



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

NORTHEAST LOUISIANA CHAPTER

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JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2008

I KNOW YOU

I know who you are...I see your face reflected in
mine.
Ravaged by tears, distorted by the pain of a lifetime
You are a parent of a child who now lives on in your
heart
Joined in spirit, though physically torn apart

To live between two worlds is now our task
To be recognized by others, we all have a mask
But in the abyss, in the darkness of the in between
We often fall to our knees,
tearing away the pretense and silently scream.

I know who you are, your voice sounds as familiar as
mine.

It calls out, vibrating throughout all of eternity,
searching.
Trying to find.

"Where are you my child? I hear you in
my mind,
but I cannot find the way.
Somehow I have gotten lost,
where are all of my yesterdays?"

In the void, a child's voice has fallen silent.
Deafening silence, echoing cries..
We are left to follow each other in the darkness,
always asking Why?

Into the unknown, we stumble along.
The sun will rise and another day will begin.
But the only light I can see is in the outstretched hand
of a kindred soul, another grieving friend.

I know who you are; your heart is shattered,
your soul is broken just like mine.
And though the pieces may fit back together,
one tiny fragment at a time
We will never again be whole,
for there is a gap in our lives where our child should
be.

The child that lives in our hearts,
dances deep in our souls, laughs in our memories.

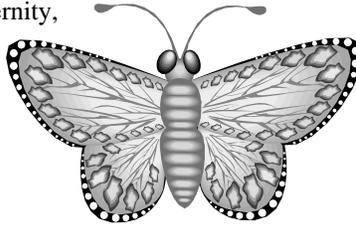
I know who you are...I can feel your pain
We will never be the same

I cry the same tears
We have the same fears
Alone in a crowd,
We both cried aloud

As our dreams came to an end.
I know you, my grieving friend.

You are not alone, look in the mirror and you will see
Standing next to you...is a reflection of me.

Lisa Comstock
TCF Florence, KY



COMPASSIONATE TEARS

I cried in my car, and was ignored.
I cried in church, and was pitied.
I cried at work, and was shunned.
I cried at home, and was hushed.
I cried at The Compassionate Friends,
And others shared their tissues & tears.

Nona Walser
TCF Greenville, SC

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, July 3

Thursday, August 7

Thursday, September 4

6:30 PM
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
1901 Lexington Ave.
Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

For Siblings

An outlet for siblings is the TCF Sibling Forum. It is available online and is a place where siblings from all over can share and help each other cope with the unique grief of losing a brother or sister. Siblings are able to ask questions, make a comment or leave a thought for others to respond.

Visit the Sibling Resources Page at www.compassionatefriends.org
Email tcsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org for the password

LITTLE BROTHER

Someone took you away from me
And I wonder if they cared
About the ones they left behind
And the pain that each must bear.

Why did you have to leave me
When there was so much left to do
I'm not sure if I can go on
If I have to go on without you.

But life dictates the rules
There are things that I can't change
When you left, my heart was torn in two
My life got rearranged.

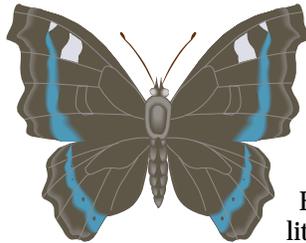
I have to believe I'll see you again
It keeps the hope alive and new
So until we meet again, little brother
Never forget that I love you.

Jenny
TCF Indianapolis, IN

MY BROTHER'S EYES

I search for my brother's eyes in my son; and in me I
see his smile.
With my offspring all around me; I hold on to him
for awhile.

Although he died so long ago he continues to live
still.
In this one's laugh and that one's hand – I always
feel a thrill.



My family laughs when I find the likeness
– the features that remind.

They say I'm making it all up and that I
must be blind.

But I have memorized it all and find him in
little ways.

His eyes, his smile and gestures are still with me
today.

Nina Danielson, Cape Cod, MA
Dedicated to my brother Moss

MY SISTER, MY FRIEND

Within our hearts
You will always be.
Our minds will be filled
With sweet memories.

Your spirit and love
Will never be gone
For each life you touched
Will carry them on.

Catherine Hall
TCF, Hinsdale IL

*There is a sacredness in tears. They are not
the mark of weakness, but of power. They
speak more eloquently than 10,000 tongues.
They are the messengers of overwhelming
grief, of deep contrition, and of unspeakable
love.*

Washington Irving

ON BUTTERFLY WINGS

From earth's caterpillars to heaven's butterflies -
They soar with the angels from the earth to the sky.
Their wings seem so fragile, translucent and light -
But they transfuse our world giving us strength in our
night.

In silence they appear like messengers of love,
Bringing hope and comfort from heaven above.
These beautiful butterflies so graceful in flight,
Transport us from darkness to color and light.

So when choosing a symbol to help grieving parents
cope,
What more than a butterfly could best
symbolize hope.
Our hearts stand in awe and hope from
within us springs.
As our hearts take flight - On Butterfly Wings.

By Faye McCord
TCF Jackson, MS
In loving memory of my son,
Lane McCord (1/26/65 - 9/13/98)



Love knows no barriers
Time or distance recognize.
Love does not diminish,
But is constant in our lives.

And like a summer breeze
Uplifts and inspires us
With healing memories.

For son Eddie (2/18/74 - 5/30/90)

Peggy Walls
TCF Alexander City, AL

REFLECTIONS IN SAND AND TIMES

I looked across the lake, then onto the sand,
Wishing I was still standing there
Holding your small hand.

Sand castles, buckets and shovels
Flashed into my mind,
As I remembered all those precious
memories you left behind.
Tiny footprints took me many,
many years back in time,
But of those I looked at—
yours I couldn't find.
But as I stood there
going so far back in the sand,
I almost could feel you holding my hand.

