



The Compassionate Friends

September 2020 *Serving Upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties*

IMPORTANT UPDATE:

Due to COVID restrictions the monthly support group meetings normally held at St. Luke's Hospital, are now being held either outdoors or virtually via Zoom. The next Support Group Meeting will be held on Sunday, Sept 13th, 12 Noon – 2 PM, at the Memorial Garden located in James Memorial Park on Ridge Road in Sellersville. Masks are required and please bring a lawn chair. Rain date will be a Virtual Zoom Meeting on Tuesday, Sept 15th @ 7:30 PM. Information regarding the Zoom Mtg. can be found on our Website and Facebook Page. Also a mass email will be sent out. Look forward to seeing all of you at the meeting.



Donations made in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling are always welcome, but more so this year. Due to COVID restrictions we had to cancel our biggest fundraiser, the annual Memorial Walk and Butterfly Release. Please help us help others. We Need Not Walk Alone.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/123802347679381/>
[Our private facebook group](#)



If you are reading this newsletter and do not receive emails from the chapter, and would like to, please email contact@tcfquakertownpa.org to be included on the email list. Be sure to include your name!



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



Quakertown Chapter
PO Box 1013
Quakertown, PA 18951
Chapter Info Line: 484-408-7314
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.



The Compassionate Friends

Quakertown Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Serving Bucks and Montgomery Counties



About Our Chapter

Barbara Reboratti, Chapter Coordinator & Chapter Delegate to National
Ginny Leigh-Manuel-Membership Outreach
Crystal Hunter, Social Media Coordinator & Sibling Outreach
Sherri Albro, Chapter Treasurer
Gail Blase, Chapter Secretary
Mary Anne Macko, Assistant Secretary
Linda Stauffer, Chapter Newsletter & Website Creator & Maintenance
Theresa Sitko, Memorial Garden Director
Lynette Lampmann, Hospitality
Diane Guerecki, Remembrance Cards
Lisa Dechant, Remembrance Cards
Dianna Cox
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. Re-member 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 meet-ing. 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

We were put on this earth to love them

for as long as WE live... ○

not for as long as THEY lived.

- Alan Pederson

Our Children Remembered for September Birthdays

- 9/1 - **Sophie Burock**, infant granddaughter of Russ and Theresa Burock
9/2 - **Cpl. Elliot Teisler**, son of Daniel & Roberta Teisler
9/3 - **Shari Geib**, sister of Lisa Cohen
9/3 - **Julie Howe**, daughter of Tim & Nancy Howe, sister of Melanie
9/6 - **Rachel Sands**, daughter of Charlotte Tatu, sister of Christian, mother of Tommy
9/9 - **Robert Reynolds**, brother of Lisa Robey
9/10 - **Calvin Gross**, son of Karen Gross
9/11 - **Justice Goodwin**, son of Holly & Keith Goodwin
9/12 - **Anne-Marie Acker**, daughter of Anne Marie Acker
9/12 - **Clayton Sitko**, son of Henry & Theresa Sitko, sister of Mandy
9/15 - **1st Lt. Matthew Gaffney**, son of Phillip & Kathleen Gaffney
9/16 - **Jeremy Kuba**, son of Roslyn Kuba
9/18 - **Gregory Giachetti**, son of Lawrence & Wanda, sibling of Jeffrey
9/18 - **David Roscilo**, son of Barbara Frojan
9/23 - **Damien DeRose**, son of Lynn DeRose
9/23 - **John Roeder, Sr**, son of Don & Joan Roeder, brother of Kerrie
9/24 - **Michael Yothers**, son of Brenda Yothers
9/26 - **Michael Adamson**, son of Darlene & Daniel Dean, brother of Michelle
9/30 - **Adrienne Heber**, daughter of Anna & John Heber
9/30 - **Christopher Reed**, son of Sally Reed

I'll see you in my dreams tonight
I'll kiss your cheek and hold you tight
I have no tears left to cry
You've flown away my butterfly....

