



Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties

The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter March 2024

Grieving is an Evolving Process

I discovered that there was nowhere to hide when radical sorrow unraveled the fabric of my life. It struck every cell of my body – physical, mental, and emotional. For the first six months, I thought I would die. For the next six months, I wanted to die. Surely any mother who “truly” loved her child could not survive this. Nor would she want to survive.

The depression. The despair sucked me into a deep black hole that landed me in psychiatric facilities for weeks and intensive outpatient therapy for months. Intense counseling for years. And most importantly, attending support group meetings of The Compassionate Friends.

Gradually I learned to soften into the pain and yield to my suffering. I discovered mothers who truly loved their children too. I wasn't alone. In the process, compassion for all suffering beings began unexpectedly to swell in my heart. I became acutely aware of my connectedness to mothers everywhere who had lost children, who were, at this very moment, hearing the impossible news that their child had died.

Grief strips us. According to the mystics, this is good news. Because it is only when we are naked that we can have union with the beloved. We can cultivate spiritual disciplines designed to dismantle our identity so that we have hope of merging with the universal life force energy. This replenishing of our emptiness is a mystery, it is grace, and it is built into the human condition.

As our membership grows costs are rising to mail paper copies of the newsletter each month. Please consider receiving the newsletter by email, or Facebook, or our website. Please contact us with your email address!!! Thank you for helping us SAVE funds!!! email or scan ----->
contact@tcfquakertownpa.org



It is 22 years since Allison was killed at age 19 by a drunk driver and 15 years since Chris died by suicide at age 22. It is seven years since my sister-in-heart died. I have survived what I never thought I could. But more so, I am thriving with balancing joy and sorrow. I surround myself with warrior moms ... the mothers who know child loss. We learn how to lead and how to follow; how to give help and how to ask for help; how to share pain and how to share joy.

We know what matters and what doesn't. We are volunteers with The Compassionate Friends and other causes because we know one thing for sure. Helping is healing.

With love and hugs, thank you for being in my life.

barbara j reboratti

TCF Quakertown, PA, Chapter



Quakertown Chapter
PO Box 1013
Quakertown, PA 18951
Chapter Info Line: 215-703-8431
contact@TCFQuakertownpa.org
website: www.tcfquakertownpa.org

Please give some thought to volunteering with The Compassionate Friends. Our Chapter is growing and we need helping hands to continue to help others that are new to this path of grief. We need not walk alone.

Gone

Gone is my son,
whose final choice cannot be undone.
Etched in my memory is his cry,
"Let me go. I want to die!"

Scholars claim "suicide is a permanent solution
to temporary desperation."

Exception to the wisdom: persistent severe mental
illness, like a cancer that's become pernicious.

No. Dogged mental illness is not temporary.
It's unyielding pain led my son to seek death as a
sanctuary.

For years, my son fought hard to stay alive,
Until he could no longer try.

It comforts me knowing the pain he once bore,
no longer lives in his core.

I hold on to hope I find meaning in his death,
sustaining me until my final breath.

