



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Jul / Aug / Sep 2020

IF ONLY, ONE MORE TIME...

To hear your voice loud and clear,
To see your image as if
you're here,
To feel your warmth like you
are near,

If only, one more time...
To hear you call, "Mom, I'm
home"
To keep me company when
I'm alone,
To watch you run and grab
the phone,

If only, one more time...
To watch you sit quietly and read,
To buy you things you say you need,
To see you do a thoughtful deed,

If only, one more time...
To find a note written by you,
To walk upstairs and trip over your shoe,
To comfort you when you're feeling blue,

If only, one more time...
To feel your arms in a soft embrace,
To see the smile upon your face,
To understand when you needed "space"

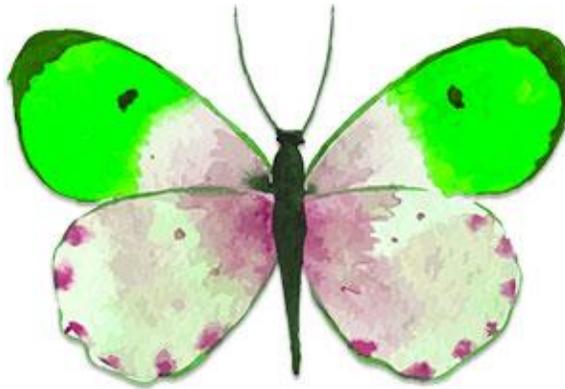
If only, one more time...
If only, one more time...

Vicki Richey
TCF Orange County Chapter, CA

DIFFICULT TIME

I used to have a very difficult time, then some
difficult times, then some difficult days, then a
difficult day at times, but now it's difficult moments
in a day now and then.

I would not have believed that possible 10 years ago,
nor did I care if I even had another day, of any kind,
at that time. It sounds so
trite to say that time helps
heal, but surviving this
moment, then the next and
the next, and then tomorrow,
is what helped me to know
that I'd be OK.



I'm very different, I'll never
"get over it", but I am
surviving and going on with
this life and after a while
I've learned to acknowledge
and accept good moments

and the good times even more.

Thanks to Compassionate Friends for being there.

Kathy Mattocks
TCF Palo Alto, CA

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, July 2

Thursday, August 6

Thursday, September 3

6:30 PM

St. Paul's United Methodist Church
1901 Lexington Ave.

Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

FREEDOM TO LIVE TAKES TIME

Summer vacation is traditionally a time for children. Families get together and children are almost always around. This can be difficult for bereaved parents. Seeing children at play can bring back memories of their child, now gone. It may also cause some to regret all those "kid things" our children will never experience.

The Fourth of July can be particularly difficult. Fire crackers, cotton candy, hot dogs and parades, picnics and family reunions are all a part of our Independence Day celebrations. But we don't feel like celebrating because we are not free. We are prisoners of our grief, our memories and our lost dreams for our children.

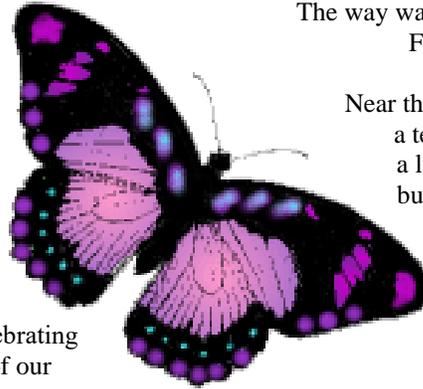
It is important to remember that you do not have to join in these celebrations. Should you choose to join in, you do not have to be the life of the party. It takes time for your heart to heal; it will get easier. In time you will be free, free from your pain, free to enjoy life again. Until then, be gentle to yourself, and give yourself time to heal.

Lisa Sculley
TCF Orange Park, Florida

STRENGTH

In the early days of my grief,
a tear would well up in my eyes,
a lump would form in my throat,
but you would not know -
I would hide it,
And I am strong.

