



The Compassionate Friends

January 2019

Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties

Please Don't Forget About My Child

Please, don't forget about my child. This is my heartfelt plea. I know you love and care about my family. I know that you don't always understand nor do I expect you to. I know that you wouldn't want to cause more pain to our already aching hearts. So, you mention my child less for fear of stirring up the dust that has seemingly settled. The truth is, the idea that my child will one day be forgotten is one of my greatest fears.

The less you talk about him the more that fear feels like a reality. I don't expect him to be the topic of every conversation. I don't expect you to mention him every time I see you. Perhaps at one time or another, I wanted that. But time has taken me further and further away from the early days of deep, suffocating grief. Even though I am always reluctant to admit it, I know the world has carried on. But what I need and what I want now is just to know that he has not been forgotten.

Maybe that means the occasional, "I thought about him the other day..." but mostly it means I need you to remember the important day he was born

and the day he died. You see my friend, I don't expect you to fix any of this. And really all I need is to know that his name can be mentioned without fear, without guilt, and without uncertainty. I need to know that he is remembered because at the very least, he deserves that. He does not deserve to be swept under a rug because you fear my tearful response. Or because you think that my grief has subsided. Or because you have moved on. Or because you have trouble talking about him.

He deserves better than to be forgotten or remain unmentioned. After all, he is still my child. My child is a huge part of who I am now. You know this. His name and his face replay in my mind every single day. Even the days I smile or the days where joy washes over me. He is still at the heart of who I am now. And I need you to know that it's okay. It is okay to speak his name whether it is a good day, bad day, or a sad day. It's okay and it's what I need from time to time.

I need to be reassured that his life holds within it

(continued on page 6)

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



Next meetings: January 8, February 12

We talk. We listen. We share. We care.

Our Support Group Meetings are the 2nd Tuesday of every month at St. Luke's Quakertown Hospital, 1021 Park Ave., Quakertown, in the Taylor Conference rooms A & B on the ground floor of the professional wing.

Meetings are 7:30 - 9 PM.

No need to register. No fees or dues. Just come as you are.

Quakertown Chapter
PO Box 1013

Quakertown, PA 18951

Chapter Info Line: 484-408-7314

contact@TCFQuakertownpa.org

website: www.tcfquakertownpa.org

It has been said that time heals all wounds. I do not agree. The wounds remain. In time the mind, protecting its sanity, covers them with scar tissue and the pain lessens, but it's never gone. ~ Rose Kennedy



The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Serving Bucks and Montgomery Counties



About Our Chapter

Ginny Leigh-Manuell, Chapter Leader
Crystal Hunter, Chapter Treasurer
Gail Blase, Chapter Secretary
Mary Anne Macko, Assistant Secretary
Linda Stauffer, Chapter Newsletter & Website
Lynette Lampmann, Memorial Garden Director & Remembrance Cards
Theresa Sitko, Chapter Librarian
Barbara Reboratti, Chapter Delegate
Carol Graham, Hospitality
Mary Catherine Nederostek
Brittini Fonder, Remembrance Cards
Celeste Nice, Outreach
Sheri Albro
Bob Albro

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.



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 are 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

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

for December

Loved...Missed...Remembered on their
Birthdays and Always

1/1 - **Joseph Cavataio**, son of Libby Cavataio
1/1 - **Pamela Minnichbach**, daughter of Paul & Dolly Cell
1/2 - **Stephanie Kissel**, daughter of Barbara & Bob Krantz
1/2 - **Beverly Sue Otten**, daughter of Mary Leuz
1/3 - **Bobby Rolph**, son of Judy and Bob Rolph
1/4 - **Marc Landis**, son of Anne & Craig Landis
1/5 - **Anthony Bonino**, son of Robert & Susan Bonino
1/5 - **Lisa Kuniega-Lewis**, daughter of Arlene & Alan Vogel
1/9 - **Christopher Accardi**, son of Anthony & Mary Ellen Accardi
1/9 - **Dominic DeBlasio**, son of Jeannine DeBlasio
1/10 - **Peter Graham**, son of Al & Carol Graham
1/10 - **Ryan Mitman**, son of Victoria & James Weisbrod
1/11 - **Sean A. Ryer**, son of Patricia Ryer; grandson of Diana Adams
1/12 - **Chris Inscho**, son of Peggy Daggitt; brother of Diane Anderson
1/12 - **Ellen Crooke**, daughter of Annette & Daniel Crooke
1/12 - **Deborah Hornberger**, daughter of Eleanor Morrow
1/13 - **Kevin Figanik**, son of Thomas & Valerie Figanik
1/13 - **Greggory Hallman**, nephew of Mary Pat Hallman
1/13 - **Jason Pini**, brother of Jennifer Pini
1/14 - **Geneva Doll**, daughter of Keith & Barbara Doll
1/18 - **Cynthia Bengel**, daughter of Robert & Cheryl Bengel
1/19 - **Karen Graham**, daughter of John & Barbara Graham, Jr.
1/20 - **Stormy Weaver**, daughter of Nathan & Amber Weaver
1/23 - **Nick Umberger**, son of Nina & Jeff Wolfinger; nephew of Bev Pearson