by Mary A. Steiner - mother of Richard, Forever 31 ❤️



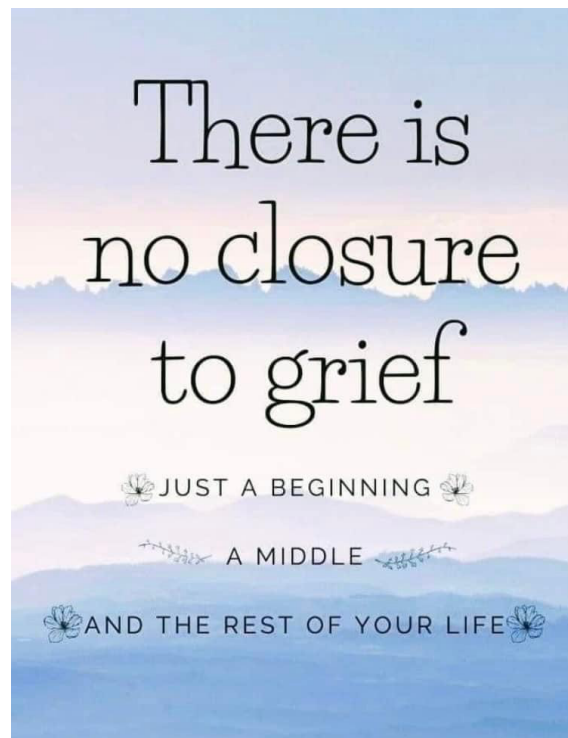
Seasons

The change of seasons is difficult. It reminds me that I must change if I am to live again. We can become stuck in our grief, full of self-pity and overwhelmed with pain. I do not believe our children would want us to live the rest of our lives in pain and misery. It is so easy to fall into the "black pit" and never have the strength or courage to crawl out – because crawl out we must...on our bellies. We are different now, with different priorities and goals. We must find a new purpose for going on, and we must accept the changes in our lives – including ourselves, for we are different now. We cannot go backward, though there are times we yearn to. We must go forward. If we don't, we stay stuck at the point our world changed. I used to say "ended."

Change is difficult. To accept the loss of our child is the most difficult of all. Our comfort comes from believing that the love we share will go on for all eternity and that we will be reunited again – and each day brings us closer. We must learn to live again, love again, feel joy and peace again – or our survival will be without value to ourselves or others.

Renee Little
TCF, Fort Collins, CO

Have a poem or something you've written that you'd like to share with our group? (send as a word file) to kt4ever@mac.com by the end of the month for inclusion in the coming month.



In Loving Memory of our Children on Their Birthdays

- 3/5 Jacquelyn Dahms, daughter of Don & Lorraine Croisette*
3/5 Genine Leary, daughter of Jon & Sylvia Holznagel
3/5 Leslie Ann Kobzina, daughter of Randy & Lori Ann Kobzina
3/10 Taryn Kline, daughter of Susan Kline
3/11 George Davish, son of Sheryle & George Davish
3/15 Kristy Bender, daughter of Kathy & Frank Bender
3/15 Donnie Daniels, Jr., son of Don & Kelly Daniels
3/16 Pat Cornell, sister of Kathy & Frank Bender
3/17 Bernie Kenzakowski, brother of Rebecca Kenzakowski
3/18 Joseph Cooper, son of Edith Cooper
3/18 Ryan Heimerdinger, son of Robert & Barbara Heimerdinger
3/19 Billy Klinedinst, son of Michelle Klinedinst
3/20 Amber Eisenstein, daughter of Ben Eisenstein
3/21 Chris Trauger, son of Mary Anne Macko & Mike Hamilton;
Jim Trauger; grandson of Dolly Bibic
3/22 Ryan McGuinness, son of Tim McGuinness
3/23 Peter Michael Hallinan, son of Carol & Tom Hallinan
3/24 Neveah Phillips, granddaughter of Chris Snider
3/26 Joshua Adair, grandson of Lois Harner
3/26 Hunter Larrabee, son of Michelle Larrabee & Steve Argue
3/26 Karisa Kade, daughter of Kathy & Mike Fluck
3/28 Alexis Falcone, daughter of Dominic & Carolyn Falcone
3/28 Jason Heuckeroth, son of Debbie & Mark Heuckeroth
3/28 Eric Hill, son of David & Susan Hill
3/31 Justin Hunter, brother of Crystal Hunter & son of Pat & Annette Hunter

*Our Children Remembered on the Anniversary
of Their Death Loved , missed and always in our hearts*

March

- 3/2 Jamie Frick Standish, daughter of Terry Frick*
3/2 Patrick Pettie, son of Doreene Pettie
3/4 Ardyth Cope, daughter of Carol Cope
3/5 Genine Leary, daughter of Jon & Sylvia Holznagel
*3/8 Katie Stauffer, daughter of Carl & Linda Stauffer; sister of
Chrissy*
*3/11 Richard "Drew" Panettieri, son of Richard & Suzanne
Panettieri*
3/12 Walter Pettie, Jr., son of Doreene Pettie
3/12 Erick McBeth, son of Marie Fedorowicz
3/14 Marc Falcone, son Dominic & Carolyn Falcone
3/18 Christine McGhee, daughter of Dawn McGhee
3/19 David Curran, son of Barbara Santaniello
3/21 Tammy Moore, daughter of Tom & Sandra Moore
3/23 Giacomo Maurizio, son of Bonnie Maurizio
3/24 Neveah Phillips, granddaughter of Chris Snider
3/28 Kristy McCoy, daughter of Arlin & Donna Moyer
3/29 Rennis Reitz II, son of Barbara Reitz
3/29 Michael Yothers, son of Brenda Yothers
3/31 Donald Trujillo, son of Priscilla Crawford