In the middle days of my grief,
I would look ahead and see that wall
that I had attempted to go around
as an ever-present reminder of a wall yet unscaled.
Yet I did not attempt to scale it
for the strong will survive -
And I am strong.



In the later days of my grief,
I learned to climb over that wall - step by step -
remembering, crying, grieving.
And the tears flowed steadily as
I painstakingly went over.
The way was long, but I did make it,
For I am strong.

Near the resolution of my grief,
a tear will well up in my eyes,
a lump will form in my throat,
but I will let that tear fall - and you
will see it.
Through it you will see that I
still hurt and I care,
For I am strong.

Terry Jago
TCF Regina, Canada

REMEMBERING

Go ahead and mention my child,
The one that died, you know.

Don't worry about hurting me further.
The depth of my pain doesn't show.

Don't worry about making me cry.
I'm already crying inside.

Help me to heal by releasing
The tears that I try to hide.

I'm hurt when you just keep silent,
Pretending he didn't exist.

I'd rather you mention my child,
knowing that he has been missed.

You asked me how I was doing.
I say "pretty good" or "fine".

But healing is something on going
I know it will take a lifetime.

Elizabeth Dent
TCF McMinnville, OR

WHO KNEW?

Our eyes are red and grief
makes us blue.
We never quite know who to
tell your story to.

We ponder our lives without
you being here,
To give us purpose, laughter
and often a tear.

It seems impossible these
days we must endure,
Emptiness, helplessness and some fear for sure.

Having no doubt that we'll not make it through,
Then we remember just how much we love you.

We celebrate your life with us here on earth,
No matter how long you lived after your birth.

Our lives have been blessed by just knowing you,
Because of your love, we'll make it. Who knew?

Dan Gardner
TCF Nashville, TN

YOU CAN GO ON

You can shed tears that they've gone, or you can
smile because they've lived.

You can close your eyes and pray they'll come back,
or you can open your eyes and see all they've left
behind.

Your heart can be empty because you can't see them,
or your heart can be full of love they've shared.

You can turn your back on tomorrow and live
yesterday, or you can be happy for tomorrow because
of yesterday.

You can remember them and only that they're gone,
or you can cherish their memory and let it live on.



You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn
your back, or you can do what
they'd want; smile, open your
eyes, love and go on.

Donna Southworth
TCF Denton, NC

AFTER

As the world around me gets
brighter,
And the darkness fades away,
The weight I carry gets lighter
Because I know she'll be near
one day.

My life is no longer as lonely,
As when it was when she left.
I know she wasn't trying to hurt me,
But for a while I couldn't catch my breath.

Each day the pain gets easier
And the memories aren't so sad.
I'm finally able to smile for her,
As I think of the time we had.

Now when I'm feeling alone,
And ask for her embrace,
I close my eyes and she warms me,
And her spirit kisses my face.

Sarah Yoder
in memory of her sister Morgan

Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith
Luann & James Butler

Steering Committee

Henry Cole, Facilitator
Johnny James, Treasurer
Dianne & Frank Bruscatto, Library
Maggy & John Dobbs, Outreach
Ann Cole, Outreach
Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter

THERE WERE NO STRANGERS

There is a tenderness among bereaved parents. A gentleness far beyond “normal” interactions with people in everyday life. We speak softly to each other and silently acknowledge our mutual vulnerable fragileness. That doesn’t mean we might not hurt each other from time to time through a misunderstanding, but it seems to me, the hurt is never meant to be. We have hurt enough already.

Somehow, there is forgiveness among bereaved parents. Forgiveness that comes from knowing we are just struggling human beings trying to make the best of our lives that will have, forever, an empty hole.

There is a quiet beauty among bereaved parents. A beauty that comes out of the experience of being hit with such pain and love all mixed together that words completely fail us.

There is courage among bereaved parents. The courage to get up, get dressed, and face another day.