1/24 - **Austin Jacobs**, son of Penny Jacobs
1/24 - **Peter Smith**, son of Angela & Richard Smith
1/25 - **Allison Reboratti**, daughter of Barbara & Eduardo Reboratti
1/27 - **Megan Eschenburg**, daughter of Gary & Peggy Eschenburg
1/27 - **Ross Van Houten**, son of Brenda Van Houten
1/28 - **Liz Ann Whipple**, daughter of Liz Sullivan
1/29 - **Matthew Lincul**, son of Linda & Ed Lincul
1/30 - **Michael Cox**, son of Dianna Cox
1/30 - **Michael Vincent Schanbacher**, brother of Bill Schanbacher

I Heard Your Voice In The Wind Today

I Heard Your Voice In The Wind Today - Unknown

I heard your voice in the wind today
and I turned to see your face;
The warmth of the wind caressed me
as I stood silently in place.

I felt your touch in the sun today
as its warmth filled the sky;
I closed my eyes for your embrace
and my spirit soared high.

I saw your eyes in the window pane
as I watched the falling rain;
It seemed as each raindrop fell
it quietly said your name.

I held you close in my heart today
it made me feel complete;
You may have died...but you are not gone
you will always be a part of me.

As long as the sun shines...
the wind blows...
the rain falls...
You will live on inside of me forever
for that is all my heart knows.

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED FOR December

Our Beloved Children...In Our Hearts Always...Remembered on the
Remembrance Day of their Death

1/1 - **Nick Campellone**, son of Johanna Goodwin

1/1 - **Lisette Martin**, daughter of Luke & Amanda Martin;
granddaughter of Evelyn & Nelson Martin, Jr.

1/2 - **Joseph Harper**, son of Chris & Janeen Harper;
grandson of Rosemarie & Francis Salamone

1/2 - **Joseph Oglialoro**, son of Mike & Becky Oglialoro;
grandson of Rose & Joseph Oglialoro; Gary & Vickie
Shoudt

1/2 - **Julia Smith**, daughter of Deborah Heatherington

1/5 - **Philip Gold**, son of Alan & Frances Gold

1/5 - **Jessica Roth**, daughter of Wilbur & Carol Roth

1/5 - **Eric Santayana**, son of Debi & Walt Schimpf

1/7 - **Stephanie Kissel**, daughter of Barbara & Bob
Krantz

1/9 - **Anthony DelConte**, son of John & Marie DelConte,
Jr.; brother of Dana Turock

1/9 - **Jason Heuckeroth**, son of Debbie & Mark
Heuckeroth; brother of Jaime

1/9 - **Stephen Stalheim**, son of Barbara Mertens; brother
of Deborah, Daniel & Peter

1/10 - **Eric Gorman**, son of Butch & Marianne Gorman,
Jr.; brother of Patrick & Jennifer Gorman

1/12 - **Kiana Alverenga**, daughter of Tina & Jose
Alvarenga

1/12 - **Daniel Attilio**, son of Patrick & Ann Marie Attilio

1/12 - **Morgan Mysza**, son of Dean & Jill Mysza

1/13 - **Brett Stebulis**, son of Barbara & Leonard Stebulis

1/15 - **Ken Trauger**, brother of Jim Trauger & Donna
Gibson

1/16 - **William Mindler**, son of Kathryn Mindler

1/16 - **David Roscilo**, son of Barbara Frojan

1/17 - **Karin Haughey Adair**, sister of Martha Stoler

1/18 - **Curtis Anthony**, son of Paul Anthony & Donna
Kapper; grandson of Charlie & Nancy Kapper

1/19 - **Peter Graham**, son of Albert & Carol Graham

1/19 - **Jacob Burkett**, son of Kathleen & Jim Hardgrove

1/20 - **K. Scott Frey**, son of Ken & Roberta Frey

1/20 - **Clayton Sitko**, son of Henry & Theresa Sitko

1/21 - **Robert Toft, Jr.**, son of Robert & Joy Toft

1/21 - **Adriana Toro**, daughter of Israel Toro

1/21 - **Margaret Welhaf**, sister of George Blood, Jr.