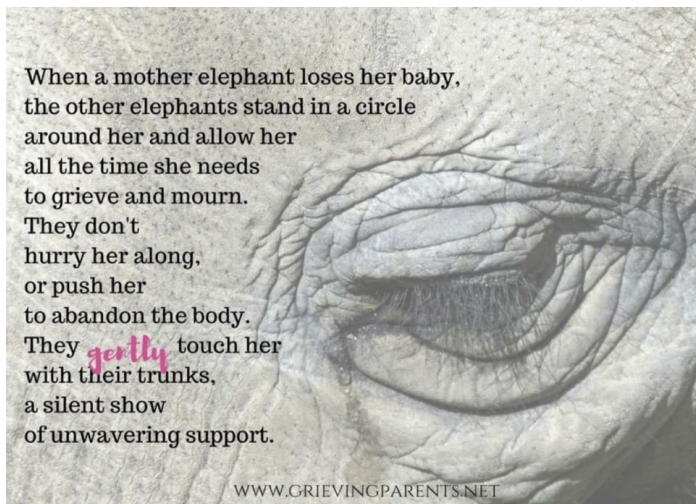
-Angela Schneider



My Beloved Katie
by Linda P. Stauffer

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.

In Loving memory of Katie Stauffer 1983-2003



Becoming Melancholy How My Grandson's Death Changed the Way I Live

By Patricia Mealer

I continue to learn and grow as this new person I have become, a griever making my re-entry back into life among those untouched by loss. In adjusting to the new me, I have come to accept things about myself that at first I assumed were temporary. I now know that I am permanently changed.

Self-awareness is a good thing. If grief has provided anything positive, it would be the soul-searching that I needed to do in order to overcome my loss. Grief shatters you, tears you apart. Rips open your soul, breaks your heart and forces you to open your eyes. When I was able to put myself back together, I found my perception of everything had been completely altered.

Grief makes you aware, hyper-aware. You become more of who you really are and you see the truth of who others are as well.

In this new state of being I tend to over-analyze everything. Not to be weighed as right or wrong or to judge, but to prevent the mental unrest that may unintentionally harm my fragile psyche.

I find myself living a life mostly melancholy. Although I have consistently tried to resume an overtly happy life, I now realize this as also misguided. There is absolutely nothing wrong with living my life the way I am. It is not a dishonor to Konnor to be sad at times. I am, in fact, honoring him when I have moments of sadness because I am expressing my love for him. To continue to falsely create a façade of a life that does not exist would be a mockery.

I am doing much better than I was. I am, for the most part, happier now. I can laugh when something is funny. I smile more. For this I feel proud considering where I was two years ago. I am settling into myself, content in who I am. Shaped by grief but surviving by my love for my family and everything that is left in the here and now.

Grieving and feeling melancholy has turned me into a deeply emotional human being. Some handle loss well and manage to go unscathed. For me, the changes I have felt within myself are irrevocable. I am emotional. I am aware. I am more alive now having experienced the trauma of death.

I am blessed to experience a sunrise, my grandchildren, a beautiful song. It doesn't bother me to feel everything so deeply. So what if I cry more than the average person. I get melancholy. I know what it means to lose someone I treasured and thought so beautiful.

Being melancholy does not mean I am depressed or sad. It is not a mood. It is a state of being. It is loving your family more. It is recognizing beauty unnoticed before. It is hearing a song and crying because it brings forth a memory whether good or bad. It is a feeling of stillness, fullness while at the same time experiencing emptiness, numbness. Melancholy is staring off into space, lost in your own thoughts in a room full of people. It's that lump in your throat and the ache in our chest.

I have adjusted to the over-whelming emotions I can experience. I am comfortable with who I have become. Truth be told, I would rather feel so much more than care less in a world that at times can seem so cold.

"When sadness knows the reason of tears, heart prepares to carry the ache for years." – Munia Khan

Patricia is a Professional Registered Nurse, mother of four, grandmother to seven, one being angel Konnor Mason, who passed suddenly November 22, 2015. At eight years old of gastric perforation caused by a very rare bacteria.

A New Beginning

*By Ian "Rowdy" Rowan, Bereaved Grandfather
of Sophia Ann West*

I opened up my heart
To the possibility
That people understand
What grief has done to me

To find another person
Who's sharing this deep pain
May change that sense of loss
Might help us to explain

Our grief brought us together
Now never will we part
A little piece for everyone
We'll share within our heart

Something we can cherish
Friendship "tween me and you
Through all this gloom and darkness
A little light breaks through