We look to each other for the tenderness, the forgiveness, the beauty, and the courage. How often we say, “I’m so glad to know you... but I wish we had not met like this.” And then we often add, “But, would I... could I... have ever felt so close if it wasn’t for the pain?” Strange, isn’t it, how there are hidden gifts in the middle of unspeakable agony?

The closeness of bereaved parents and siblings is universal. I just returned from the National TCF Conference in Washington, DC, where 1,500 people, from all over the world and every walk of life, attended. It didn’t take a name tag to identify each other. Formal introductions weren’t necessary. The question, “What do you do for a living?” never came up. The words most often spoken were, “Tell me about your child (or brother or sister).” There were no strangers. Even if you were not there... you were there. The invisible link ... is love.

Alice Monroe
TCF Mesa

FOR THE NEWLY BEREAVED

One day you wake up and realize you must have survived it because you are still here, alive and breathing. But you don't remember the infinitely small steps and decisions you took to get there. Your only awareness is that you have shed miles of tears on what seems to be an endless road of sorrow. One day... one glorious day, you wake up and feel your skin tingle again and you forget, just for an instant, that your heart is broken... and it is a beginning.

Susan B.
TCF Kingston, Canada



Everyone is encouraged to contribute to the newsletter to keep our chapter going strong. Please contact Julie Petty with your ideas.



Also, remember you can bring your child’s favorite snack for refreshments to our monthly meeting or do a flower arrangement for the table. Please contact Marilyn Smith one month prior to the meeting.

Our Children Always Loved and Remembered



A special table is set up at our meetings to honor children whose special days are in that month. We invite you to bring a picture or memento of your child to share during that significant month.

OUR CHILDREN'S JULY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Chris Springfield	07/03/75	Deborah & Walter Springfield
Don Shlosman	07/04/78	Margie Godwin
Joe David Williams	07/04/74	Dolph Williams
Michael Stephens	07/06/51	Maggie & John Stephens
Tonya Hurst	07/06/79	Pam Wimbish
Stacey Morrison	07/07/83	Sandy Kendrick
Amiee McIveene	07/07/78	Rhea & Danny McIveene
Greg Dennis	07/08/60	Camille Dennis
Jill Whitaker	07/21/02	Cynthia Machen
Fred Page	07/22/62	Gloria Roye
Randy Foote	07/25/75	Linda Foote
Scottie McLarrin	07/30/87	Mary McLarrin
Matthew Nolan	07/30/91	Karen Nolan

OUR CHILDREN'S JULY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Leigh Ann Carlton	07/01/01	Gail Dupuy
Allen Byrnside	07/02/19	Terri Musgrove-grandmother
Andrew Rinicker	07/03/04	Dale Rinicker
Hunter Carr	07/08/09	Juanita Carr
Andy Smith	07/12/16	Anita Wynn
Derrick Sadberry	07/15/06	Belinda Sadberry
Steven Wisdom	07/15/06	Dee Wisdom
Mike Hayes	07/19/97	Margaret & George Hayes
Michael Hollier	07/21/09	Lyn Hollier
Allison Butler	07/30/11	LuAnn & James Butler

OUR CHILDREN'S AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Heather Greer	08/01/83	Kim & Heath Greer
Robin Munholland	08/02/81	Terry Williams
Michelle Putman	08/03/83	Gaye Laing
Kim Smith	08/02/75	Jackie Bailey
Adam McKenzie	08/04/68	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Aaron McKenzie	08/04/68	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Lisa Giovingo	08/07/59	Frances Webb
Chad Byrd	08/13/79	Janice & Randy Byrd
Shontavious Foster	08/13/87	Sarah Foster
Robert Harrison	08/15/59	Dr. & Mrs. Robert Harrison
John Bruscato	08/19/74	Dianne & Frank Bruscato
Michele Perry	08/25/66	Don & Clara Perry
Dominique Bruscato	08/28/79	Gene Bruscato
Tytianna Jenkins	08/28/98	Beverly Jenkins
Benjamin Box	08/30/63	Erlene & Jack Box