Special Thanks



A special thank you to Jennifer Pini, Diane Gurecki, Sierra Doyle for the Remembrance cards that you receive

They do this in memory of their children/ siblings: An appreciated Thank You to our members for helping to set up and tear down for chapter meetings. Thank you to Linda Stauffer for supplying the ink and paper and printing our newsletter and creating and maintaining our website. She does this in memory of her daughter Katie. Thank you to Theresa Sitko for managing our memorial garden. She does this in memory of her son Clayton Thank you to Dianna Cox for addressing our monthly newsletters for mailing. She does this in remembrance of her son Michael. Thanks to Barb and Bob Heimerdinger for applying the memorial Plaques to the wall in the memorial garden. They do this in remembrance of their son Ryan.



"When the heart resists, the mind will not accept"

"I'm not exactly sure what this quote means. There are many things in life that you don't really want to. Your heart just isn't in it. But, you do it anyway because it has to be done. On the other side, I guess if you have a loved one who dies your heart is still attached and it refuses to relinquish. When your heart still aches for that person your mind can sometimes not accept that they are dead. Overall though I believe common sense or the "mind" can usually overrule the heart maybe because I am young and haven't really experienced love or loss I can't comment on this quote. Sure, in the books I read the heart always overrules and in the end and everyone overcomes troubles to live happily ever after. But does that happen in real life? If even in your heart you know something is true it doesn't stop your mind from thinking it is false. I don't know? I feel like I am out of my depth here and writing about something I'm not yet old enough to understand. Why does the heart always have to symbolize emotions and the mind the rationality? I can't tell you what this means until 20 years from now when I've experienced it instead of watching it on Dawson's Creek or Beverly Hills (Not that I ever have or will watch either). The truth is they're just imaginary characters with no real hearts or minds with which to guide me. I'll trust my own judgment not some scriptwriters".

Katie Stauffer 2000

Each day I wake up from a terrible dream,
Only to find the world has changed.
I go to your room; your things are still there
Your dolls, your medals and your favorite bear. The scent
of you lingers, the smell of your hair
Memories of you, I find, are everywhere
Your precious books are stacked by the bed
And tissues that captured your tears as you read
Your paintings and drawings still hang on the wall
Collections of seashells and rocks from the beach
Bring back the memories of the times well spent
How do I go on without you by my side?
To love you to hold you, with smiles and pride.
My heart, it is broken, my dear beloved child
I miss your laughter, your music and your smiles,
All of our dreams of the future will never come true.
The 'whys 'and 'if onlys 'endlessly swirl in my head
Please tell me, oh God, I wish I were dead
I want to be with you every second of the day
But Dad and your sister, they need me to stay
Your friends and your family will never forget,
Your friendship, your love and your gentle kindness
You will live on forever in their hearts and their
minds,
I will love you forever my darling, my child.

Katie Stauffer 6/24/83-3/8/03
by Linda Stauffer



The
Gathering
Place

<https://gatheringplaceevent.com/>

MY DAUGHTER
MAY BE GONE FROM
My sight

but never
GONE FROM
MY HEART

Love Gifts

"There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are messengers of overwhelming grief...and unspeakable love."
Washington Irving

Sending a very special thank you to those who sent in love gifts this month:



No love gifts this month



As I loved you, so I miss you,
in my memory you are near.
Loved, remembered, longed for always,
treasured with a love sincere.
You are where I cannot see you,
and your voice I cannot hear,
yet I know you walk beside me,
never absent, always near.



Donations made in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling are always welcome.
Please help us help others. We Need Not Walk Alone.



LOVE GIFTS

A Love Gift is a donation of money in support of our Quakertown Chapter of The Compassionate Friends. Donations can be in memory of a child, sibling, or grandchild on their birthday, angel day or anytime. Your Love Gift will be acknowledged in our newsletter. Love Gifts are our Chapter's main monetary support. Anyone can donate and we thank you for your support of our chapter.

We are a 501(c) 3 nonprofit, chapter #2053. Donations are tax deductible.