Our Children Remembered on the Anniversary of Their Death

Loved, missed and always in our hearts

9/1 - **Kevin Figanik**, son of Thomas & Valerie Figanik
9/1 - **Justin Hunter**, brother of Crystal Hunter; son of Pat & Annette Hunter
9/2 - **Jenna Nicole Burleigh**, daughter of Ed & Jaqui Burleigh
9/4 - **Aaron Abud**, son of Susan Abud
9/4 - **Ryan Heimerdinger**, son of Robert & Barbara Heimerdinger
9/5 - **John Jarema III**, son of Josephine Lenhart
9/5 - **Tyler Mostek**, son of Kimm Mostek & Brendan Dorsa; grandson of Vicki Bartakovits
9/6 - **Richard Cantando**, son of Stephen & Kathryn Cantando
9/6 - **Billy Klinedinst**, son of Michelle Klinedinst
9/6 - **Jennifer Rose**, daughter of Michael & Donna Rose
9/6 - **Farrald Lee III**, brother of Kendra Stenack
9/7 - **Judy Besh**, sister of William Klinger
9/9 - **Sullivan Burd**, son of Glenn & Jessica Burd
9/10 - **John Ruch**, son of Christina Dunning
9/12 - **Ben Smith**, son of Nick Wyllie,
9/14 - **Cristina Ewers**, sister of Phillip & Linda Emery; Mark & Jacqueline Teufel
9/15 - **Gregory Giachetti**, son of Lawrence & Wanda, sibling of Jeffrey
9/17 - **Sophie Burock**, granddaughter of Russ & Theresa Burock
9/17 - **Cole Ferdock**, son of Kelly Ferdock
9/17 - **Susan Sine**, daughter of Dorothy & Lynn Miller
9/20 - **Ellen Crooke**, daughter of Annette & Daniel Crooke
9/21 - **Geneva Doll**, daughter of Keith & Barbara Doll
9/21 - **Alycia Pinkowski**, daughter of Patty Rugulo
9/22 - **Christopher Fonder**, brother of Brittni Fonder
9/22 - **Michael Vincent Schanbacher**, brother of Bill Schanbacher

9/23 - **Tara Sciss**, daughter of Todd Sciss
9/24 - **Petie Shultz**, son of Maria Shultz; grandson of Doreen Pettie
9/25 - **Jean Marie Moyer**, daughter of Joe Siedlecki & Monica Siedlecki
9/26 - **Matt Dille**, son of Patti & Joe Dille
9/27 - **Nathaniel Rocque**, grandson of John & Marie Rocque
9/28 - **Karen Murray**, sister of Nancy Perrin



Next plaque order deadline Feb 15, 2021

The memorial garden is a serene place that you can sit quietly, read, or hide a rock for others to find. Most importantly, this memorial garden is for you and for your children and siblings gone too soon.

There are just over 80 spots left if your child, grandchild, or sibling does not have a space yet. The deadline is February 15, 2021 for this next order. There will be plenty of reminders.

You can fill out the form at this link <https://forms.gle/YWupAnu2qPVpjrA6> or scan the QR code to go to the website to fill out the form. You can send a check even if you order online.

The memorial garden was a large project and will always need care, donations, and love. Please keep your love gifts coming for the garden or the chapter in general. We rely on your donations, your time, and your love. If you have questions about the plaques, please email memorialgardenTCF@gmail.com.



Scan the QR code to go to order form



Stepping Through Quicksand Men need an outlet, and self-care. By Ken Brack

On the edge of the woods at nightfall, eight men sit near a crackling wood-fired chiminea. It sparks in a familiar way that mirrors our group's mood: from resistance to a fast burn, bursts of laughter, and quiet pauses. As the fire provides some light, so too, does the group. Reaching men who have each lost a child. Validating the obstacles and doubts we face, our worst fear comes true. Giving space for questions and listening and even tears.

Several of the guys have a son or daughter who died within the past year or sixteen months. Their wounds are so damn fresh. So complex that I, as one of the facilitators, don't need to remind myself to be fully present as they vent or probe. Others are four or five years out. We have so much in common. While our support group is known formally as "Just for Dads," we half-jokingly refer to ourselves as something like, "Life sucks" (a little less on a better day).

The isolation we experience in this God-forsaken club can be acute. Even approaching 16 years since the death of my oldest son, at times my wife and I still feel shunned by other parents. It is as inexorable as rising sea levels that erode banks and beaches; our identity as parents and families was swept away and there is little we can do. We are like island bluffs constantly exposed to the elements. And for us guys, there is a quicksand of issues and emotions to step through – regardless of how many years it's been.

