udseth
Luke	Amy & Jason Crotteau
Harriet	Stephen & Fiona Burgdorf
Lana Celinda Johnson	Eldon & Penny Johnson
Michael DeBruin	Mary & Bob DeBruin
Selene Anderson sibling	Elizabeth Anderson
Selene	Deborah Anderson
Jason McCarthy Grandson	Ken & MaryLou Theisen
Brian	Julia Malmgren
Alexander	Susan & Ed Herrmann

There's a hint of girlish laughter
 Wafting past the porch.
 For a moment I pause and listen
 In the warmth of summer sun,
 Memories are to bask in.
 Trees you climbed, kites you flew,
 Bikes you raced, waves you splashed in.
 At night we wrapped time around us
 As we blanketed the grass
 And gazed toward heaven.
 The stars were full of wonder then,
 And lazy days seemed endless.
 Life spread before you,
 Laughter filling the wind with happiness.
 Just now I thought I heard you once again.
 How pleasant this breath of summer,
 The breezes hold such memories.

Lovingly lifted from Madison Area Chapter

Serendipity and a Mother's Day Card

March and April are restless months for me as the May date of my son's death approaches. I wonder now at the timing of a spring cleaning chore that I tackled in mid-March. Was it serendipity, a happy accident, or something more? Mitch Carmody taught me to think "Definitely, something more!"

I needed something to do one day in early spring. I settled on cleaning a drawer full of old papers. Half way through the chore I found a Mother's Day card that my son Art made in 5th grade. He wrote a long letter with no periods. That was his writing style at the time. It read like a stream of consciousness from a 10-year-old boy. The letter was pasted on green construction paper, folded, with his school photo on top.



Art wrote that he knew my love for him would continue even if I died. Those were unusual words for him. I reread that sentence many times. Who knew it would be vice-versa ten years later? In hindsight, I believe he was telling me that we would continue our relationship despite a death between us.

I was in job-seeking mode at the time that he wrote the card. The rest of the letter was a persuasive argument to shift my career into sports writing. He thought I was a good writer. (I used periods.) He would help me with the sports stuff since he was good in sports and I would need that, he wrote.

It was hilarious! It made me cry. I shared it with my stepdaughter Jessica, Art's sibling.

For many years after Art's death I shut down on Mother's Day. Grief was too strong. Today I view things differently. My stepdaughter Jessica grew up knowing me. She is an extraordinary mother and daughter. My son-in-law Brandon is by far much more than I ever anticipated. They are enormously supportive for each other and for me. I am a grandmother now for their two children, a boy and a girl. For these reasons I will celebrate Mother's Day.

There is one more reason to celebrate. I received a Mother's Day card. It was a gift that I had forgotten long ago and found again on a restless spring day. My son is still with me, still nudging me, still sending me gifts with love.

Monica Colberg, Art's Mom
TCF Minneapolis MN

Any Child's Death Diminishes Me

What difference does it make whether a child is stillborn or dies after some years of life? She spoke of lack of memories because her child was stillborn. He commented on the deep pain brought by those very memories which remind him of what he lost. When it comes to a child's death, does the type of death matter? Is a murder worse than an accident? Suicide worse than chronic illness? Teenage worse than older adult? Stillborn worse than teenage? I've tried to be thankful that Jeanie wasn't murdered, that she and those dear boys did not linger comatose, or die from prolonged illness. I could not find thankfulness, though I have sought diligently for it within my deepest being. The death of each child, whatever the age or circumstances, brings its own guilt and anger, its own despair and questioning. Any child's death diminishes the parents who love that child, and for those bereaved parents, that death is surely the worst, their grief the most severe.

Robert F. Gloor
Tuscaloosa, AL
In Memory of Jeanie

Sibling Support Meeting

16 and older

Same date/time as our Chapter meeting

Facilitated by a
bereaved sibling

Find Someone to Talk to About Your Grief

Finding someone to talk with following the death of your brother or sister may be one of the best ways to cope with the loss. It really doesn't matter who that person is, as long as you can be open and honest in conveying your feelings. It would be terrific if this person could be a parent or a surviving brother or sister, because sharing your loss and going through the grief process together can make you stronger as a family. But often other members of the family are facing their own struggles with the grief process, and may not be able to open up with you.

Sometimes it is difficult to share your own feelings with other family members because of the emotions this can bring on. Tears are often difficult for us to handle because' as surviving siblings, we may feel guilty for causing someone else to have "a bad day." We may interpret the other person's tears to mean that our deceased sibling is more important than we are, or that we must compete with them for our parents' attention. If you can't talk with your parents or a surviving sibling, talking with another person who has experienced the death of a brother or sister may be the next best thing.

One of the hardest things to do after a sibling dies is to create a life for yourself that will not include your brother or sister. You are going to: •continue going to work or school •fight back the tears when that special favorite song comes on the radio •run to the phone to call your brother or sister—only to realize no one will answer •think that you see your sibling in a crowd •have to answer for the first time the question: "How many brothers and sisters do you have?"

Others around you may not understand these things, but someone who has had a brother or sister die knows what this is like. They, too, have sat at a red light, crying their eyes out. They, too, may wear their sibling's clothes. They, too, may look to date someone who knew their brother or sister. Although no one can know exactly what you are going through (because no one will have the same relationship you had with your brother or sister), someone whose sibling died has probably gone through many of the same experiences you are going through. It helps to hear that what you're going through is "normal." It helps to talk about what's going on in your life now. You may feel it helpful to talk with a counselor or therapist. As an objective third party trained in dealing with the bereavement process, they may be able to help you through what will probably be a very difficult time. They may be able to provide you with insights you may not get from family or friends.

But perhaps one of the best ways to find someone to talk with is to come to the National Conference of The Compassionate Friends. Each year, 200 to 400 surviving siblings ten years of age or older journey to the TCF conference. There are many activities at the conference for surviving siblings: workshops, sharing sessions, a hospitality room with free drinks and snacks, a sibling lunch or dance, and much more. For 3 days, you get to be with hundreds of people who understand what you're going through, who accept you as you are, and who give you the opportunity to talk as much or as little as you like. Often times many surviving siblings will exchange phone numbers and addresses to stay in touch throughout the year. Regardless of who you find to talk with, talk with someone—because talking helps!

Mary A. Paulson PhD, Worthington, OH
bereaved sibling, and Child and adolescent psychologist
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The Compassionate Friends

Minneapolis Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

c/o St. Joseph Parish Community
8701 36th Ave N
New Hope MN 55427

The Minneapolis Chapter of The Compassionate Friends operates solely with voluntary donations. The printing and mailing of this newsletter is the largest item in our chapter's budget. While there are no dues or subscription fees, donations to help offset this expense are much appreciated. A \$10 annual donation covers the expense of providing the newsletter to you for a year. Gifts in any amount are appreciated.

Thank you for your consideration!

Complete and return this form along with your donation to a chapter monthly meeting or mail to our treasurer:

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Child's Name	_____
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