1/22 - **Eric Martin**, son of Daniel Martin; brother of Mikaela
Martin

1/23 - **Matthew DiNicola**, son of Ron & Myra DiNicola

1/23 - **William Ingelido, Jr.**, son of William Ingelido, Sr. &
Rosann Smiley

1/23 - **Jacob Jones**, son of Elaine & Paul Barndt

1/23 - **Michael Macko**, brother of Mary Anne Macko

1/25 - **Nathan Rodosky**, son of Dean Rodosky; grandson
of Sandra & Warren Madison

1/26 - **Michael Cox**, son of Dianna Cox

1/27 - **Julie Hartwich**, daughter of Donna & Dave Hartwich

1/29 - **Karen Slotter**, daughter of Dolly Bibic

1/30 - **Dan Bardsley**, son of Emma Bardsley; brother of
John & Anita Bardsley

1/31 - **Stephen Lees**, son of Gregory Lees

1/31 - **Kristin Statuti**, daughter of Henry & Maryann Statuti

1/31 - **Linda Toland**, sister of Andrea Dunning & Valerie
Schulz

5 Tips To Manage Grief In The New Year, Mindfully

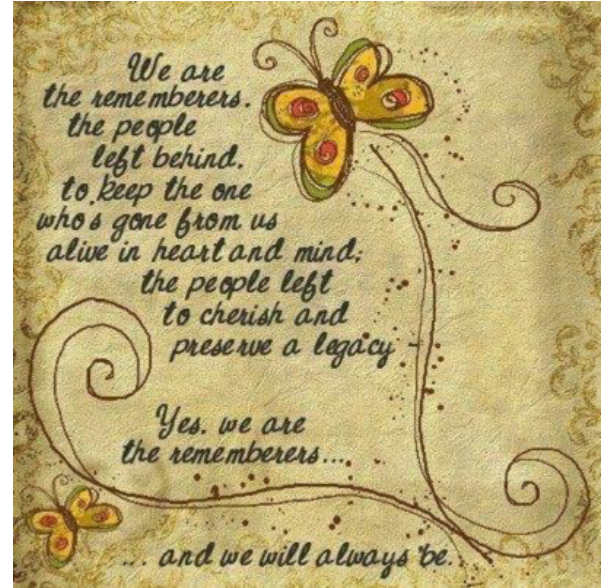
While most of the world is celebrating the start of a new year, those of us who are **grieving** may be feeling not so joyous. As with other holidays, anniversaries, and days that end in -day, feeling sad, angry, anxious, resistant, confused, detached, or any other difficult emotion is par for the course when you are grieving. Instead of fighting the reality that things are different, let go a little, and allow yourself to do things a little differently from before. Here are a few ideas:

1. **Focus on self-care over self-improvement.** This year, you may want to skip the typical New Year's resolutions and instead, focus on self-care for your grieving mind, body, and spirit. Simple things like getting good sleep, eating nourishing food, and exercising a little bit each day will help your body and mind support you during loss, but do these things with an attitude of **self-care** instead of self-improvement, which is often implied in our resolutions. Don't add to your suffering by trying to attain an unrealistic goal. Instead, treat yourself as you would treat a beloved friend in the same position.

2. **Create your own mantra to replace "Happy New Year."** If you are like most grieving people, the idea of being happy is a bridge too far from where you are right now, but since you are going to hear these words, again and again, you may as well incorporate them into your self-care practice. Instead of feeling bad for not feeling happy, or angry that someone would assume you could feel happy, use these three ubiquitous words as a reminder to send yourself compassion. Try this: Each time you see or hear "Happy New Year," offer yourself words of kindness that resonate with you. For example, "May I treat myself with kindness this year," or "May I have a Compassionate New Year," or simply "This is hard and I am doing my best." This not only puts you back in the driver's seat so you have a modicum of control over your experience but is a great bell of awareness that can remind you to take care of yourself.

3. **Know that you are not leaving your loved one behind.** When you cross the threshold of a new year without your special person by your side, it can feel like you are leaving them behind. That isn't the case. Yes, the annual change of the calendar is a marker that time is passing, but you will never forget your special person, no matter how many years go by. Take some time out early this year to reflect on the ways you carry your special person with you. What habits, likes, dislikes, hobbies, or mannerisms do you share with them? What are your favorite memories of your time together? If they are a blood relative, in what ways do you look like them? They have left their mark on your heart, and that will never go away.