Linda Trimmer
TCF York, PA

SEASONS OF THE HEART

Your special days are unchanging
Seasons of the heart I celebrate.

Your birth, forever spring,
Tender memories relate,
New and green, a dream
From which too soon I awake.

The summer of your life was bright
Laughter needed no reason,
Seemingly endless days of sharing.
Sixteen summers. Short in season.

Your death brought winter without warning,
What sense in all this can be found?
Summer dreams replaced with mourning.
Where is hope now?

But the heart knows what
The mind cannot accept
That when all is lost,
It is love that is left.

Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith

Steering Committee

Henry Cole, Facilitator
Beverly & Charles Wall, Treasurer
Dianne & Frank Bruscatto, Library
Ann Cole & Marilyn Smith, Hospitality
Frances & Jim Gregory, Outreach
Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter
Betty Jean & Johnny James, Memorial Park
Sandy Chester, TCF Regional Coordinator

GRIEVING IN PAIRS

How many times have people said, “Well, thank God you have each other.” How many times have you felt “each other” to be entirely inadequate at meeting your needs?

Alarming statistics are available telling us of the rocky road parents encounter in their marriage after the death of a child. We sometimes see in ourselves a touchiness or quickness to become irritated that wasn't there before. It always seems that my “bad day” is my wife's “good” day, or the day she wakes up crying is the day I had planned on playing tennis. Or sometimes, even more difficult, we both have a bad day and find no help from the other in pulling things back together. How can one person hold up another when he is, himself, face down in the mud!

Every person grieves differently. This is a rule that even applies within a family. And the needs of every individual are different. While you may need to talk and talk and talk, your spouse may need some time alone to reflect inwardly. You have both been through the worst experience of your life. And while at times, you can face recovery as a team, sometimes you must develop the patience to be able to wait out certain needs alone or with someone else. Realize that no matter how it is shown, your partner hurts, too.

Gerry Hunt
TCF White River Jct., VT



ABOUT BEING STRONG

Many people are convinced that strong and brave means trying to think and talk about "something else."

But we know that being strong and brave means thinking and talking about your dead love, until your grief begins to be bearable.

That is strength,
That is courage.

And only thus can being strong and brave help you to heal.

Sascha



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.



PLEASE NOTE: THE NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE HAS CHANGED TO BE PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

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>
Amiee McIlveene	07/07/78 Rhea & Danny McIlveene
Greg Dennis	07/08/60 Camille Dennis
Milton Scarborough	07/11/89 Tina Scarborough
Lonnie Matheson	07/20/68 Dorothy Matheson
Lauren Hemphill	07/26/78 Kitty McDougall & Tommy Hemphill
Scottie McLarrin	07/30/87 Mary McLarrin

OUR CHILDREN'S JULY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>	<u>Parent(s)</u>
Leigh Ann Carlton	07/01/01 Gail Dupuy
Lonnie Matheson	07/03/06 Dorothy Matheson
Andrew Rinicker	07/03/04 Dale Rinicker
Derrick Sadberry	07/15/06 Belinda Sadberry
Steven Wisdom	07/15/06 Dee Wisdom
Spencer Ramsey	07/17/06 Cindy & Billy Ramsey
Mike Hayes	07/19/97 Margaret & George Hayes
Stephen Blanchard	07/26/06 Tracey & Steve Blanchard

OUR CHILDREN'S AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>	<u>Parent(s)</u>
Heather Greer	08/01/83 Kim & Heath Greer
Kim Smith	08/02/75 Jackie Bailey
Adam McKenzie	08/04/68 Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Chad Byrd	08/13/79 Janice & Randy Byrd
Spencer Ramsey	08/13/90 Cindy & Billy Ramsey
Dylan Smith	08/18/77 Joan Taylor
John Bruscato	08/19/74 Dianne & Frank Bruscato
Michael Hoyem	08/26/54 Dorothy & Don Hoyem
Jesse Chilton	08/29/80 Cheryl & Ronnie Chilton
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	08/03/05 Janice & Randy Byrd
Beth Ann Smith	08/06/06 Judy & Randy Smith
Joel Rundell	08/09/90 Sharon Rundell
Heather Greer	08/13/03 Kim & Heath Greer
Paul Hayes	08/14/03 Patty & Paul Hayes
Brandon Dempsey	08/15/06 Belinda Enterkin
Stephen Sivils	08/19/03 Veda & Leon Sivils
Jason Hutts	08/22/99 Carol & Greg Hutts
Brian Perry	08/22/02 Clara & Don Perry
Greg Gilstrap	08/24/07 Jean Gilstrap
Alice Rains	08/28/94 Marie Rains
Brandon McGehee	08/30/02 Teddi & James McGehee

OUR CHILDREN'S SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>	<u>Parent(s)</u>
Dwain Whitehead	09/05/66 Mary & Ralph Whitehead
Fred Page	09/08/58 Charlotte Colquette
Pamela Ford	09/08/74 Leona Upton
Leigh Ann Carlton	09/13/83 Gail Dupuy
Stephen Blanchard	09/15/88 Tracey & Steve Blanchard
Ashley Taylor	09/15/98 Valerie & Doug Taylor
Wesley Canterbury	09/23/84 Dewanna Canterbury
Aaron Akers	09/23/93 Allison Woods
Joel Rundell	09/26/65 Sharon Rundell
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
Kenneth Wall	09/06/99 Beverly & Charles Wall
Kaye Shields	09/06/04 Lila & R.L. Hargrove
Colby Wixson	09/23/06 Laura Scriber
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.

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www.tcfnortheastla.org

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Northeast Louisiana Chapter
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Return Service Requested