In Memory of: _____

Birth Date _____ Death Date _____

Check One: Please use my gift for:

General Operating Expenses Memorial Garden

Your Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Love Gift Message _____



Please make check payable to:
The Compassionate Friends, Quakertown Chapter

Mail to:
PO Box 1013
Quakertown, PA 18951

Yes or No - include my name / love note in the newsletter.



The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Serving Bucks and Montgomery Counties



About Our Chapter

Chapter Treasurer – Lisa Dechant

Chapter Secretary – Gail Blase

Assistant Secretary –

Mary Anne Macko

Newsletter Editor/Webmaster –

Linda Stauffer

Membership Outreach-

Memorial Garden Chairperson –

Theresa Sitko

Committee members – Dianna Cox,

Diane Gurecki, Barbara Reboratti,

Amy DeLellis

TCF National Office:

877-969-0010

www.compassionatefriends.org

The Compassionate Friends is a nationally renowned 501 C (3) non-profit organization with 700 chapters in the US. All donations are tax deductible.



**New Chapter
phone number
215-703-8431**

Self-help Program

The Compassionate Friends, Inc. is a mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child of any age, from any cause is welcome. Our meetings give parents an opportunity to talk about their child and about their feelings as they go through the grieving process. There is no religious affiliation. There are no membership dues. The purpose of this support group is not to focus on the cause of death or the age of the child, as it is to focus on being a bereaved parent, along with the feelings and issues that evolve around the death experience of a child.

To Our New Members

Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain!. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not The Compassionate Friends will work for you. At the next meeting you may find just the right person or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.

To our Members who are 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, share your grief, encourage you and tell you, "your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get better!"

Information Regarding Our Meetings

PLEASE don't stay away from a meeting because the topic scheduled does not interest you. We are here to discuss whatever is on your mind, we don't stay on the topic only. This is YOUR group and we are here for each other. You do not have to talk at meetings. We welcome your participation in our group but it is not a requirement. Coming to listen to the others is Okay too. Remember also that our meeting is open to adult siblings, grandparents, or adult family members such as aunts or uncles.

Support Group Meetings

We are so sorry for the cause that brings us together. It takes courage to attend a Compassionate Friends support group meeting. We understand how it feels to walk into a room of strangers and share personal feelings, especially when you are in so much pain. At your first meeting, we hope you find care, support, understanding and a group of friends to share with. Truly, there are no strangers among compassionate friends.

As a reminder to families that would like to attend a support meeting. Please allow yourself at least 3 or 4 meetings of attendance to determine if they are for you. It may take a few meetings before you're able to talk about your loved one and that is understandable. What you say at our meetings is kept in the meeting, you can cry, hug, talk about how you are feeling freely. Our meetings are for parents, grandparents and siblings in grade 9 or above and adult siblings.

Your Friends at TCF Quakertown Chapter

Library Books

We have a nice library of books for our members to check out and read and return them back to our library. A problem we currently have is that some books have not made their way back to our library and our library is shrinking. If you have checked out a book or magazine from our library and are done reading it won't you PLEASE return it to us at our monthly meetings. If you are not able to make the meeting you may mail it back to us or have someone else return it to us. Also, if you have any books that would help other grieving families through their journey and would like to donate them to our library please give them to our librarians.

Newsletter Errors and Omissions

For any errors or omissions please contact Linda via email at kt4ever@mac.com with the error and the correction for the next month newsletter. Please remember we are all volunteers and grieving

About This Newsletter

This newsletter comes to you courtesy of The Compassionate Friends, Quakertown Chapter with the hope that it will be a helpful resource for you on your grief journey.

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter please contact the newsletter editor by email: newsletter@tcfquakertownpa.org

PLEASE NOTE: If you are moving or your email has changed please notify the newsletter editor so that we can update your information and you continue to receive the newsletter. If the newsletter is returned to us either via mail or your email bounces back and you have not notified us you will be removed from the mailing list.

Newsletter submissions:

Submit articles and poetry to the editor by the 15th of the preceding month. Include the author's name & your contact information. You may mail to our PO Box 1013, Quakertown PA 18951 or email as a pdf file or word document to: newsletter@tcfquakertownpa.org



The Compassionate Friends
Quakertown Chapter
PO Box 1013
Quakertown, PA 18951

Next Support Group Meeting— March 12 at the Gathering Place

The Compassionate Friends 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 they 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 a 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.