4. **Prioritize your grief-work with your new calendar.** Instead of just scheduling things you have to do, use your new calendar to plan what you *need* to do to support yourself this year. While none of us have a crystal ball, many people find holidays and anniversaries especially challenging. Record them on your calendar, and plan how you want to



spend those special days. Whether scheduling coffee with a supportive friend on your loved one's birthday or gathering a group of survivors together to reminisce on the anniversary of their death, knowing what you are going to do on these special grief-days may help reduce your anxiety. You can also plan ahead to attend grief support groups and memorial events through your local hospice or grief group. Even if the groups don't start for a while, get them on your calendar now, before work and social obligations take over. You can also block off self-care time for a massage, meditation, **journaling**, or just free time to do as you wish.

5. **Steady your mind in the present with meditation.** The human brain is rarely fully present, and this is especially true when we are grieving. Part of us wants to fast forward and leave this awful time behind, but an even bigger part wants to turn around and sprint back to the time when our loved one was still alive. The reality, of course, is that we can't control the passing of time, but we can control what we do with our attention. In the meditation world, we call this bouncing around "monkey mind", and although it is just a side-effect of being human, it rarely reduces our suffering. There are countless ways you can learn to tame your mind with **meditation**, but I find that in the early days, months and even years of grief, **focusing meditation** practices can be especially helpful. Try this: with your eyes open or closed, turn your attention toward your breath. As you breathe in, silently say to yourself – **In**. As you breathe out, silently say to yourself – **Out**. Do this over and over each time you breathe, for 3-5 minutes. When your monkey mind wanders off, find your breath again and start over. It doesn't matter how often you need to begin again. After a few minutes, you may feel calmer and more in control of your own mind.

Heather Stang

Quakertown Chapter Marks 20 Years of Support

Almost 20 years ago the Quakertown chapter of The Compassionate Friends was chartered. The need for this chapter came when Darlene Dusza and Barbara Reborriati connected over the deaths of their daughters, Michelle and Allison. Since 2002, over 200 support meetings have been held. Over 15 World Wide Candle Lightings were hosted by the chapter. Over a dozen butterfly releases took place. Dozens of members have helped by giving time, money, or items for these events. Over 500 families have connected with the chapter. It is no easy feat to start something and keep it going.

As we all reflect on the past year, we thought it was appropriate to reflect on how the chapter had an outstanding year remembering our children, siblings, and grandchild. We know sounding so positive about a somber group can feel frightening or wrong, but what made 2018 different and better than the years before? The Memorial Garden! This Garden was a dream of Darlene Dusza's before she passed away suddenly in 2016. As a chapter, everyone contributed to the success

(continued from page 1)

so much value, still. I need to know that his story is not over and his story has not been forgotten, even though he has been gone for some time now. I need to know that I do not remember him alone. And all it takes to remind me of these things is to say his precious name. I don't need gifts, I don't need flowers or cards. I just need you to say his name aloud, unapologetically, and unprovoked.

I need you to remember the significance of important days like his birthday. Because while they are normal average days to you, they are days that we remember, that we mourn. They are days that bring up extremely complicated feelings. It doesn't matter how many years have passed. These days are significant to my family. And they always will be. So please, please don't forget about my child. The greatest gift you can give to my family is the gift of remembrance. It costs you nothing. It requires very little. Yet it is more precious than gold. Hearing my child's name is the greatest reminder that he has not been forgotten.

And there is nothing that I want more.

Post by Jessi Snapp

of this garden. From April 2017-April 2018, that garden became a physical reminder of why we all know each other. The garden is a spot we can meeting, a place we can sit, and a beautiful reminder that our loved ones will be remembered. April 2018, however, was a huge month because we pulled together a dedication with your help-- whether you bought a plaque, donated any amount of money or time, or simply cheered us on. Getting the garden in was only the beginning of our future... the story does not stop here. Stay tuned for Garden Updates in the coming months!

Also, to recap 2018, we had many new families come to a meeting or reach out through a phone call or email. We are saddened to hear of more children and siblings dying, but we know we can and will support you. Through our meetings, impromptu social outings (painting, at the garden, etc), this group is the place you know we will stand beside you, we will listen, and we will learn from each other. Remember that everyone has a different journey but by listening and learning, your journey will progress on your own timeline. Reach out to those who are further along on the grief journey so we can give you hope, hugs, and a listening ear.

We wish all of you a peaceful January. We are here, so you need not walk alone.

42ND TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE



**RINGS OUT IN
PHILADELPHIA**

JULY 19-21, 2019



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

Next Meetings : January 8, February 12



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.