OUR CHILDREN'S AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Don Shlosman	08/01/00	Margie Godwin
Chad Byrd	08/01/05	Janice & Randy Byrd
Hope Johnson	08/02/05	Fran Johnson
Matthew Elliott	08/04/16	Guina Elliott
Savannah Thornton	08/07/16	Rhonda & Ronald Thornton
Joel Rundell	08/09/90	Sharon & Jim Rundell
Brittany Braxton	08/11/09	Ursula Braxton
Heather Greer	08/13/03	Kim & Heath Greer
Paul Hayes	08/14/03	Patty & Paul Hayes
Scott Thompson	08/16/03	Tammy Thompson
Stephen Sivils	08/19/03	Veda Sivils
Jayson C. Crawley	08/20/90	Ruby Crawley
Jeffrey Carter	08/22/10	Dianne & Tim Carter
Jason Hutts	08/22/99	Carol & Greg Hutts
Brian Perry	08/22/02	Clara & Don Perry
Greg Gilstrap	08/24/07	Jean Gilstrap
Debbie Pope	08/24/08	Jean Hamilton
Dean Keirse	08/28/11	Shirley Porter
Brandon McGehee	08/30/02	Teddi & James McGehee
Robert Harrison	08/31/06	Dr. & Mrs. Robert Harrison

OUR CHILDREN'S SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Mario Lambert	09/04/77	Helma Lambert
Fred Page	09/08/58	Charlotte Colquette
Pamela Ford	09/08/74	Leona Upton
Holly M. Robertson	09/12/70	Nancy & Joe Mulhern
Leigh Ann Carlton	09/13/83	Gail Dupuy
Anne Barham	09/14/77	Pat Barham
Rodney Hubbard	09/15/64	Claudina Vega
Barry Kirby	09/18/89	Lisa Kirby/Bridget Kirby
Donald Acree	09/20/64	Fran Acree
Paul Johnston	09/20/59	Gloria & Paul Johnston
Michael Woods	09/20/95	China Telano
Jayden Ward	09/21/09	Alicia Hill
Cole Brooks Hamilton	09/22/95	Laurie & Britt Hamilton
Emerson Johnson	09/23/14	Sandy Johnson
Jeffrey Carter	09/24/82	Dianne & Tim Carter
Joel Rundell	09/26/65	Sharon & Jim Rundell
Kody Spann	09/27/84	Cindy Spann
Richard Bryan	09/28/79	Linda & James Bryan

OUR CHILDREN'S SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Amanda Maxwell	09/01/02	Angie Maxwell
Blade Gilbreath	09/06/15	Dawn & Brandon Gilbreath
Kenneth Wall	09/06/99	Beverly & Charles Wall
Kaye Shields	09/06/04	Lila & R.L. Hargrove
Matthew Nolan	09/11/17	Karen Nolan
Cole Crawford	09/22/18	Sylvia & Greg Crawford
Timothy Smith	09/25/76	Mary & Buddy Smith
Aaron McKenzie	09/29/10	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Kim Smith	09/29/97	Jackie Bailey

TO OUR LONG TIME MEMBERS:

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting when new parents arrive with a fresh hurt and frightened eyes, I remember how we felt at our first meeting. Think back ... what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, "your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer." They were the ones who wanted to really listen when you talked about your child. Can you be an "oldie" for someone else? By helping someone else, you help yourself and share your child with someone who never got to know them. Come out and share with newly bereaved parents to help them heal. Our own healing happens when we are reaching out to others.

**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE;
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

OUR CREDO

We need not walk alone.
We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope.
Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for our children 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 and creeds.
We are young, and we are old.
Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh
and so intensely painful that we feel helpless and see no hope.
Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength;
some of us are struggling to find answers.
Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression;
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 our children.
We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building a future together
as we reach out to each other in love
and 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**

www.tcfnortheastla.org

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Northeast Louisiana Chapter
P.O. Box 6114
Monroe, Louisiana 71211

Return Service Requested