Among this morass is the need for men to carve out some time for ourselves. This is just one thing I am relearning in my role with the group, which started at summer's end. Some of us are so used to being providers and protectors. We often define ourselves that way, or society does. Some of us are less comfortable expressing emotions; it's not our thing or how we were raised. We may put those feelings aside, avoid and bury them, or self-medicate until we are numb.

Many guys tend to be fixers and problem-solvers. We often take action dealing with the aftermath, the very destruction, of a loved one's death. The logistics of keeping the family afloat and survival itself take precedence. None of this negates a man's need for an outlet. For self-care. Among my group, a couple of the guys have already mentioned ways they find a little time for themselves. For several it was such a struggle to carve out any space – whether to just sit with their feelings, talk to a son, or do something restorative.

One goes fishing once a week before breakfast. One rearranged his garage shop. Another confides he is so down and at his wits end that about the best he can do is work alone on a construction site where no one can see his tears. Others aren't even close to doing such things. One faces such a barrage of issues – including the recent death of a parent,

and questions about the true cause of his child's death—that there has been no window for himself, and no one to talk to. It's grueling to hear their experiences by the fire. Sometimes it brings me back to my own quicksand. Hopefully I can share how I extricated myself if that will be useful. Still the fact that we gather together is empowering. They are able to come. And the camaraderie that's already building is potent.

One insight that's been helpful to me as our group congeals is recognizing the range of men's grieving styles. And how a little blending of our different approaches is so healthy. There is no one way to do this. No right or wrong. No roadmap, as we say. The "doers", guys who work it out largely by their activity, thinking, and problem solving are known as "instrumental grievers" by counselors and other grief professionals. Their grief is more often expressed cognitively or through behaviors than by sharing emotions. Sometimes these men are thought to be denying their grief when they're really just working it out in another way. This may mean finishing a project that he and his teenage daughter started together. Or although while afraid to lose control around others, not denying a memory to play his son's favorite song on the drive back from work. Keeping busy so the dam doesn't burst in front of friends. I do not believe that a wall automatically goes up to insulate every grieving dad's feelings. Nor do the old stereotypes of "masculine versus feminine" grief hold up with ironclad boundaries. On the flip side of this active style are so-called intuitive grievers. These are people who express strong emotions. Waves of guilt or anger, bouts of crying and exploring feelings run strong. As a society, we have long said that expressing strong emotions is typically a bereaved woman's response. Yet many men do not shrink from their intuitive or "feminine" side. In my own quest to make sense of my son's death and find a new purpose, I delved in to this terrain repeatedly – In my writing and in conversations with others trying to cope with loss. We shared experiences and sometimes cried together, which at times was cathartic.

As Kenneth Koka, a leading grief expert and professor of gerontology at The College of New Rochelle Graduate School notes, blending these varied grieving styles can be a good thing. "Grief is manifested in many ways, it's not just an emotional response", Doka said in a recent webinar. "It's a roller coaster of reactions. Some days we think of that person constantly, and other days not so much." For sure, the guys in our men's group are on their own roller coasters.

Each one appreciates having a place to vent and hang out, lightening the load for a short while every other week as they break from the ride. A few have been craving something like this, even though they might not appear to be the "support group type." For some, it's been impossible to explain or even deal with others on the outside who just do not get it. Our quest for outlets will undoubtedly continue. We have to – or risk being pulled back into those thick sands.

Ken Brack is co-founder of a nonprofit bereavement center, Hope Floats Healing and Wellness Center, in Kingston, MA. He and his wife, Denise Brack, created the center to support other grieving families after losing their son Michael in 2002. Ken is also the author of Especially For You: Finding a New Purpose After Unspeakable Loss, which tells the uplifting stories of people who find a way forward through trauma and daunting trials.

Love Gifts

Many thanks to Lynette Lampmann (In loving memory of Shawn) and Diana Cox (In loving memory of Michael) for bringing waters to our outdoor gathering these last two months, making very sure we stay hydrated and healthy!



A special thank you to Diane Guerecki, Kasey Bradley Lisa Dechant, Jenifer Pini and Crystal Hunter 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, Betty and Charlie Hottenstein for addressing our monthly newsletters for mailing. They do this in remembrance of their daughter, Tracy. 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.

Donations made in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling are always welcome, but more so this year. Due to COVID restrictions we had to cancel our biggest fundraiser, the annual Memorial Walk and Butterfly Release. 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





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

Next Meeting : Sept 13, 12-2 at the park



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.

